African Thematic Conference:

Managing a statistical organization in times of change

Programme note and agenda

7 – 9 October 2019

Pretoria, South Africa

Draft Programme Note

- The Thematic Conferences is be held on 7-9 October 2019 in Pretoria, South Africa. The Conference is targeted at heads and/or senior managers of national, regional and international statistical agencies.
- The participation of 2 delegates from each 28 Africa member states associated with English speaking regions of Africa as no translation or interpretation will be available at the conference. These members are as follows; Angola, Botswana, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe may be financed by the organisers.
- Multilateral and bilateral donors active in the region are welcome to to participate and contribute.
- Please send any additional feedback on this conference or information to support the Handbook to statistics-handbook@un.org.

Purpose and background

The first Africa Thematic Conference (7-9 October, Pretoria, South Africa) is part of a series of regional conferences organised to further understand and prioritise the emerging needs of statistical organisations to adapt and develop, as stressed in the **Cape Town Global Action Plan**[1] (CTGAP) for Sustainable Development and in the final report of the series of conferences on a Transformative Agenda for Official Statistics[2]. In particular, the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related regional and national development policies requires national statistical systems to grasp the potential of innovative technologies in a rapidly changing data ecosystem while reinforcing leadership, coordination, communication and dialogue through institutional and organizational reforms, in compliance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, endorsed by the General Assembly in 2014. Modernization, transformation and adaptation are crucial if official statistics are to meet the widening and increasing requirements of policymakers, researchers, the media and civil society for high-quality, timely and disaggregated statistics.

Supporting this process of adaptation and modernization, the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) at its 49th session endorsed the proposed outline of the updated **Handbook of Statistical Organization**[3] (the Handbook) aimed at guiding chief statisticians and senior

---

[1] See https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/hlg/cape-town-global-action-plan/, and E/CN.3/2017/3 and E/CN.3/2018/4.
[2] See E/CN.3/2017/5.
[3] See E/CN.3/2018/5.

managers of statistical organizations in developing and maintaining statistical capacity that is fit for purpose. An advisory group[4] was established with the task of providing overall guidance to the drafting team at UNSD and of ensuring a link with the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG-PCCB) and other relevant bodies. The UNSC suggested this approach being complemented with this series of thematic conferences at the regional and sub-regional level, at which senior statisticians may address recent institutional, organizational and technical developments addressing prospective challenges and opportunities for the production of official statistics and indicators.

Objective of the first African Thematic Conference and target audience

The main objective of the African Thematic Conference is to better understand and prioritise the emerging needs of statistical organisations to adapt and develop and exchange experiences and strategies of Member States in such processes. The regional approach will put emphasis on aspects of this process that are typical for the region and represent common challenges among members of that region. The workshop will also stimulate an exchange of information on national best practices as well as recent global and regional initiatives and programmes supporting the necessary transformation and modernisation of official statistics to address emerging user needs for high-quality and internationally comparable statistics and indicators.

The Conference will allow the organizers to collect additional information on practices and challenges that will contribute to an extended knowledge base related to the new Handbook whose purpose is to guide chief statisticians and senior managers in developing, adapting and maintaining statistical organisations that are fit for purpose. The Handbook itself will be based on the strategic development areas mentioned in the CTGAP and the outcome of the series of regional conferences on a transformative agenda for official statistics.

Structure of the Thematic Conference

The organizing committee[5] of the African Thematic Conference suggested to structure the two and a half (2 ½) day event around 4 main sessions covering the 6 strategic areas of the CTGAP and 14 substantive chapters of the forthcoming Handbook identified as highly relevant for Africa. The organizing committee also proposed to allocate enough time for discussions and interventions after each session and to organize 2 series of breakout sessions after session 2 and session 4. An initial outline of the draft agenda is attached to this document.

---

[4] Members of the Advisory Group are Brazil, Kenya, Mongolia, Palestine, Philippines, Poland, Suriname, United Kingdom, FAO, ILO, UNCTAD, Asian Development Bank, Eurostat, Open Data Watch, PARIS21, SESRIC, and the five UN Regional Commissions.
[5] For the first African Thematic Conference, the members of the organizing committee are Ghana, Kenya, South Africa and UN-ECA and UNSD.

Session 1: Strengthening the institutional and organisational frameworks of national statistical systems

This session will address how to strengthen the institutional and organisational frameworks of national statistical systems. Interventions and discussions will also cover the role of national statistical offices as leaders and coordinators of these systems, as well as their partnerships with non-traditional data providers and the data community at large.

