

**First Steering Committee Meeting of the Southern African Development  
Community (SADC)  
Durban, South Africa, 14 – 16 July 2006**

**Main conclusions**

1. Considering that, to date, the focus of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)-related initiatives has been on the design of the strategies, the Project should address issues related to their implementation and promote the adoption of methods and standards by the various partners of the National Statistical Systems in order to monitor the progress of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The Project should also promote a greater involvement of National Statistical Offices in “non-core” statistical data collection, such as vulnerability assessment.
2. The Project should serve as leverage for the official statistics community in the SADC region to raise additional funds with development partners on initiatives related to the Project and to foster further cooperation on statistical activities in the region.

**Project Document**

3. The Committee agreed with the assessment and objectives established in the Project Document provided three changes be made, one in paragraph 8 to reflect the notion that statistical data and information are public goods and should be provided as such, the other in paragraph 15 to specify which are the regional institutions whose statistical capacity the Project aims to strengthen; and the third one in paragraph 16, under expected accomplishments, to highlight that the adoption of international methods and standards are extended to all internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

**Priority areas**

4. The Committee agreed on the following priorities to be addressed by the Project:
  - a. Strengthening statistical organization and legislation, leadership and management, and staffing.
  - b. Building Government’s awareness of the importance of the production and use of statistics for decision making, through advocacy and sensitization of policy makers at the highest levels.
  - c. Strengthening the capacity in National Statistical Systems of member states, especially in the areas of data analysis, presentation and dissemination.
  - d. Defining the legacy of the Project for the statistical community in the region.

- e. Strengthening the role that the SADC Secretariat plays in the development of statistics in the region.
  - f. Strengthening the capacity for data dissemination infra-structure.
  - g. Sharing of information on best practices and initiatives in the region.
  - h. Increasing access to statistical packages/software.
5. The Committee agreed that this Project should focus on the following thematic areas:
- a. The measurement of employment, with particular focus on informal economy.
  - b. The development of vital statistics through the improvement of civil registration systems and the use of alternative methods such as sample surveys (verbal autopsy).
  - c. Energy statistics with a focus on energy balances, strengthening data collection, dissemination and definitions.
  - d. Poverty measurement, building on the SADC Secretariat/World Bank Project on Poverty Analysis.
  - e. Population Censuses in post-conflict countries.
  - f. Vulnerability statistics.
6. The Committee reiterated the importance of developing Economic Statistics in the region and pointed out the initiatives of other development partners in this direction, i.e. ADB, IMF and the World Bank. Given the extent of the ongoing initiatives, the Committee agreed that this Project should focus on the thematic areas listed above and leave economic statistics out of its scope.

### **Implementation modalities**

7. In the context of enhancing the Information and Communication Technology in National Statistical Systems (NSS) in the SADC region, the Committee agreed on the following:
- a. Improvement of data dissemination infra-structure through the development of national IT Plans in support to the implementation of NSDS in each member state.
  - b. Strengthening of the capacity for data archiving and for the development of metadata.
  - c. Development of SADCInfo as a tool to compile and disseminate development indicators on the region.
  - d. Enhancement of the SADC Secretariat Statistics Website to present data and share information on activities of countries and development partners in the region, including best practices.

- e. SDMX to be adopted in pilot countries with the support of the DEVInfo group.
- f. Exploring ways of acquiring statistical packages and software at reduced prices.
- g. Adoption of tools to allow for data archiving (eg.: the microdata management toolkit by the International Household Survey Network Programme).

8. In the context of organization of study tours, the Committee agreed on the following:

- a. Initiatives should be closely related to the Project thematic areas;
- b. Tours should be for the most part to countries in the SADC region or to other regions in Africa;
- c. Each tour should be of a sufficient duration for trainees to benefit from the tours and to the extent possible include more than one fellow at a time;
- d. Tours should be strategic in their timing so as to optimize efforts and resources by taking advantage of ongoing activities in the hosting countries;
- e. NSSs should be able to absorb and incorporate the knowledge acquired by trainees.

Member states will submit requests for study tours specifying subjects, expected durations and trainees. Countries willing to host will submit proposals on what they can offer.

UNSD will, in consultation with the Steering Committee, review the submitted requests and proposals matching offer and demand, and make the necessary arrangements, including identifying additional funding and location.

9. In the context of General Temporary Assistance, as an interim measure, a Project Coordinator will be hired and stationed at Botswana Central Statistics Office for the period of up to one year so as to allow time for the SADC Secretariat to put in place a mechanism for absorbing this assistance. The TOR will be circulated to the Committee. While noting that the Integrated Committee of Ministers of SADC had requested that the SADC Finance Committee consider unfreezing of the two posts of Macro-economic Statistics Officer and Social and Human Development Statistics Officer in the Policy and Strategic Planning Unit of SADC Secretariat, the Steering Committee expressed concern about the delay of this process. The Committee also agreed that in order to ensure the success of the Project, the coordination and management of funding for statistics in SADC Secretariat should be improved.

10. The Committee agreed to carry out the following activities during 2006 - 2007:

- a. November 2006 –Workshop on statistical organization and management, to be held possibly in Angola, after assessment of feasibility. In order to give the highest possible profile to the event, the workshop could be held in connection with the African Statistics Day celebrations. It was strongly recommended to

ensure the presence of the following authorities: highest ranks of the African Union, African Development Bank and UNECA and the Director of UNSD. ADB representatives agreed to try to co-fund this activity.

- b. First quarter of 2007 – Workshop on statistical development and Population Censuses in countries in recovery, to be held possibly in the Democratic Republic of Congo, after assessment of feasibility. This activity aims at countries with special needs such as countries in recovery and countries with immediate needs due to eminent Population Census activities.
- c. Third quarter of 2007 – Workshop on household surveys and measurement of labour force with focus on informal economy, to be held in the United Republic of Tanzania.
- d. Third quarter of 2007 – Workshop on Energy statistics, to be held in Mauritius, tentatively.
- e. 2<sup>nd</sup> Steering Committee Meeting, to be held in conjunction with the next meeting of the SADC Statistics Committee tentatively scheduled for May 2007, in the United Republic of Tanzania.

## **Cooperation with other development partners**

11. Member states took note of the ongoing and planned activities linked to the Project conducted by other development partners and of the offer by some of the development partners for the following areas:

- a. Joint-funding of some study tours with the World Bank and IMF;
- b. Joint-funding of workshops with the World Bank and IMF;
- c. Joint technical cooperation with the World Bank and IMF;
- d. Assistance in the development of SADCInfo and support for a few pilot countries in the adoption of SDMX by the DEVInfo Group;
- e. Development of a module on Tourism Statistics by the World Tourism Organization;
- f. Joint-funding of Population Censuses activities by the African Development Bank;
- g. Assistance related to the African Statistics Day Celebrations by UNECA;
- h. Strengthening of vital statistics in Namibia by the Health Metrics Network;
- i. Joint cooperation at different levels and advocacy activities, according to required expertise, by PARIS21;
- j. Technical assistance on labour statistics by ILO;

- k. Technical assistance in capacity building for vulnerability monitoring by the United Nations Regional Team for Southern and Eastern Africa.

### **Legacy of the Project**

12. The Committee agreed that the Legacy of the Project shall be:
  - a. Improvement of data dissemination infrastructure by developing National IT Plans as an integral part of NSDSs.
  - b. Development of a programme for the monitoring of the internationally agreed goals including the Millennium Development Goals in the SADC Secretariat.
  - c. Strengthened collaboration on statistical activities in the SADC region.