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*Sixth Meeting of Experts*



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Third Joint Annual Meetings of the AU  
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Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic  
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**IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF THE CONFERENCE RESOLUTION ON  
THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON STATISTICS**

**ACHIEVEMENTS**



## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Joint Annual Meetings of the AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, which held in Lilongwe (Malawi), after considering the report on the implementation of the African Charter on Statistics, resolved to:

- (i) Commend countries which have signed and ratified the African Charter on Statistics and call upon those which have not yet done so to sign and ratify same as soon as possible to enable it to come into force;
- (ii) Adopt the draft Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA) as well as its first pillar, the African Strategy for the implementation of the System of National Accounts 2008, and recommend the adoption of both strategies by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2011;
- (iii) Request Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the African Union Commission (AUC), ECA, African Development Bank (AfDB) and development partners to support and implement these initiatives and to develop the other pillars of SHaSA;
- (iv) Request the AUC to strengthen its statistical function by transforming its statistics unit into a Division to enable it to effectively play its role in implementing the SHaSA.

2. Thus, in pursuance of these recommendations and under the aegis of the three pan-African organisations, the AUC, ECA and AfDB, all members of the African Statistics System (ASS) conducted various activities in close collaboration with development partners.

3. This report deals with all actions and their outcomes and proposes recommendations for effective implementation of ongoing and future activities.

## **II. AFRICAN CHARTER ON STATISTICS**

### **II.1. Signing and ratification of the Charter**

4. Since the adoption of the African Charter on Statistics by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its 12th ordinary session in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) on 4 February 2009, twenty (20) AU Member States have signed it and only one (1) Member State has ratified it. The table below presents the status of signing and ratification.

Table 1: Status of signing and ratification of the Charter by Member States

No	Country	Date of signature	Date of ratification	Date of deposit
01	Benin	17/08/2009		
02	Burkina Faso	06/07/2010		
03	Côte d'Ivoire	11/06/2009		
04	Congo	28/06/2009		
05	Gambia	30/06/2009		
06	Ghana	28/06/2009		
07	Mozambique	17/06/2009		
08	Niger	12/05/2009		
09	Rwanda	15/05/2009		
10	Sierra Leone	18/06/2009		
11	Togo	12/05/2009		
12	Comoros	02/02/2010		
13	D. R. Congo	02/02/2010		
14	Gabon	29/01/2010		
15	Kenya	25/01/2010		
16	Mauritius	21/01/2010	27/01/2010	09/02/2010
17	Malawi	05/08/2010		
18	Sao Tome & Principe	01/02/2010		
19	Senegal	24/02/2010		
20	Zambia	31/01/2010		

## I.2. Prospects for speeding up ratification and effective implementation of the Charter

5. In terms of prospects, the AUC will implement a **strategy to speed up the process of signing and ratification of the Charter**, in close collaboration with ECA, AfDB, the RECs and all Member States. **Advocacy documents to popularise the Charter and ensure ownership by all stakeholders** will be prepared with World Bank support. National Statistical Institutes (NSIs) in their capacity as coordinators of national statistical systems (NSS) will popularise the charter in their respective countries, using appropriate means and documents which will be provided them. Sessions for training on the Charter will be organised and also integrated into programmes of schools and centres offering statistical training.

6. A manual (guide) for effective and efficient implementation of the Charter is also being developed. This document will constitute a methodological framework based on principles contained in the Charter and on implementation of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), as stated in guides prepared by PARIS21. Peer reviews of national statistical systems (NSS), based on the Charter principles, will be conducted in four (4) pilot countries. A base line study will also be conducted in conjunction

with ECA and AfDB and support from the World Bank to determine the extent to which countries implement basic principles of official statistics and those in the Charter.

