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19ᵀᴴ Committee of Directors General of National Statistical Offices (CoDGs)

03-05 December 2025, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Report

December 2025

Introduction

1. The nineteenth session of the Committee of Directors General of National Statistical Offices (CoDGs) of the African Union took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 3–5 December 2025, aligned with the African Union's 2025 theme: "*Contribution of statistics to 'Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations*".

Participation

2. *The meeting brought together the Directors General of the AU Member States' NSOs, Pan-African Organizations, development partners, Journalists, Statistical Training Centres, independent experts, non-African states, and observers.*

a) Member States

3. Delegates from 43 AU Member States took part in the meeting: Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinee Bissau, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Mauritius, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

b) Other participants

4. The meeting was also attended by other participants such as:

   a. **Regional Economic Communities (RECs**): The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Community of Sahel–Saharan States (CEN-SAD). The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

   b. **Pan-African Organisations (PAOs):** Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), African Migration Observatory (AMO), African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM**),** African Union Commission (OSPD, STATAFRIC), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

   c. **Other regional organisations and statistical Schools:** Economic and Statistical Observatory for Sub-Saharan Africa (AFRISTAT), National School of Statistics and Economic Analysis (ENSAE), National Higher School of Statistics and Applied Economics (ENSEA), Higher School of Statistics and Information Analysis (ESSAI), Makerere University, the Sub-regional Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (ISSEA), University of Ibadan, Institute for Training and Demographic Research (IFORD)**.**

   d. Other international organisations and non-African states: ATAF, Eurostat, World Bank, OECD, Paris 21, FAO, INSEE, IOM, ILO, Statistics Sweden, Praia Group, Statistics Norway, Statistics Sweden, Expertise France, and Data Act Lab, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, and International Statistical Institute.

e. Key experts and Consultants.

Meeting objectives

5. The main objective of the 19th session of the CoDGs was to reflect on ways of producing sound statistics, including those relevant to guiding decision makers for building resilient justice systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant justice in Africa. The specific objectives include:

(i)	Present the report of the SHaSA 2 Mid Term Review (MTR);
(ii)	Present the key notes on the 2025 AU Theme on Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations;
(iii)	Present the status of the implementation of the 18th session of the CoDGs;
(iv)	Present the status of the signing and ratification of the African Charter on Statistics;
(v)	Discussing statistical coordination mechanisms and their implementation in the continent; and
(vi)	The establishment of the STATAFRIC's Governance.

Opening Session

6. The 19th session of the Committee of Directors-General of National Statistical Offices (CoDGs) opened with warm welcomes from Ethiopia's Director General of Statistics, Dr Beker Shale, and other officials, distinguished guests, and representatives of regional and international organisations. Speakers highlighted the indispensable role of credible, timely, and harmonised statistics in guiding evidence-based policy, development planning, and equitable growth across Africa. Ethiopia's investments in its national statistical system, including surveys and censuses, were showcased as examples of commitment to evidence-driven development. The importance of modernising statistical capacities, fostering collaboration among African and global statistical offices, and leveraging digital and big data innovations was strongly emphasised.

7. Key partners and leaders, including Prof. Samuel Annim (UNECA), Mrs. Dorothee Ouissika (AfDB), Mr. Nyakassi Sanyang (GBoS), H.E. Selma Malika Haddadi (AU Deputy Chairperson), H.E. Ahmed Shide (Ethiopia Ministry of Finance), and H.E. Temesgen Tiruneh (Deputy Prime Minister), underscored Africa's progress in statistical development, the need for robust and inclusive indicators on justice, inequality, and historical reparations, and the centrality of the African Charter on Statistics. They called for strengthened partnerships, harmonised data, institutional capacity-building, and innovative approaches, including AI and big data, to ensure statistics not only inform policy but also advance justice, inclusivity, and sustainable development across the continent.

