

F. African statistical knowledge networks in support of progress towards the internationally agreed development goals

Department of Economic and Social Affairs, jointly with the Economic Commission for Africa (\$896,000)

Background

20. There is a broad consensus among African countries and development partners about the need for better statistics that lead to better policies for the achievement of the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Consistent underresourcing of national statistical offices and largely uncoordinated assistance from development partners have led to limited institutional and infrastructural development, which explains the current underperformance of the statistical systems in Africa. Those systems are providing limited statistical products and services in terms of quantity, type and quality, and are therefore unable to respond adequately to the increasing demand by countries and the international community for better development statistics.
21. In order to address these problems, the African Centre for Statistics has been created in ECA under the auspices of the Executive Secretary. This repositioning of statistics will enable ECA to play its rightful role in statistical development by enhancing statistical capacities of African countries for better policymaking and tracking of progress towards the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.
22. As a result of lack of large-scale pan-African statistics-development initiatives in the past decade, there is a lack of continent-wide networks of professional statisticians. To ensure the success of any future initiatives in African statistical capacity-building, statistical knowledge networks among African national statistical offices need to be built. Only when such networks exist, and coordinated approaches to African statistical capacity-building are entrenched, will there be continent-wide progress in statistics.
23. The project will be executed by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and ECA. The project builds upon lessons learned from five statistical development projects implemented or being implemented by the Statistics Division in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), ASEAN, ESCWA, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) regions. All of those projects have been successful in strengthening the regional network of statisticians, increasing intraregional statistical cooperation and raising the regional profile of statistics. They have also provided those regions with an impetus in statistical capacity-building, as shown by the number of region-led follow-up projects. The project will also build on the experiences gained from a prototype project on the

development of African practices in the adoption and implementation of international statistical standards, which is currently in the planning stages.

<p>Objective of the Organization: To create African statistical knowledge networks to strengthen the capacity of African countries for the production, analysis and dissemination of benchmark statistics required for national development planning and for monitoring of the internationally agreed development goals.</p>	<p>Summary budget (Thousands of United States dollars)</p> <table> <tr> <td>Consultants</td> <td style="text-align: right;">86.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Travel</td> <td style="text-align: right;">130.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contractual services</td> <td style="text-align: right;">60.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Equipment</td> <td style="text-align: right;">110.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Operating expenses</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Study tours</td> <td style="text-align: right;">125.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Workshops</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>375.0</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td style="text-align: right;">896.0</td> </tr> </table>	Consultants	86.0	Travel	130.0	Contractual services	60.0	Equipment	110.0	Operating expenses	10.0	Study tours	125.0	Workshops	<u>375.0</u>	Total	896.0
Consultants	86.0																
Travel	130.0																
Contractual services	60.0																
Equipment	110.0																
Operating expenses	10.0																
Study tours	125.0																
Workshops	<u>375.0</u>																
Total	896.0																
<p>Relationship to the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2008-2009 and the Millennium Development Goals: Department of Economic and Social Affairs subprogramme 5 (Statistics); ECA subprogramme 9 (Statistics).</p>																	

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat	Indicators of achievement
<p>(a) Improved knowledge-sharing among African national statistical offices to increase the quantity of quality, timely and relevant data on internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals</p>	<p>(a) Increased volume of official statistical data for tracking progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals used by statistical systems</p>
<p>(b) Increased adoption of international statistical methods and standards with a strong regional approach, towards the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals</p>	<p>(b) Increased number of national statistical offices using common statistical definitions and methodologies</p>

Main activities

24. The main activities of the project will include:
- (a) Organizing five seminars for staff of national statistical offices to identify and review African practices in the adoption and implementation of international statistical standards, in order to improve their technical capabilities in the areas of management of statistical systems, economic statistics, vital statistics, labour statistics and data management;
 - (b) Production of materials on African practices in the adoption and implementation of international statistical standards in the areas of management of statistical systems, economic statistics, vital statistics, and labour statistics;
 - (c) Providing technical assistance to strengthen national institutions in the implementation of international statistical standards in the areas of management of statistical systems, economic statistics, vital statistics, labour statistics and data management;
 - (d) Promoting exchanges of staff among statistical offices to encourage the implementation of common methodologies and to facilitate exchanges of information on international statistical standards, in the areas of management of statistical systems, economic statistics, vital statistics, labour statistics and data management;
 - (e) Establishing connectivity to the Internet for staff from African national statistical offices to promote access to and sharing of information in statistics-related data management and

specific areas of social and economic statistics, as well as statistical organization and management;

- (f) Creation of an African statistical knowledge networks website to disseminate international statistical standards, statistical reports and African practices and experiences in their adoption and implementation.