### **III. ELABORATION OF STRATEGY FOR HARMONISATION OF STATISTICS IN AFRICA AND SECTORAL STRATEGIES**

7. Concerning the Strategy for the Harmonisation of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA), in pursuance of the Ministers' recommendations, the African Union Commission submitted the Strategy to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Union in Kampala, Uganda, in July 2010. The Assembly adopted it alongside its first pillar, the **African Strategy on the implementation of the SNA 2008**. The Assembly also requested the African Union Commission, in collaboration with ECA, AfDB and Member States, to develop other SHaSA sectoral strategies and to produce regular annual implementation reports for those initiatives at upcoming sessions. The report on activities conducted within the framework of implementation of this decision was discussed at the meeting of Directors General of National Institutes of Statistics in December 2010 in Yaounde, Cameroon. The activities revolve around the following points:

#### **III.1. Implementation of the Strategy for the Harmonisation of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA)**

8. In pursuance of recommendations from the fifth meeting of Directors General of National Institutes of Statistics (NIS), the AUC, ECA and AfDB prepared an advocacy document for policy organs and Heads of State and Government, as well as Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. This document should inform and sensitise top level authorities of the continent on the importance and role of statistics in decision-making and development process monitoring at country level as well as of integration agendas at regional and continental levels.

9. The three pan-African organisations also prepared a global plan of action for implementing the SHaSA and some of its sectoral strategies. The plan of action describes activities to be conducted within the scope of SHaSA implementation during the next five years, with expected outcomes, performance indicators, responsibilities, and achievement deadlines. This document will also help in implementation monitoring and assessment of all sectoral strategies and to assign stakeholder responsibilities.

#### **III.2. African Strategy on the implementation of the SNA 2008**

10. A single African project on the implementation of the SNA 2008 over the period from 2011-2015 is being elaborated and a round table will be organised thereon with involvement of all countries and development partners as well. During that round table, implementation responsibilities within the project will be discussed and advocacy towards mobilising the resources needed for operationalisation of the African Strategy on the implementation of the SNA 2008.

11. In a bid to ensure effective implementation of this sectoral strategy, the three pan-African institutions appointed coordinators. The AfDB's coordinator will assume general coordination, with assistance from the other coordinators at ECA and AUC. There are plans to develop advocacy material to promote ownership of the SNA 2008 by all stakeholders; transform the African Group on National Accounts (AGNA) into a permanent working group on national accounts in the same vein as the world level inter-secretariat working group on national accounts and retain SNA 2008 as the theme for the African Statistics Day 2011.

### **III.3. Plan of Action on civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa**

12. The first Conference of African Ministers responsible for Civil Registration was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 13 to 14 August 2010. The Conference produced a declaration on crucial policy issues which should be addressed in reforming and enhancing civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa. The Conference also endorsed the recommendations of the meeting of experts which preceded it.

13. The Conference was attended by 40 African ministers and representatives of civil status services, NSIs, as well as regional and international organisations. Over 30 experts from national institutions and representatives of regional and international organisations attended the meeting of experts which preceded the Conference. The need to organise the Ministerial Conference arose from recommendations of the regional workshop held in Dar-es-Salam (Tanzania) in June 2009.

14. As a follow-up to the Conference, the ministers' declaration was translated into a set of concrete implementation measures (known as the Call to Action). These were discussed and finalised at the meeting of experts held from 17 to 21 January 2011 in Addis Ababa. The regional medium term plan on civil registration and vital statistics was discussed and finalised in accordance with the ministers' resolution.

15. Following the Conference of Ministers, important initiatives and a good number of commitments towards improving civil registration and vital statistics systems have been recorded at various forums. These include the resolution taken by the 6<sup>th</sup> African Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) in Cairo (Egypt) which decided to replace their main theme which was on population censuses by one on civil registration and vital statistics systems during the next five symposiums, considering the progress that has been made on the first theme.

16. The ministers, at the August 2010 Conference (see Point 10 of the Declaration), requested the AUC to consider institutionalizing the Conference of African Ministers

responsible for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics as a standing regional platform to meet biannually, for discussion and evaluation of policy issues related to civil registration and vital statistics in Africa. The second Conference of African Ministers responsible for Civil Registration will hold in South Africa in mid-2012.