Session I: Procedural issues

I.1. Organisational matters (the Quorum)

8. The 19th CoDGs was attended by 43 AU Member States. The quorum was therefore met.

I.2. Adoption of the Agenda

9. The agenda of the meeting was adopted without any amendments.

I.3. Election of the Bureau

10. The elected bureau of the 19th session of the CoDGs is as follows:

- Chair: Zambia
- 1st Vice-Chair: Algeria
- 2nd Vice-Chair: Cameroon
- 3rd Vice-Chair: Tanzania
- Rapporteur: Senegal

I.4. Keynote address

11. The Statistician-General of South Africa opened the 19th session of the CoDGs session, acknowledging partners and emphasizing the 2025 AU Theme on justice and reparations as central to addressing Africa's historical inequalities. He stressed the key role of statistics in documenting past injustices, guiding transformative policies, and supporting reparations, while noting challenges such as data gaps, weak measurement of discrimination, and the invisibility of diaspora populations. He called for reliable indicators on inequality, justice, and discrimination, a continental statistical framework under SHaSA II, and the use of digital and big data innovations, urging NSOs and partners to act decisively to produce credible, harmonised statistics that enable evidence-based action for Africa's future.

Session II - Status of the SHaSA 2 implementation

II.1 Presentation of the Mid-Term Review report of SHaSA 2 (2017-2025)

12. The STATAFRIC consultant presented the midterm review of SHASA 2 Strategy, highlighting achievements, challenges, and areas for improvement, including political commitment, coordination, funding, and stakeholder involvement. The review, coordinated by STATAFRIC, involved all strategic themes and objectives of SHaSA2.

13. Findings revealed an overall implementation rate of 63%, with disparities in implementation across different strategic themes and objectives. Key recommendations emphasized accelerating the recruitment of key STATAFRIC staff, full operationalization of PANSTAT, enhancing data dissemination, and ensuring inclusive process in the development of SHaSA 3 to ensure implementation success. **Discussions and recommendations**

14. Delegates highlighted the need for detailed, sector-specific reporting to track progress in producing quality, harmonized continental data, particularly through

initiatives like SHaSA 2. Furthermore, concerns were raised about lack of Population censuses in key African countries, underscoring the potential impact on accurate demographic data. Collaboration with development partners and empowering leadership were identified as critical steps to address ongoing challenges and standardize practices across member states.

15. The meeting recommended empowering the leadership (chairs and secretariat) to ensure effective follow-up and implementation of these initiatives. Furthermore, it is recommended that a team should be established to visit member states (in-conflict and post-conflict) and better understand challenges related to census and data initiatives.

Session III: Coordination of Statistical Activities

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Session III: Coordination of Statistical Activities

III.1 Report on African Statistical Coordination Committee (ASCC)

20. The presentation provided achievements and a comprehensive overview of ongoing initiatives aimed at strengthening national statistical systems across Africa. The report underscored the importance of building resilient, autonomous institutions capable of delivering reliable and timely data to support evidence-based policymaking and continental development agendas.

21. A major focus was placed on capacity building, with particular emphasis on deploying technical assistance, training programs, and collaborative surveys. Notable efforts included joint projects with organizations such as the FAO and World Bank, which have supported agricultural censuses, improved methodologies, and contributed to food balance sheet compilations.

22. Alignment with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals was highlighted as a guiding principle. The ASCC emphasized harmonizing national strategies, updating frameworks like the System of National Accounts (SNA), and fostering regional cooperation to ensure countries are progressing together on key statistical milestones.

23. The report addressed significant challenges, including resource mobilization, sustainability, and overreliance on external funding sources. It called for greater financial autonomy and the integration of innovation, such as artificial intelligence and big data, to modernize statistical infrastructures and keep pace with global advances.

24. Finally, the ASCC offered clear recommendations for legal reforms, enhanced communication strategies, and broader stakeholder engagement. These measures aim to support the modernization of statistical law, improve advocacy for the value of data, and advance Africa's leadership in global statistical development.

25. The migration side event underscored the critical need for robust and harmonized data systems to effectively capture migration trends across Africa. It emphasized the complexity inherent in tracking migration movements due to diverse legal frameworks, regional integration, and limited cross-country coordination. The meeting underlined efforts by partner organizations to support statistical offices through technical assistance, shared methodologies, and integration of migration statistics into national and continental development planning.

26. There was broad agreement on the importance of capacity building, legislative reforms, and securing sustainable funding to ensure migration data is both reliable and actionable for policy and humanitarian planning.

