

T. Strengthening statistical capacity in support of progress towards the internationally agreed development goals in the Southern African Development Community^a region

Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Economic Commission for Africa (\$950,000)

Background

88. Statistics are an important tool in the development-policymaking processes of countries and regional organizations. They are needed for assessing the current development situation, setting objectives and targets for the future and measuring progress and development. However, a substantial gap still exists between the demand for information and the ability of most countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region to routinely provide it.
89. The SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan recognizes statistics as one of the cross-sectoral areas that need to be strengthened to foster regional cooperation and integration over the next 15 years. This project is therefore designed to improve the availability and reliability of basic data required for development planning in the SADC region, with special emphasis on data requirements for the internationally agreed development goals and the Millennium Development Goals. The project is aimed at facilitating subsequent networking among subregions through interactive sharing and management of knowledge. Furthermore, the project will strengthen links between producers and users of statistics.
90. The project builds upon lessons learned from three statistical development projects implemented by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs Statistics Division in the Caribbean Community, Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and ESCWA regions. The project will be executed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in collaboration with the Statistics Division of the SADC secretariat and in association with ECA.

^a Member countries: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

<p>Objective of the Organization: To strengthen the capacity of Governments in the SADC region for the production and analysis of benchmark statistics to support national monitoring of progress towards the internationally agreed development goals.</p>	<p>Summary budget (Thousands of US dollars)</p> <table> <tr> <td>General temporary assistance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">80.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Consultants</td> <td style="text-align: right;">75.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expert groups</td> <td style="text-align: right;">110.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Travel</td> <td style="text-align: right;">190.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contractual services</td> <td style="text-align: right;">45.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Operating expenses</td> <td style="text-align: right;">80.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Workshops</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>370.0</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td style="text-align: right;">950.0</td> </tr> </table>	General temporary assistance	80.0	Consultants	75.0	Expert groups	110.0	Travel	190.0	Contractual services	45.0	Operating expenses	80.0	Workshops	<u>370.0</u>	Total	950.0
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<p>Relationship to the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007 and the Millennium Development Goals: Department of Economic and Social Affairs subprogrammes 4 (Sustainable development) and 5 (Statistics); ECA subprogramme 4 (Harnessing information for development).</p>																	
Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement																
<p>(a) Improved organization of statistical systems and user-producer relationships, resulting in quality, timely and relevant data on the Millennium Development Goals</p> <p>(b) Adoption of international statistical methods and standards for knowledge management in relation to the Millennium Development Goals and internationally agreed development goals</p>	<p>(a) Increased volume of official statistical data for tracking progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and internationally agreed development goals used by statistical systems, the public and the media</p> <p>(b) (i) Increased number of national statistical offices using common statistical definitions and methodologies</p> <p>(ii) Increased number of national statistical offices providing indicators of improved quality for policy-oriented research and analysis</p>																

Main activities

91. The main activities of the project will include:

- (a) Organization of six training workshops for staff of national statistical offices to improve the technical capabilities of countries in the collection of demographic and social statistics, economic statistics and environment and energy statistics; in statistical classification; in the organization of statistical systems; and in user-producer relationships;
- (b) Convening an expert group meeting on the harmonization of development indicators to exchange country experiences and adopt common methodologies and classifications for the collection of data; to provide a forum for a dialogue among the countries of the region and other regions; and to identify common policy priority areas and develop the corresponding regional core indicator set;
- (c) Establishing the connectivity of experts in statistics-related ICT to promote the sharing of information among experts in their respective fields, access to information on websites and exchange of statistical reports;
- (d) Promoting exchanges of experts between statistical offices to encourage the implementation of common methodologies and facilitate exchanges of information on statistical standards;

- (e) Provision of technical assistance to strengthen national and regional institutions in the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics and the use and maintenance of technology.