

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
of
The Seminar on the Implementation of the 2008 SNA in Africa
and
The Ninth AGNA meeting

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
11-15 April 2011

The first regional meeting on the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA), the “Seminar on the implementation of the 2008 SNA in Africa,” jointly organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 11 to 15 April 2011.

The meeting has gathered together more than 70 senior managers and experts of National Accounts from 44 African countries and 10 international and regional organizations. Among them, 45 from the National Statistics Offices (NSOs), 12 from the Central Banks, five from the Ministries of Finance and Economic Development, four from the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and nine from other international and regional development partners.

The purpose of the seminar was to assist the African Group on National Accounts (AGNA) in implementing the regional implementation programme of the 2008 SNA and supporting economic statistics with the objective of developing comparable economic statistics for countries in the region as a whole to monitor the integration of their economies. This regional programme forms part of the global implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics. In addition, the seminar also discussed the development of national plans for the implementation of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics. The Seminar initiated the formulation of an implementation programme for the 2008 SNA through reviewing the global and regional strategies, and discussing and providing comments and suggestions for improving and finalizing the Regional Project Document (ProDoc) for the implementation of the 2008 SNA.

The AGNA held its 9th meeting back to back to the Seminar.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE SEMINAR:

1. Agreed to appoint the following persons as regional coordinators for the three pan-African organizations: Mr. Luc Mbong Mbong from AfDB, Mr. Xiaoning Gong from UNECA, and Mr. Yeo Dossina from AUC following the decision of the 5th meeting of the Committee of Director Generals of NSOs to establish the AGNA as a permanent body for facilitating work on national accounts in Africa.
2. Welcomed the decision to have the 2008 SNA as the theme for celebrating the African Statistics Day (ASD) 2011 and stressed that the ASD 2011 should target non national accountants as audience and therefore focus on sub-themes like the use of national accounts for informed decision-making and improving communication between NSOs and the civil society.

3. Agreed on the following issues regarding the Terms of References of AGNA:
 - AGNA will report to StatCom-Africa biennially and to its Bureau in the intermediate year;
 - there is a need to clarify AGNA's governance mechanism in accordance with existing schemes;
 - a mechanism is to be set up to accommodate associate external experts or independent consultants and non-African institutions in AGNA's work and to consider them as observers in AGNA;
 - the AGNA mandate should include research on national accounts issues;
 - terms of references for Regional Economic Communities (RECs), which play an important role in the implementation of the 2008 SNA should be developed to enable them to better serve the needs of their Member States; and
 - AGNA should create specific task forces to work on specific themes.
4. Agreed that countries and RECs should provide the name of the institution(s) responsible for economic statistics and national accounts compilation and also nominate a principal and an alternate member to serve on AGNA to the regional coordinators.
5. Recognized the important role of the region's Central Banks in the development of national accounts and economic statistics, and may therefore, in their capacity as members of AGNA, be requested to support specific areas in the implementation of the 2008 SNA.
6. Reaffirmed that the *African Strategy for the Implementation the 2008 SNA*, which is fully aligned with the *Implementation Programme for the 2008 SNA and Supporting Statistics*, adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission, is the overarching framework for formulating the national implementation programmes for the 2008 SNA in Africa.
7. Appreciated the progress made from the African Strategy to the Regional ProDoc; agreed on the following, and pledged to give their support to the finalization of the Regional ProDoc according to agreed timelines:
 - The Regional ProDoc will be finalized by taking into accounts the results of the Seminar and the completed SNA Assessment Questionnaire conducted prior to the Seminar;
 - the period of 5 years for the implementation of the 2008 SNA is seen as a first step in its implementation;
 - the implementing ISIC Rev. 4.0 and CPC Rev. 2.0 is part of the implementation programme of the 2008 SNA, as these classifications are an integral part of the SNA;
8. Agreed to establish a road map for the implementation of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics at the national level taking into account the national and regional policy needs and the requirements of the *African Strategy for the implementation of the 2008 SNA* and to incorporate this road map in the review of the NSDS in countries.
9. Agreed on the following activities in the work programme of AGNA:
 - To create a website to archive all the documents of the AGNA with access restricted to members and observers of the AGNA;
 - to create a discussion website for African partners;