27. The side event on governance, peace, and security centered on the need to strengthen institutional frameworks for African statistical systems to enhance transparency, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making. The event called for reforms that support data-driven peace-building and governance, particularly in regions affected by instability and migration pressures.

Discussions and recommendations

28. The meeting discussion revealed broad consensus on prioritizing capacity building and resource mobilization for statistical institutions. Participants stressed the importance of investing in qualitative data collection, technological innovation, and developing communication skills to better advocate the value of statistics for good governance and policy formulation. Concerns about financial sustainability and the dependence of statistical offices on external donors were recurrent themes, with suggestions that member states consider earmarked national resources for statistical activities.

29. Further, the participants debated the roles and nomination procedures for national focal points, seeking clarity on representation and levels of engagement within continental statistical initiatives. There were repeated calls to modernize national statistical legislation, update the African Charter of Statistics, and strengthen collaboration with partners such as Paris 21. The need for Africa to stay abreast of advancements in artificial intelligence and big data analytics was emphasized, with pilot projects and assessments already underway in several countries.

30. Finally, the discussion highlighted the impact and significance of Africa Statistics Day, advocating for its continued celebration as an opportunity for advocacy, capacity development, and showcasing statistical achievements. Several participants noted the importance of aligning statistical campaigns with national and regional goals, sharing best practices, and fostering a culture of data-driven decision-making across the continent.

31. The meeting discussed the persistent challenges of data quality, resource constraints, and fragmented responsibilities among national focal points. Participants debated the necessity of harmonizing data collection practices, clarifying the scope and mandate of focal persons for migration, and fostering stronger collaboration between countries. There was broad agreement on the importance of capacity building, legislative reforms, and securing sustainable funding to ensure migration data is both reliable and actionable for policy and humanitarian planning.

III.2 Report on Peer Review in Africa

32. The presentation on the peer review of African National Statistical Systems, highlighted the importance for evaluating national statistical capacities and drafting improvement strategies. The review process included country self-assessment using a snapshot questionnaire, followed by onsite peer visits, and covered key areas like organization, legal framework, production processes, and data dissemination. Two rounds of peer reviews were discussed: the first covered 16 countries; the second aimed for 15 but completed reviews in 11 nations due to scheduling and logistical challenges.

33. He detailed practical challenges in mobilizing Directors General for these reviews,

including leadership transitions and other national commitments. Recommendations included making peer review reports public, allowing deputy directors or experienced staff to act as peers when needed, and emphasizing the snapshot questionnaire for ongoing self-improvement. The importance of transparency, adaptability, and continuous system enhancement was repeatedly emphasized, along with ensuring lessons from each review benefit the wider African statistical community.

Discussions and recommendations

34. Discussion highlighted the role of NSO's evaluating national strategies for development of statistics, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and informing reforms. Meeting discussed criteria for selecting countries, such as those that have not had recent reviews and those preparing new strategies. The process is voluntary, costs countries nothing, and involves external and regional observers, with the aim of improving coordination, capacity, and overall statistical governance.

35. Members shared experiences from past peer reviews, noting benefits like advocacy, access to funding, and opportunities for institutional improvement. However, they also acknowledged challenges including limited implementation of recommendations, political hurdles, and logistical issues, especially in conflict-affected countries like Sudan. There were calls for more sustainable funding, sharing of best practices, and ways to involve all interested states and reviewers in future cycles.

III.3 Report on Revenue Statistics in Africa

36. The 10th edition of the Revenue Statistics in Africa report, a joint initiative between the AUC, OECD and ATAF, covers data from 38 countries, marking significant growth since its 2016 launch. As a key partner, the African Tax Administration Forum (ATAF) plays a critical role in enhancing the quality, comparability, and accessibility of revenue data across the continent. The initiative places strong emphasis on data harmonization and has recently begun focusing on an African specific public revenue classification. Africa's average tax-to-GDP ratio stands at 16%, which is much lower than the OECD average of 34%, though there has been consistent improvement over time.