#### **III.4. Plan of Action of the Global Strategy for improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics**

17. Concerned about the declining quantity and quality of agricultural statistics and the need to provide data to support emerging data requirements and the requirement for the data systems to be integrated to achieve synergy and cost effectiveness, the United Nations Statistical Commission, in February 2010, endorsed a Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics. The purpose of the Strategy is to provide a framework and methodology that will lead to the improvement of national and international agricultural and rural statistics to guide policy analysis and decision-making in the 21st century.

18. Africa is the first region to initiate the implementation of the Strategy. Key stakeholders participating in the Strategy implementation are: (i) the African countries (main beneficiaries of the Strategy), (ii) African institutions including the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group, the UN Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union (AU), (iii) Regional Economic Communities (RECs) which group together individual countries for purposes of achieving greater economic integration and development, (iv) sub-regional organizations, mainly Afristat (The Economic and Statistical Observatory for Sub-Saharan Africa) and regional statistical training centres, and (v) development partners.

19. Three technical components of the plan were selected and responsibility for their development and implementation were assigned to execution agencies as follows: technical assistance by AfDB, training by ECA and research by FAO. In addition, it was recognized that effective implementation of the Global Strategy in Africa will require good governance at global, regional and country levels. It thus called for the establishment of a governance mechanism under the leadership of AfDB to provide an institutional framework and coordination arrangements for the implementation of the Strategy.

20. The achievements to date and the next steps are as follows:

##### **a) Project documents**

21. The three components and the governance mechanism were first developed separately and later consolidated into a single document. The proposed implementation plan will have a long term perspective (10 to 15 years) but will follow a phased approach, with the first phase covering the next 5 years (2011-2015). The initial budget for the first phase has been estimated at US\$ 68.6 million.

## **b) Contribution to the 5th International Conference on Agricultural Statistics**

22. Project documents were presented, improved and endorsed by the 5th International Conference on Agricultural Statistics held in Kampala, Uganda, in October 2010. Enthusiasm for supporting the implementation plan was shown by various development partners in their side meeting held at the conference.

## **c) Preparation for assessing statistical capacity in countries**

23. In order to better plan for the implementation of the Strategy, an assessment of statistical capacity and needs in countries will be undertaken. The assessment will be used by countries to help establish gaps and priorities for the implementation plan of the Global Strategy. It will also provide baseline information and will constitute a valuable tool for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the implementation plan. Technical tools for this assessment are being developed.

## **d) Next steps**

24. Implementation of the Strategy has begun in the first quarter of 2011. In the next few months, the following activities will be undertaken:

- finalisation of the framework for assessing statistical capacity and needs in countries, development of assessment tools at country level for data/information collection;
- mobilization of the requisite resources from development partners; and
- establishment of structures for functioning and execution.

25. The other planned activities will be gradually executed following a calendar established for that purpose.

## **III.5. International Comparison Programme for Africa (ICP-Africa)**

26. The International Comparison Programme (ICP) is a global statistics initiative which was put in place in 1970 for the purpose of producing internationally comparable price and expenditure levels to facilitate comparisons between country real GDPs and sub-aggregates without the distortions resulting from prices and exchange rates. During the last round of the ICP benchmarked to the year 2005, over 150 countries worldwide participated in the programme, with 48 from Africa. The programme is overseen at the global level by the World Bank and is implemented by region – Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Russia, Western Asia and Europe.



27. AfDB has been managing the programme for Africa since 2002; this is the first time an African institution is assuming such responsibility since the start of the ICP. The previous rounds of the ICP for Africa were managed by EUROSTAT, for the 2011 ICP round, all African countries, except Somalia, have indicated their interest to participate. In Africa, unlike the other regions, AfDB has designed ICP-Africa to equally serve as a framework for building capacity for developing price and national accounts statistics in participating countries. For the 2011 Round, the work in Africa will be undertaken within the framework of the AfDB's multinational statistical capacity building programme, which was approved by the Board in November 2008.

28. AfDB, ECA and AUC organised a workshop to launch activities in Nairobi, from 14 to 25 June 2010. There were discussions with officials in charge of statistics in Regional Member Countries on methodological approaches and procedures for data collection for the 2011 ICP Round, as well as on governance mechanisms to be established. A second workshop took place in Hammamet.