Recommended chapters for discussion[6]		*Also available for discussion*	
IV	National statistical system	III	Basis of official statistics
		V	National statistical office

Session 2: Securing quality of statistical information and improving data coherence through statistical analysis and analytical frameworks

This session will address the relevance and use of national quality assurance frameworks that secure the production of official statistics and indicators meeting the needs of the various user groups, and how to interact with them in order to identify their needs and priorities. Session 2 will also consider how analysis and analytical frameworks, such as national accounts and other domain-specific accounting frameworks, can address data inconsistencies and eventually improve the coherence of official statistics and indicators across various domains.

Recommended chapters for discussion		*Also available for discussion*
VII	Quality management	*None*
IX	Analysis and analytical frameworks	
VI	*Users and their needs*	

Session 3: Supporting the transformation of statistical production processes from the data collection to dissemination in the context of the digital and technological revolution

This session will address the transformation and modernisation of the production architecture, processes and related technology, including the integration of innovative data sources for the compilation of official statistics and indicators. Session 3 will also cover the development of innovative strategies and integrated platforms for data sharing and dissemination.

Recommended chapters for discussion		*Also available for discussion*	
VIII	Data sources, collection and processing	XIII	*Data, information and knowledge management*
X	Dissemination and user communications	XI	*Common statistical infrastructure*
XIV	Information technology management		

---

[6] These are chapters from the upcoming Handbook that have been identified by the organizing committee as highly relevant for the Caribbean.

Session 4: Mobilizing and securing adequate resources and infrastructure, and promoting regional and global cooperation for the development of national statistical capacity

This session will discuss how to ensure effective means of mobilizing and securing adequate national resources, including human resources, and infrastructure, as well as how to promote and coordinating efforts at regional and global levels to support the implementation of country-owned strategies and programmes for the development of official statistics and indicators.

Recommended chapters for discussion		*Also available for discussion*	
XII	Human resources management and development	*XVI*	*International activities and collaboration*
XV	Management of finance, buildings and physical space		

Breakout sessions:

The 2 breakout sessions will serve as an overview of the themes of the workshop and will broadly cover all themes presented and discussed respectively in sessions 1 and 2 for the first breakout session and sessions 3 and 4 for the second one. Participants, will be split into 3-4 groups, and will discuss a set of prepared questions. The objective of the breakout sessions are to identify and further discuss good practices, opportunities, lessons learned and challenges in Managing a statistical organization in times of change. Participants will also be invited to propose ways to embrace opportunities and address challenges including through specific programmes and actions supported by multilateral and bilateral donors. For each group, a designated speaker will deliver a short report in plenary on the main outcome of the discussions that will be commented by a small panel and eventually further discussed with all participants. It is expected that the reports and discussions in plenary will lead to the conclusions of the workshop including next steps/way forward and eventually proposals for future capacity building activities.

The outcome of the breakout sessions, allowing for the consolidation of knowledge and experiences shared, will significantly contribute to inform the upcoming Handbook.

Draft Agenda

Monday, 7ᵗʰ October

Registration (08:30 - 09:00)

Welcome and opening (09:00 - 10:00)

- South Africa (10'),
  Mr. Risenga Maluleke (Statistician General, Statistics South Africa)

- UNECA, Mr. Oumar Sarr / AfDB, Mr. Rees Mpofu (15')

- UN Statistics Division – Mr. Gabriel Gamez (15')
  Including introduction to the work on the 4th edition of the Handbook on Statistical Organisation and priority themes for the conference

General discussion

Tea/coffee break and group photo (10:00 – 10:30)

Session 1:
10:30-12:30   **Strengthening the institutional and organisational frameworks of national statistical systems**

Chair: Ms. Laura Ahtime (Chief Executive Officer, National Bureau of Statistics, Seychelles)

Presentations:

- UN Statistics Division – Mr. Gabriel Gamez
  Sound Institutional and Organizational Frameworks for Official Statistics **(20')**

- UN Economic Commission for Africa – Mr. Oumar Sarr
  Regional initiatives for strengthening African Statistical Systems **(20')**

- Botswana – Dr. Burton S. Mguni (Statistician General, Statistics Botswana)
  Development and Coordination of the National Statistical System: Botswana Case **(20')**

- Ghana – Ms. Araba Forson (Acting Deputy Government Statistician, Ghana Statistical Service) and Ms. Gloria Akoto-Bamfo (Principal Statistician, GSS)
  Responding to the Data Revolution: the Case of Ghana Statistical Service **(20')**

- Malawi – Mr. Hector Kankuwe (Assistant Commissioner of Statistics, National Statistical Office)
  Strengthening the institutional and organisational frameworks of national statistical systems **(20')**

General discussion

Lunch break (12:30-13:30)