37. Most African tax revenues are derived from VAT and goods and services, while some countries continue to depend on more volatile non-tax revenues. The harmonized data framework not only underpins policymaking and good governance but also advances regional integration, with increasingly current data now available. All African nations are encouraged to participate, as this enhances transparency, enables meaningful comparison, and supports better fiscal policy.

III.4 Report on Leadership training to Head of the NSOs

38. Paris21, in collaboration with STATFRIC and global partners, has led leadership training for heads of national statistical offices, emphasizing effective leadership, inclusion, and innovation, particularly across Africa. Since 2015, these workshops have fostered peer exchange, supported by organizations such as the Center for Creative Leadership. Key topics include emotional intelligence, adoption of AI, gender equality in leadership, and the integration of climate and gender data into national strategies.

39. The AI readiness project, funded by Google and in partnership with the World Bank and others, seeks to expand AI assessment in more countries. Recent achievements include NSDS (9 countries) and RSDS (2 RECs) development, and ongoing support for data communication strategies. Paris21's 2026-2030 strategy prioritizes data use and impact, ensuring continued advancement in official statistics and collaborative readiness for emerging challenges.

Session IV: Reports from Partners

IV.1 World Bank report on HISWA, HISWACA, EARSP & SADC

40. The presentation focused on the World Bank's regional projects in Africa aimed at enhancing statistical data harmonization and capacity building. Key projects include a $1.5 billion initiative in West Africa, a Central African project, and an Eastern African project. The projects support 15 countries in West Africa, five in Central Africa, four in East Africa and six in the SADC region. Achievements include conducting censuses in countries like Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, and Tanzania, and using innovative methods like drones for statistical purposes. Key outcomes included progress in regional projects aimed at harmonizing and improving statistical capacities in Africa whilst improving data accessibility and quality, ultimately benefiting decision-making and livelihoods.

IV.2 Eurostat report on PAS II Programme

41. The Pan African Statistics Program (PAS2) focused on creating empowering statistics for policy makers, building on the success of PAS1. EU member states provided direct support through grants on macroeconomic and social statistics. Notable achievements included harmonizing statistics, capacity building, and SDG dashboard development. The program's success was attributed to strong governance and coordination. Discussions for PAS3 are ongoing with the EU delegation, and there is hope for positive news next year.

IV.3 Report on Statistical Migration in Africa

42. Statistics Sweden, responsible for developing and disseminating official statistics, has been instrumental in international development cooperation since the 1980s. The agency has been actively engaged in projects across Africa, notably in Zambia and Kenya, improving data quality and capacity. A major Pan-African initiative, funded by the Swedish International Development Corporation Agency, involves four long-term advisors and various partners like the IOM, ILO etc. Key achievements include guidelines on migration and displacement statistics, peer-to-peer learning between countries, and regional migration studies. The project aims to enhance data quality, comparability, and policy impact, emphasizing the importance of accurate, trustworthy data for evidence-based decision-making and sustainable development.

IV.4 ILO Report on Labour Statistics in Africa

43. The ILO has been providing technical support to enhance labour force statistics across Africa, aligning with the social justice agenda and the decent work agenda. They have developed international standards for labour statistics, including data collection, production, and analysis, and have been supporting member states in adopting the latest ICLs resolutions on labour underutilization, employment status, and the informal economy. The ILO has also been providing tools like model questionnaires and guidance for national adaptation, as well as technical assistance for various labour market topics. In 2025, they supported several African countries in implementing the latest ICLs and establishing labour market information systems, emphasizing the importance of data sharing to enrich global understanding of labour markets.

Discussion and recommendations (I9 -I14)

44. Several key issues were raised in the discussion, primarily focusing on the challenges of implementing World Bank-supported statistical projects due to the diverse internal conditions across countries. Participants highlighted the lack of uniformity in project execution, concerns over limited access to leadership and technical training, the drying up of financial resources, communication barriers within statistical institutions, and the absence of harmonized approaches, leaving some countries unsupported.

45. Meeting recommended broadening access to leadership and technical training—extending opportunities not only to Directors-General but also to other leaders, technicians, and journalists. Suggestions also included involving experienced leaders in sharing expertise, enhancing collaboration and peer exchange, developing strategies for harmonization of statistical methods, ensuring inclusive support from regional and international partners for all countries, and strengthening financial and stakeholder engagement strategies.