### **III.6. African Group on Statistical Training and Human Resources (AGROST)**

29. The Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa), which held in January 2010, endorsed the African Group on Statistical Training and Human Resources (AGROST) as one of its Working Groups.

30. The main objective of AGROST is to coordinate all activities and initiatives relating to statistical training on the continent. More specifically, AGROST seeks to: i) harmonise programmes and qualifications from various African statistical training centres; ii) promote information sharing and best practices; and, iii) identify needs and statistical training capacities.

31. In 2010, AGROST conducted the following activities:

- Elaboration of a Statistical Training Programme for Africa, for the next three years;
- Elaboration of an African Programme for the Statistical Training Component within the framework of the African Plan for the implementation of the Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics, for the next five years;
- Carrying out of one Study Mission to explore the possibility of creating a statistical training institute in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC);
- Participation in meeting to elaborate curricula for the ISIBalo Capacity Building Programme of the International Statistical Institute in South Africa;
- Organisation of Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions in technical and didactical skills of e-learning and public relations within the framework of a triangular cooperation

established between ISAE (University of Makerere, Uganda), ENSEA (Cote d'Ivoire) and InWent (Germany);

- Carrying out of joint missions to ensure that the NSDS being developed takes into account the statistical training component in the following countries: Djibouti, Liberia, DR Congo and Gambia;
- Staff and student exchange, as well as conducting joint researches between ISAE and ENSEA;
- One of the objectives of AGROST is to remove language barriers, it is a pleasure to note that ENSEA of Abidjan hosts students from Anglophone countries: South Africa and Liberia; and
- Holding of a meeting in Cairo (Egypt) in November 2010.

### **III.6. Labour Market Information System (LMIS) in Africa**

32. Within the framework of the implementation of the Ouagadougou Plan of Action for Promotion of Employment and Poverty Alleviation (Extraordinary Assembly of Heads of State and Government, September 2004), the African Union Commission is carrying out a project for the harmonisation and coordination of labour market information systems, which is an important aspect of the strategy for the harmonisation of statistics in Africa. The project seeks to put in place a harmonized conceptual and methodological framework to improve employment policy formulation in Africa as well as the monitoring and evaluation of such policies. It seeks, among others, to propose a harmonization framework based on common definitions, terminologies and concepts consistent with international standards, common methodologies and a set of four categories of indicators on (i) labour, social insurance and employment; (ii) productivity; (iii) poverty and labour market status; and (iv) labour market information systems governance. In pursuance of the recommendations of the third Joint Annual Meetings of the AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, a minimum list of employment, labour and professional training indicators has been elaborated with support from UNDP's West and Central Africa Regional Centre. In addition to that list, a harmonized framework for manpower survey has been developed. For the implementation of the project, a Steering Committee was set up, comprising the AUC, ECA, AfDB, and RECs, with two representatives of the Committee of Directors General of NSIs, AFRISTAT as well as partners such as EUROSTAT, ILO and UNDP.

### **III.7. Africalnfo Database**

33. The AUC, with support from UNICEF, has developed a database known as Africalnfo, with an accompanying implementation five-year plan of action (2011-2015). The development of this database is consistent with implementation of *Strategic Objective 3: To Establish an effective technological environment* of the Strategy for the Harmonisation of

Statistics in Africa (SHaSA). This calls for developing a management information system (MIS) for monitoring the integration agenda and for standardising dissemination tools and platforms.

34. The key objective of AfricalInfo is to enable AUC, RECs, Member States and other users to have statistical information to monitor and evaluate the integration process at regional and continental levels. The AUC organized several meetings of all its departments and RECs to discuss the database content, structure and list of indicators. Focal points were appointed by department and trained to use AfricalInfo. The first version of the database was also presented at the meeting of Directors General of NSIs held in Yaounde, Cameroon, in December 2010.

