

Concept Note

Seminar on the Implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts in Africa

11 to 15 April 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Background

The 2008 SNA was adopted as the international standard for National Accounts at the 40th session of the Statistical Commission.

The Implementation Programme for the System of National Accounts 2008 (2008 SNA) and supporting statistics represents a global statistical initiative. The Global Strategy highlights three principles for an efficient and sustainable implementation of the 2008 SNA: (a) strategic planning, (b) coordination, monitoring and reporting; and (c) improving statistical systems. The strategy takes as a starting point the different levels of implementation of the SNA in various countries. It acknowledges the need for coordinated action, not only at the international level but also at regional and sub regional levels and emphasizes the need for close cooperation with regional commissions and sub-regional organizations.

In Africa, the African Group of National Accounts (AGNA) coordinated by the Pan-African Institutions, namely the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the African Union Commission (AUC), and the African Development Bank (AfDB), has prepared a Strategy for the implementation of the 2008 SNA. It consists of seven strategic lines and is built around the methodological development, capacity building, institutional strengthening, advocacy campaign, and monitoring and evaluation reporting in support of the implementation of the 2008 SNA in all African countries.

During the eighth workshop of the AGNA meeting and the back-to-back fifth meeting of the Committee of Directors General of African National Statistical Offices in Yaoundé, Cameroon last December, it was recognized that a further in-depth assessment of the current state of the implementation of the 1993 SNA and the capacity of Member States to implement the 2008 SNA will be crucial for the development of the Regional Project. Accordingly, an assessment questionnaire is distributed to countries as part of the preparation for this Seminar. In accordance with the recommendations of the Yaoundé meetings, a Regional Project Document (ProDoc) to operationalize the African Regional Strategy has been prepared.

Three distinct stages were identified for the change over to the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics through a multi-year programme, irrespective of the level of statistical development, as follows:

- (a) Stage I. Review of strategic framework and detailing of national and regional implementation programmes;
- (b) Stage II. Adaptation of classification frameworks, business registers and frames, surveys, administrative data sources and information technology infrastructure; and

- (c) Stage III. Application of adapted frameworks and source data, backcasting and changeover to 2008 SNA.

In this context, the UNECA, jointly with the AfDB and United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), is organizing a seminar on the implementation of the 2008 SNA in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia from **11 to 15 April 2011** to address issues of Stage I: Review of strategic framework and detailing of regional implementation Strategy and the ProDoc.

Purpose

The purpose of the seminar is to initiate the formulation of an implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting economic statistics with the objective of developing comparable economic statistics for member states in the UNECA region in order to monitor the integration of their economies. It is expected that this initiative would lead to a multi-year programme to move the countries over to the 2008 SNA and to establish a minimum common data set of annual and high frequency statistics. This regional programme will be part of the global implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics.

Participants

Senior managers of economic statistics and national accounts programmes from National Statistical Offices and/or Central Banks, able to express a view on the regional and national implementation programmes will attend. Representatives of international organizations will also attend.

Organization of the programme

The programme of the seminar will be organized around nine themes:

- (i) Overview of main changes from the 1993 SNA to the 2008 SNA;
- (ii) The global strategy for the implementation of the 2008 SNA;
- (iii) The use of high frequency indicators for the development of the national accounts;
- (iv) The 2008 SNA implementation tools for assessing the adequacy of the national statistical production process to support the implementation of the 2008 SNA;
- (v) The Regional Strategy and the Regional ProDoc;
- (vi) Review of the results from the Assessment Questionnaire;
- (vii) The work programmes of the AGNA and those of AfDB, AUC, and UNECA related to National Accounts;
- (viii) A set of recommendations for countries to design implementation plans; and
- (ix) (Sharing of experiences and best practices which will be incorporated in the implementation of the 2008 SNA as part of statistical activities within the NSDS.

Expected outcome

The results of the seminar will be important inputs for the Regional Project and the activities of AGNA. It is expected that the Seminar will reach consensus on a comprehensive, region-wide assessment of countries' current capacity and needs to produce the basic economic statistics and National Accounts for policy and decision making; a region-wide roadmap to enhance the scope

and quality of basic economic statistics and National Accounts for improved policy and decision making; and a minimum common data set of annual and high frequency statistics.

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