IV.5 Praia Group report on Governance Statistics

46. After the SHaSA was adopted in 2010 by Head of States and Government of the Union, and the Specialized Technical Group on Governance, Peace and Security under SHaSA was operationalized, the Group Praia was established in March 2015 at a United Nations meeting in Santiago, focused on creating international norms and methodologies for compiling governance statistics. The group's first mandate (2015-2020) produced a handbook on eight dimensions of governance, including non-discrimination and anti-corruption. Their second mandate emphasized enhancing methodologies and addressing non-discrimination and equality, with support from the United Nations, UNDP, and UN Women. Over four years, they engaged 250 members in 25 meetings, presenting tools to the UN Commission on Statistics. Future plans include validating methodologies, seeking a third mandate, and organizing side events on governance and security.

IV.6 UNWOMEN report on Gender Statistics in Africa

47. The Africa program on gender statistics, led by the African Union, African Development Bank, Eco, and UN Women, aims to improve gender data availability, quality, and use. Key achievements include increasing the measurement of gender indicators from 31% in 2019 to 63% in 2022. The program supports various surveys and data systems, such as time use surveys and administrative data systems. Gabon is set to host the 2026 African Gender Statistics Forum. The program is transitioning from Phase Two to Phase Three, with continued support from partners and a focus on strengthening relationships and evaluating progress.

Session V: Ongoing and New/Emerging Issues

V.1 NADABASE/ERETES

48. ERETES is a national accounts compilation tool aligned with SNA 1993, SNA 2008 (milestone 5), and SNA 2025, currently used by 20 AU Member States. The new OE2.0 version merges key modules, introduces multi-year databases, and adds features such as balance sheets, semi-automatic balancing, and assisted backcasting. Implementation includes validation workshops, full-scale testing in Cameroon and Senegal, and national transition strategies. STATAFRIC's 2026 plan includes regional workshops and study visits to strengthen user capacity.

49. NADABAS, an Excel add-in with an Access/SQL backend, supports automated national accounts compilation, secure data storage, and smooth transition to SNA 2008. Its footprint now spans several AU countries, contributing to improved SUT preparation, stronger data quality, and expanded training materials and video tutorials. The tool enhances timeliness, compiler capacity, and system security. A

newly updated version (5.10.004) includes additional features such as a Portuguese interface, further strengthening usability across the continent.

Discussions and recommendations:

50. The meeting sought clarification on why STATAFRIC supports two national accounts tools, questioning whether dual support affects harmonisation efforts and why a single tool is not preferred. STATAFRIC explained that both ERETES and NADABAS contribute to harmonisation by aligning with SNA standards, while offering different functionalities that respond to diverse national contexts. Meeting suggested that immediate priority should be to assist countries whose national accounts remain unpublished for three or more years, to improve data availability and timeliness. STATAFRIC confirmed that support is provided for both tools, with Member States free to select and implement the option best suited to their institutional needs.

V.2 ISI Academy on Artificial Intelligent

51. The meeting discussed the launch of the ISI Academy, which aims to enhance statistical capacity development globally, leveraging the Institute's resources and expertise. The Academy supports member countries and partners in optimizing statistical capabilities, fostering scientific independence, and transferring knowledge. Additionally, the Anglophone West African Countries Institute of Statistics and Economic Research was introduced to address regional statistical challenges. This new institute, based in Ghana, will complement existing efforts, focus on training and benchmarking, and improve policy-making for regional development.

V.3 Ethical Principles in the Statistical Profession: A case study of United Republic of Tanzania

52. The discussion focused on ethical principles in statistical professions, highlighting Dr. Chua's contributions as the first female statistician general of Tanzania. Key challenges include resource constraints, data quality issues, and technological pressures. Tanzania's National Development Statistics Strategy aims to strengthen the National Statistical System through institutional development and capacity building. The Tanzania Statistics Association faces funding challenges. IMF and World Bank assessments praised Tanzania's statistical integrity. Trust in official statistics rose from 70% in 2014 to 79% in 2023. Recommendations include legal reforms, professional development, and data quality improvements.