### **III.8. Sixth African Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD)**

35. The African Symposium on Statistical Development, which was launched in 2006, is organised annually in one African country or the other. The main objective of the Symposium is to provide African countries with a forum for discussing challenges faced in the development of statistics on a continental basis. Given the importance attached to general population and housing censuses (GPHCs) and considering the involvement only of a few African countries during the 2000 Round (1995-2004), the first five Symposiums focused on ensuring greater participation by African countries in the 2010 Round (2005-2014) by emphasizing greater advocacy and sharing of experience and best practices. During the preceding round, only half of the African population was counted and some African countries failed to conduct their censuses. For the 2010 Round, 24 countries have already conducted their censuses and 11 are preparing to do so in 2011. In 2014, it is expected that all African countries but one would have conducted their censuses.

36. The 6th Symposium held from 31 October to 2 November 2010 in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt. Over 300 experts from all African countries and several experts representing sub-regional, continental and international organisations attended. Since the Symposium was launched, it has discussed the various phases of the population and housing census.

37. The main theme of the 6th Symposium was on data analysis and use in population and housing censuses.

38. Among other resolutions from the 6<sup>th</sup> Symposium are those on the shift to addressing national civil registration and vital statistics systems as from 2012 and working out modalities that will ensure the harmonization of population projections during inter-censal periods.

## **IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

39. We feel that an effective implementation of SHaSA and accompanying sectoral strategies will provide credible and harmonised data that is produced regularly, and which covers all political, economic, social and cultural dimensions of the African integration

process. In that regard, it is important for all members of the African Statistical System to join forces, since the challenge of producing quality statistics remains a huge one that is beyond the reach of individual institutions and African countries.

40. In a bid to speed up implementation of ongoing and future activities of the African Charter on Statistics and the Strategy for the Harmonisation of Statistics in Africa, **the Conference of Ministers:**

**(i) Signing and ratification of the African Charter on Statistics**

- Invites all AU Member States to sign and ratify the Charter to enable it to enter into force as quickly as possible;
- Requests Member States, RECs, AUC, ECA, AfDB and other members of the ASS to implement the peer review mechanism and to ensure that all countries are covered within 5 years; and
- Requests the AUC to build its capacity in view of adequately playing its role in coordinating the implementation of the Charter and SHaSA.

**(ii) Strategy for the Harmonisation of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA)**

- Requests Member States, RECs, AUC, ECA, AfDB to take all necessary steps towards the implementation of all initiatives contained in the Strategy; and
- Invites development partners to support the implementation of SHaSA.

**(iii) African Strategy for the implementation of SNA 2008**

- Requests that the African Group on National Accounts (AGNA) be transformed into a permanent working group on national accounts in the same vein as the world level inter-secretariat working group on national accounts ; and,
- Requests that SNA 2008 be retained as the theme for the African Statistics Day 2011.

**(iv) Plan of Action on civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa**

- Takes note of the progress made to improve civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa and to support the process as an important pillar of SHaSA; and

- Requests the AUC to institutionalise the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics as a standing regional platform to meet biannually, for discussion and evaluation of political and policy issues related to civil registration and vital statistics in Africa.

**(v) African Group on Statistical Training and Human Resources (AGROST)**

- Requests all countries to include statistical training programmes in their NSDS ; and
- Calls upon all countries to support the statistical training programme for Africa and the African strategy for improving agricultural and rural statistics.

**(vi) Labour Market Information System (LMIS) in Africa**

- Urges the AUC to pursue implementation of the Project for the harmonisation and coordination of labour market information systems ; and
- Calls upon Member States to allocate adequate resources to building a viable labour market information system to complement resources that will be mobilised from development partners.

**(vii) Developing AfricalInfo database**

- Endorses the Plan of Action (2011-2015) for the implementation of AfricalInfo; and
- Invites UNICEF, ECA, AfDB and all United Nations agencies, as well as other development partners to join in the implementation of the plan of action and to mobilise the necessary resources for its realisation.

**(viii) 6<sup>th</sup> African Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD)**

- Calls upon all African countries to conduct their population and housing censuses by 2014 ;
- Invites countries to establish close links between civil registration services and national statistics offices in a bid to make use of civil status information to improve social and demographic statistics; and,
- Calls upon countries to contribute to making the round of symposiums on civil status and vital statistics successful.