The Bank’s Contribution to

“Managing a Statistical Organization in times of Change”

AfDB Statistics Department

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Outline

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   - The Africa Information Highway (AIH)
   - Responses to user demand for CAPI.
   - The International Comparison Program (ICP)
   - The development of HCPIs in the COMESA and SADC regions.
4. Strengthening engagement as a process of attracting funding
5. Practical challenges and possible ways of managing them.
The Bank provides technical and financial support to Regional Member Countries (RMCs) strengthen and sustain their statistical capacity to produce reliable and timely data to inform the national, regional, continental, and international development agendas.

Special focus is on monitoring progress towards the SDGs, Agenda 2063, the Bank’s High 5s and national development plans (national priorities).

The second phase of the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics (SHaSA.2) attempts to harmonize the production of statistics in Africa.

One key tenet of (SHaSA.2) is the development of the National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS); the Bank has successfully supported 48 RMCs develop their NSDS.
The Bank’s SCB approach recognizes,

- Statistics as international public goods that transcend national boundaries with multifarious strategic purposes as well as national, regional and global impacts.

There is merit in the use of uniform standards in data production and management to facilitate regional and global comparisons.

The International Comparison Program (ICP) and the Harmonized Consumer Price Index are perfect practical examples of harmonized statistical domains.

The implementation process is at best through collaboration to minimize duplication of effort – given the international public good characteristics of statistics.
The Africa Information Highway (AIH)

- Through the Africa Information Highway (AIH) initiative, the Bank has been instrumental in revolutionizing data management and dissemination systems in RMCs.
- The AIH has also been adopted by other development partners like the IMF for own data needs in Africa.
- The collaboration on the use of the AIH has evolved consistently with the development agenda.
We have witnessed growth in the demand for use of CAPI to ease data collection across RMCs.

- There is no question about the practical utility of shortening the time frame between data collection and data dissemination.
- The Bank has witnessed significant growth in requests for technical assistance in this area.
The development of HCPI in the COMESA and SADC Countries;

- Regional integration requires harmonized statistical frameworks.
- As a practical example, the Bank worked closely with the RMCs in SADC and COMESA regions to develop internationally comparable Consumer Price Indices.
- The initiative also produced Technical Guidance Notes (TGNs) that are recommended for the national Consumer Price Indices.
- However, the dissemination of the same indices remains weak across countries and the RECs.
- What is the problem?
The strengths of National Statistical Systems remains uneven across the continent;

- Some NSS are not able to under regular surveys as and when they are due. This is common with economic statistics – National Accounts.

  - The usual recommendation is that national governments allocate adequate resources for statistical purposes from the national budget.

  - Countries that have accessed significant resources from the Bank processes through the Ministry of Finance are encouraged to keep trying as and when possible.

  - When statistical support resources are secured, it is important to make a positive impression across the board to attract additional funding.
Taking advantage of cross country programs

They provide a platform for knowledge sharing;

- The ICP in particular is useful in connecting countries; and elevates the level of national accounts and price statistics at country level.
- It also plays a complementary role to the CPI.
Consistent and compelling arguments as a catalyst for possible funding.

Not everyone understands the importance of timely/predictable survey programs to the quality of statistics in general;

We need to take the initiative;

• Generate knowledge products with hard evidence for policy makers considerations to sway their mood accordingly;

Exploit realities like the following for positive results;

• "Delayed rebasing of GDP understates the size of the economy"
  ▪ This distorts the decision making process and many derived statistics like DEBT/GDP ratio.
  ▪ The Bank made a comprehensive assessment across 44 countries and the lessons remain valid to date.

• "Delayed general rebasing of the national CPI overstates the rate of inflation" -------see the Tunisian study.
Consistent and compelling arguments as a catalyst for potential funding.

Demonstrate the importance of specific statistical domains which may not necessarily be obvious to the policy makers at country level;

Realities like the following provide a case for internationally comparable GDP and its principal components; *(Use them!)*

- “Official market exchange rates understate the real size of African economies yet the PPPs provide the real size of African economies”
- “The Official market exchange rates widen the gap between poor and developed countries, yet the PPPs narrow the gap”
Consistent and compelling arguments as a catalyst for potential funding.

Practical experience shows that unless there is a common methodological framework across relevant countries, it is not easy to obtain internationally comparable data.

• National CPIs measured independently are not necessarily good for international comparison of inflation and the Harmonized Consumer Price Index provides an efficient alternative.

• Practical experience from Kenya where inflation rate fell from what would have been reported as 17.5% (October 2009) using the Chained Dutot to 6.6% (October 2009) reported using the geometric mean justifies the strength of harmonization of methods across countries.