V.4 UN Africa Data & Statistics Strategy

53. The UN Africa Data Strategy aims to enhance data efficiency and decision-making across the UN to address global challenges like development, peace, and human rights. The strategy is driven by the UN 2.0 transformation agenda and the Secretary General's data strategy. Key components include accelerating the African

statistical system's transformation, mitigating data blindness, fostering a data culture, and promoting digitalization and big data. The strategy involves collaboration among UN agencies like UNFPA, UN Women, and ECA, and will be supported by a finalized document and an implementation framework, set to be published in January

Discussion and recommendations (V.3 – V.4)

54. The discussion focused on the importance of institutional independence for national statistical agencies in Africa, with calls for legal reforms to support this. Discussions emphasized the need for comprehensive, harmonized ethical guidelines for statisticians. There were recommendations to include professional standards and codes of ethics in the African Charter of Statistics. The meeting advocated for protecting the profession—proposing certification and a professional order for statisticians. Special status and legal protections for heads of agencies were discussed to ensure leadership independence. Finally, the need for ongoing ethical reinforcement, capacity-building, and knowledge transfer to the next generation was highlighted.

V.5 Launching of the Statistical Publications

55. During the CoDG meeting, a series of major statistical publications were officially launched, reflecting strong collaboration across the African Statistical System and international partners. The African Statistical Yearbook 2023 was unveiled as a joint effort by UNECA, STATAFRIC, and the AfDB, underscoring continued commitment to harmonized continental data. STATAFRIC and Statistics Sweden, with support from the World Bank, introduced the Guidelines on Migration and Displacement Statistics, providing a much-needed framework for improving the quality and comparability of related data.

56. The meeting further marked the release of the 4th Edition of the Labour Migration Report 2023, developed collaboratively by the ILO, AUC, STATAFRIC, IOM, and GIZ. In addition, STATAFRIC, in partnership with the OECD and African Tax Forum and supported by the World Bank, launched the latest Revenue Statistics in Africa 2025. Finally, STATAFRIC presented the new Key Statistics on African Integration 2023, produced in collaboration with RECs and with financial support from the World Bank. Together, these publications highlight significant progress in strengthening evidence-based policymaking and advancing statistical capacity on the continent.

V.6 MICS Programme and State of the Africa Children Compendium

57. UNICEF highlighted Africa's rapidly growing child population, with projections of a 30% increase by 2050 from 702 million to 904 million children. They noted past improvements in child health indicators but warned progress is plateauing due to

demographic and development challenges. UNICEF emphasized the importance of harmonized statistical systems and annual data compendiums covering multiple child rights domains. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) program was introduced as a key tool for generating representative, high-quality data, managed by national agencies with UNICEF support. Strong partnerships at both global and country levels were stressed to advance data quality and child-focused policy across Africa.

V.7 Advancing the Measurement of Migration Through Census, Surveys and the National Statistics System

58. The presentation discussed the importance of accurate migration data in Africa. IOM, a UN organization with operations in 171 countries, including all AU member states, collects primary data on displaced populations and collaborates with governments and NSOs. Migration in Africa is diverse, driven by historical patterns and new factors like climate variability. Reliable migration data is crucial for development and demographic planning, as it influences health, education, labor markets, and infrastructure. IOM emphasized the need for standardized migration data in censuses and surveys to support evidence-based policies and meet international commitments like the GCM

V.8 Statistics South Africa Council's work report

59. The South African Statistics Council (Stats Council) oversees the production and coordination of official statistics, advised by the statistician general and the minister. Established in 1999 and amended in October 2023, the council ensures the integrity, relevance, and credibility of statistics. It advises on statistical policy, provides technical guidance, and coordinates statistical activities. The council's role expanded to include oversight of entities within the National Statistics System. It uses the South African Statistical Quality Assurance Framework (SASQAF) to evaluate data quality. The council's independence is crucial for maintaining statistical integrity amid political pressures.