- launching a study on the impact of the implementation of 2008 SNA in African countries, based on a sample of countries;
 - the finalised ToR of the AGNA will be disseminated to countries;
 - to translate the self assessment tool and its guide proposed by UNSD in French; and
 - to prepare the advocacy materials for the mobilization of financial resources for the Regional Project; and to prepare ToRs for the Regional Coordinators and the RECs.
10. Stressed the need for clarification on the following specific issues related to the main changes in the 2008 SNA: the treatment of FISIM, regional Central Banks and weapons systems.
 11. Recognized the importance of short term economic indicators for the early detection of changes in economic trends and agreed to review the appropriateness and feasibility of collecting short term economic indicators, as reflected in the Ottawa data template, with the aim of developing a central national data hub, as part of the implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics.
 12. Welcomed the proposed implementation tools comprising the *Statistical System Information* sheet, the *Self Assessment Diagnostic Tool*, and the *Framework for setting goals and actions to reach the goals*, which are helpful for preparing a vision document.
 13. Agreed that countries use the *Self Assessment Diagnostic Tool* to assess the current status of the statistical capacity in the country to comply with the requirements of the *African Strategy for the implementation of the 2008 SNA* to carry out various assessments of the national statistical systems.
 14. Agreed that a vision document, based on the self assessment of the statistical capacity constraints, needs to be prepared to establish a set of actions to accomplish statistical and institutional goals and is instrumental in the sustainable improvement of the statistical agenda ensuring adherence to best practices in official statistics.
 15. Welcomed the update of the SNA implementation milestones, data sets and quality assessment framework for monitoring the scope, detail and quality of national accounts compilation at the country level.
 16. Welcomed the dedicated website established by the UNSD to track and support the implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics, as well as the Knowledge Base for economic statistics and macroeconomic standards, and participants agreed to provide material on country practices to be housed in this Knowledge Base.
 17. Welcomed the handbook *Essential SNA: building the basics*, prepared by Eurostat and agreed that this handbook and others prepared by the ISWGNA members are important tools for supporting the implementation of the 2008 SNA.
 18. Welcomed the updating of ERETES to be 2008 SNA compliant and recognized that this IT-tool plays an important role in supporting the compilation of the national accounts statistics in the region.

19. Welcomed the training opportunities provided by GIZ and agreed that the training initiatives foreseen by the *African Strategy for the implementation of the 2008 SNA* take into account these and other similar facilities available in the region to make full use of these training opportunities.
20. Requested UNSD to actively *support* African countries through cooperation with AGNA and the regional implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics in Africa; and to provide support to alleviate the difficulties faced by countries in the implementation of some recommendations of the 2008 SNA.
21. Called for:
- All development partners to be strongly committed in the implementation of the 2008 SNA in Africa through the common Regional Project; and
 - Pan-African organizations to move forward in the implementation of the Regional Project, to launch advocacy campaign and to mobilize resources for the implementation of the Regional Project.
22. Agreed on the following indicators of progress for the formulation of the national and regional implementation programme for the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics:

Activity	Due date	Responsible
Finalization of the draft Regional ProDoc for the Implementation of the 2008 SNA in Africa	End of May 2011	AfDB, ECA, AUC
AGNA to discuss the draft Regional ProDoc	Next AGNA meeting	AfDB, ECA, AUC, Countries
Translation of the self-assessment (NA DF & ES) questionnaire and related instructions in French	April 2011	AGNA (AfDB)
Nomination of AGNA members	End of May 2011	AfDB, ECA, AUC, and Countries (NSOs, central banks)
Sample of countries selected for the study on the impact of the implementation of 2008 SNA	End of May 2011	AfDB, ECA, AUC, and countries
Appointment of coordinators at REC level	End of May 2011	AfDB, ECA, AUC, RECs
Self-assessment of statistical capacity using the DF-NA & ES	July 30, 2011	ECA, AfDB, AUC, RECs, countries and UNSD
Report on the self-assessment	October 2011	ECA, AfDB, AUC, RECs, countries and UNSD
Study on the impact of the implementation of SNA 2008 in Africa	December 31, 2011	AGNA & 12 sample countries (Rwanda, Cameroon, Morocco and Guinea, others TBD)
Proposed AGNA meetings	June-July, October-November 2011	ECA, AfDB, AUC, RECs and countries

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