

**Statistical Commission
Thirty-seventh session
7-10 March 2006**

Item 4 (j) of the provisional agenda

Item for information: Statistical capacity building

**Background document
Available in English only**

**Forum for African Statistical Development (FASDEV II)
Addis Ababa, 9-10 February 2006**

Communiqué

**Prepared by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
(UNECA)**

Representatives of African countries, African Union (AU), bilateral and international institutions, United Nations Secretariat and agencies, African statistical training centers, and regional and sub-regional organizations, attended the second meeting of the Forum for African Statistical Development (FASDEV-II) from February 09 to 10, 2006 at the United Nations Conference Center (UNCC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This meeting followed the meeting of Heads of National Statistical Offices, held from 6 to 8 February 2006.

Recalling that FASDEV-I was endorsed by all the stakeholders of statistical development in Africa on 13 May 2004;

Recalling the main objectives of FASDEV to: (i) have an overview of statistical activities, including assistance, and training in Africa; (ii) set up a permanent system for the monitoring of statistical development in Africa; and (iii) strengthen modalities for cooperation with a view to leveraging on each partner's comparative advantage;

The meeting:

- a) Appreciated the efforts made by the African Development Bank (ADB), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Partnership In Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) Secretariat and the World Bank to organize this second meeting of FASDEV;
- b) Discussed issues relating to statistical development in Africa:
 - A draft Reference Regional Strategic Framework for statistical capacity building in Africa (RRSF);
 - Current and planned statistical programmes to support and boost the RRSF implementation;
 - Partners' support to statistical capacity building in Africa;

The participants:

1. Endorse the Regional Reference Strategic Framework for statistical capacity building in Africa (RRSF) as a guide for African statistical development in the next 10 years;
2. Note the progress already made and reiterate their encouragement to African countries to design and implement a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) by 2006 using the PARIS21 Guidelines and following the recommendations of CODI II, the MAPS, the GDDS, the Yaoundé Declaration on Statistical Development in Africa, and the RRSF;
3. Urge all stakeholders to ensure that the development of sectoral statistics, including administrative records, is integrated into the NSDS;
4. Encourage Member States to finance the implementation of their NSDS within the national budget and to exploit other sources, and exhort Development Partners to align their support in a coordinated way, with the priorities of the Government as stated in the NSDS;

5. Call on African Governments to use their NSDSs as a framework for coordinating and streamlining financial support and technical assistance, and to exercise restraint in accepting projects that are not within the NSDS;
6. Acknowledge the commitment of the AU to make statistics more visible within its Commission by the creation of a statistics unit;
7. Urge the African Union to provide critical political support to statistical development, especially to play an advocacy role for increased funding to statistical activities in the region, and ensure that regional initiatives such as NEPAD have a statistical component;
8. Appreciate the commitment stated by the UNECA Executive Secretary to strengthen the statistical capacity of the ECA;
9. Urge African governments to support the enhancement of the statistical capacity of the ECA;
10. Commend the African Development Bank (ADB) for its efforts in statistical capacity building and request the Bank to continue and increase them;
11. Commend the World Bank for its statistical capacity building efforts, following up with MAPS, Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics, including the Accelerated Data Program, and call upon countries to support these initiatives, and other donors to contribute to the funding;
12. Commend PARIS21 Secretariat for its statistical advocacy role and the initiative taken to produce a light report on support to statistical capacity building by development partners in the region and the NSDS progress report, and invite the PARIS21 Secretariat to continue updating the information;
13. Commend all partners for their continuous support to statistical development in Africa, including assistance to statistical training institutions, and recommend that they use the outputs of the light reporting exercise of PARIS21 for better coordination and alignment with other initiatives;
14. Urge the ECA to play an active role in the mobilization of resources for the 2010 round of population and housing censuses (2005-2014) in Africa;
15. Ask the ECA, in close collaboration with the ADB, the PARIS21 Secretariat, and the World Bank, to convene the next FASDEV meeting in 2007;
16. Call on all stakeholders to support FASDEV and implement the above recommendations.

The sponsors of the draft RRSF commit themselves to amending it according to the participants' comments and distribute officially the amended version by end of March 2006.