Discussion and recommendations (V6 – V8)

60. The meeting addressed the need for clear delineation of roles between the Statistics South Africa council and the Statistician-General, with several participants emphasizing the importance of operational independence in national statistics governance. Collaborative efforts with UNICEF to map households and address migration, particularly for internally displaced persons affected by Boko Haram, were discussed, alongside the significance of institutional dialogue on humanitarian data. Challenges related to African children were raised, highlighting that broader issues beyond mere population growth need consideration. Innovations in survey methods and data estimation techniques were commended. Practical recommendations for clarifying governance mandates and enhancing technical councils were made.

Conclusions and Recommendations

61. Based on these findings, discussions and conclusions, the CODGs adopted a set of resolutions and recommendations to address the identified challenges. They focus on enhancing coordination across the national, regional and continental statistical systems, strengthening financial and human resource capacities, and improving the coverage, quality and dissemination of statistical data in line with international standards and frameworks.

Recognition/Gratitude/Endorsement

The CoDGs:

62. Congratulates the Executive Committee and the African Statistical Coordination Committee (ASCC) as well the side events on Africa Migration Data Network and the side event on Governance, Peace and Security for the high quality, rigour, and relevance of their deliberations, and commends them for the valuable recommendations which are hereby endorsed.

63. Expresses appreciation to STATAFRIC for its enhanced organisation and coordination in preparing the CoDGs, acknowledging its dedication, professionalism, and effective leadership, which have contributed significantly to the smooth and successful conduct of the meeting. Recognises its ongoing activities, including the revision of the African Charter on Statistics, the mid-term evaluation of SHaSA 2, and the development of various continental guidelines, which continue to strengthen statistical systems across Africa.

64. Extends sincere recognition to partners—including OECD, UN-Women, EU, UNICEF, ILO, IOM, INSEE, FAO, PARIS21, Statistics Sweden, and the World Bank—for their invaluable support and initiatives in strengthening national, regional, and continental statistical systems, with special appreciation to the World Bank for its substantial contributions, and encourage the continuation and extension of such support to all regions of Africa.

Mandate/Delegation

65. The CoDGs:

M.1 Mandates STATAFRIC, with the support of AfDB, ECA, and all relevant partners, to develop continental guidelines for ethical data collection and dissemination, particularly on sensitive topics such as ethnicity, race, and historical injustices, to support reparations and the formulation of inclusive policies.

M.2 Mandates STATAFRIC, in collaboration with relevant partners, to continue the peer review process of National Statistical Systems (NSS), building on the African Peer Review Methodology, and to expand its scope to cover the

statistical systems of the AU Regional Economic Communities (RECs), with the support of other Pan-African Organisations (ECA, AfDB) and partners.

M.3 Invite STATAFRIC to develop a comprehensive roadmap outlining the remaining steps for the full implementation of SHaSA 2, including timelines, responsibilities, and required resources. STATAFRIC is further instructed to initiate the preparatory work for SHaSA 3 by drafting a clear guidance note and an initial roadmap that defines its strategic priorities, expected outcomes, and consultation process with Member States and partners.

M.4 Encourage the ASCC members to co-sponsor and co-invest in further enhancing the Open Data Portal which serves as the key reference tool endorsed by the Pan-African Data Sharing Community to promote harmonized data management, reporting, and dissemination across Africa.

M.5 Mandates STATAFRIC, as the coordination body of the African Statistical System, to design and promote robust succession planning and systematic knowledge-transfer frameworks. STATAFRIC will provide guidance, tools, and best practices to national statistical offices, which will implement these mechanisms to ensure continuity of leadership and nurture the next generation of statisticians across the AfSS.

M.6 Requests STATAFRIC to work with ECA to enhance its visibility and engagement in international forums. This includes ensuring that SHaSA-related issues are consistently brought to the agenda through a unified African position, increasing STATAFRIC's presence and active participation at the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), and going beyond the current observer status to assert a more influential and recognised role in global statistical discussions.

Resolutions/Decisions

66. Recognising the indispensable role of credible statistics in documenting historical truths and informing transformative policy, we, the Directors/Statisticians General, commit to strengthening national statistical systems, developing reliable indicators on inequality, justice, and discrimination, leveraging digital and big data innovations, and coordinating with continental and global partners. Progress will be reported regularly to the Secretariat to ensure effective monitoring, follow-up, and accountability, thereby enabling Africa to measure its past, understand its present, and pursue a future rooted in justice.