Session 2: 13:30-15:30	Securing quality of statistical information and improving data coherence through statistical analysis and analytical frameworks

Chair: Ms. Nthabise Makhatha (Deputy Director General, Statistics South Africa)

Presentations:

- UN Statistics Division – Mr. Trevor Fletcher
  User needs, quality management and analytical requirements **(20')**

- Southern Africa Development Community – Ms. Zarafenosoa Ruth
  Regional initiative: SADC Protocol on Statistics **(20')**

- Angola – Dr. Camilo Ceita (General Director, National Statistics Institute)
  Statistics: Problem or Solution for Angolan Users? **(20')**

- Egypt – Mr. Tarek Saleh (Head of CAPMAS Regional Offices Sector)
  Experience in Census 2017 (a transformation from Paper based to E-census) **(20')**

- Nigeria – Mr. Emuesiri Ojo (Technical adviser to the Statistician General, National Bureau of Statistics)
  Enhancing the quality of statistical output: The case of Nigeria Living Standards Survey (NLSS) **(20')**

General discussion

Tea/coffee break (15:30-16:00)

Breakout 1: 16:00-17:15	Group discussion for sessions 1 and 2 (see document on breakout session modalities and questions)

Group 1A & B	Set of suggested topics related to sessions 1 prepared in advance
Group 2A & B	Set of suggested topics related to session 2 prepared in advance

Tuesday, 8ᵗʰ October

Breakout 1: **09:00-10:30**	**Report in plenary and general discussion**

Facilitator: UN Statistics Division – Mr. Gabriel Gamez

Report back on outcome of breakout session (10' each group)

Reporters for General Discussion:

- Rapporteur group 1A
- Rapporteur group 1B
- Rapporteur group 2A
- Rapporteur group 2B

Tea/coffee break (10:30-11:00)

Session 3: **11:00-13:00**	**Supporting the transformation of statistical production processes from the data collection to dissemination in the context of the digital and technological revolution**

Chair: Mr. Ivan Murenzi (Deputy Director General, National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda)

Presentations:

- UN Statistics Division – Mr. Trevor Fletcher
  Statistical production infrastructure, data sources, information technology, dissemination and user support **(20')**

- UN Economic Commission for Africa – Mr. Oumar Sarr
  Regional geospatial initiatives and experience **(20')**

- Mauritius – Ms. Cheung Kai Suet (Director of Statistics, Statistics Mauritius)
  Administrative data and IT to improve quality and timeliness of official statistics **(20')**

- Namibia – Ms. Tersia Gowases (Executive of Information Technology and Data Processing, Namibia Statistics Agency)
  Namibia Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) in support of national development plannning **(20')**

- South Africa – Mr. Ashwell Jenneker (Deputy Director General, Statistics South Africa)
  The world is moving at a new speed, it expects this of official statistics **(20')**

General discussion

Lunch break (13:00-14:00)

Session 4:
14:00-16:00
Mobilizing and securing adequate resources and infrastructure, and promoting regional and global cooperation for the development of national statistical capacity

Chair: Mr. Nyakassi Sanyang (Statistician-General, Gambia Bureau of Statistics)

Presentations:

- UN Statistics Division – Mr. Ian Rutherford (Statistician, Statistical Capacity Management)
  Developing statistical capacity and specific programmes and tools in the SDG era **(20')**

- African Development Bank – Mr. Rees Mpofu
  The Bank's Contribution to "Managing a Statistical Organization in times of Change" **(20')**

- Ethiopia – Mr. Biratu Yigezu Gutema (Director General, Central Statistical Agency) and Ms. Aberash Tariku Abaye (Deputy Director, Central Statistical Agency)
  Mobilizing resources for the development of statistical capacity - The case of Ethiopia **(20')**

- South Africa – Mrs Yandiswa Morudu (Deputy Director General, Statistics South Africa)
  National initiatives, good practices, and challenges **(20')**

General discussion

Wednesday, 9th October

Breakout 2:	**Group discussion for sessions 3 and 4**
09:00-10:15	(see document on breakout session modalities and questions)

Group 3A & B	Set of suggested topics related to sessions 3 prepared in advance
Group 4A & B	Set of suggested topics related to session 4 prepared in advance

Tea/coffee break (10:15-10:45)

Breakout 2:	
10:45-12:15	**Report in plenary and general discussion**

Facilitator: UN Statistics Division – Ian Rutherford and Trevor Fletcher (advisor)

Report back on outcome of breakout session (10' each group)

Reporters for General Discussion:

- Rapporteur group 3A
- Rapporteur group 3B
- Rapporteur group 4A
- Rapporteur group 4B

Closing – Conclusions of the Conference (12:15 – 13:00)