67. Decide to hold the STATCOM and CoDG's meetings jointly in 2026, recognising overlapping issues and the shared audience. This will meet statutory requirements, integrate side events, enhance efficiency, and avoid duplicate travel. The meetings will provisionally be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia pending confirmation of 3 Member States to host following three months of consultations.

68. To defer the establishment of the STATAFRIC Board pending consultation by all stakeholders as advised by the legal office.

Recommendations

69. The CoDGs

AU Member States

R.1. Call upon AU Member States, with the support of Pan-African Organisations and partners and in coordination with STATAFRIC, to engage in developing indicators on inequality, justice, and discrimination, and in leveraging digital and big data innovations, to ensure credible statistics that support evidence-based policies and accountability across Africa.

R.2. Encourages national statistical systems data producers, under the coordination of NSOs, to establish a professional order for statisticians to uphold ethical standards, ensure technical and professional integrity, reinforce accountability, and enhance the credibility and recognition of the statistical profession across Africa.

R.3. Invites AU Member States to promote production, dissemination, and use of disaggregated data to inform targeted actions and development plans, including those addressing gender disparities and child-related challenges, ensuring that no group is left behind in development efforts.

R.4. Urges AU Member States to actively engage in initiatives led or supported by partners—including the World Bank, OECD, UN-Women, EU, UNICEF, ILO, IOM, INSEE, FAO, PARIS21, Data Act Lab, and Statistics Sweden—that strengthen national statistical systems, facilitate the production and dissemination of data, publications, and analytical tools, and promote capacity-building, methodological exchanges, and knowledge sharing to improve the quality, comparability, and utilization of statistics across Africa.

R.5. Call upon AU Member States that have not signed and ratified the ACS to do so and invite Pan-African and Regional organizations to provide them support need in terms of advocacy and guidance.

R.6. Call upon Member States to work with the Ministry of Finance to examine potential modalities for establishing a financing mechanism based on a percentage of Customs revenues for statistical development to meet the 0.15% target recommended by the decision of the Assembly of the Head of States and Governments.

R.7. Call upon AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities to join Revenue Statistics in Africa initiative as there is not financial implication for countries.

Pan African organisations, regional organisations and Development partners

R.8. Call upon the Pan-African Organisations and relevant partners, in coordination with STATAFRIC, to establish a dedicated program to assist fragile and post-conflict states in strengthening their national statistical systems, addressing their needs to produce reliable data for national programs as well as regional and continental initiatives.

R.9. Call upon STATAFRIC, in coordination with AfDB, ECA and partners to support Member States and RECs to use AI and emerging technologies in statistical operations, emphasising capacity-building, skills development, and knowledge transfer to enhance innovation, efficiency, and sustainability.

R.10. Call upon development partners supporting the African statistical system to periodically assess their initiatives and programs for institutional capacity-building, including leadership training, to ensure they are aligned with the needs of national statistical systems and effectively contribute to strengthening statistics across Africa.

R.11. Call upon the AU Commission to write to Member States, regional economic communities and other Pan African Organisations to nominate members within three months regarding the board of the STATAFRIC.

R.12. Call upon the STATAFRIC to convene virtual meetings for induction to clarify the modalities for STATAFRIC' board members.

R.13. The meeting underscored the need to reinforce STATAFRIC's institutional status as the continental statistical authority. This includes securing legal recognition within AU structures and investing in its capacity to coordinate data harmonization across member states.

I.   Closing Remarks

70. Mrs. Botho, Acting Executive Director of STATAFRIC, thanked all delegates for their active participation, constructive inputs, and commitment throughout the CoDGs deliberations. She acknowledged the Secretariat for its hard work and professionalism in guiding the review of the report. She noted that the quality of discussions reflected the shared dedication to strengthening the African statistical system. Mrs Botho encouraged Member States to continue collaborating closely with STATAFRIC and partners to advance ongoing initiatives. She expressed appreciation for the supportive atmosphere and praised the collective progress achieved. She concluded by congratulating participants on a successful meeting and wishing everyone well.

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