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## **Niger marks Africa Statistics Day with call for Africa to scale-up production of quality data**

Niamey, Niger, 20 November 2017 (ECA) - The government of Niger on Saturday joined other countries on the continent in marking the 27th Africa Statistics Day with officials urging the continent to scale-up efforts to produce quality data that will guide policy formulation processes and improve the lives of ordinary people.

The event was organized in collaboration with the Sub-Regional Office for West Africa of the Economic Commission for Africa (SRO/WA-ECA).

The theme of this year, "Better Lives with Better Economic Statistics", focuses on the critical role of economic statistics in supporting good economic governance that generates sustainable growth and in linking economic growth to better living conditions and a better economic status for all citizens.

Indeed, statistics provides information for monitoring, assessing and communicating on progress made in attaining goals and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as the basis for effective economic governance, conducive for the well-being of a nation.

"Countries that make the most progress, that improve the living conditions of their populations the most, are those that come up with and implement policies based on good and high quality statistics," said Niger's Minister of Planning, Mrs. Kane Aichatou Boulama.

"Good statistics is therefore a tool for decision making, a tool for the proper management of resources, facilitating thereby the efficient monitoring of progress in the implementation of our development policies and programs."

For his part, the Director of the ECA Sub-Regional Office for West Africa, Mr. Dimitri Sanga, said the day equally constitutes "an advocacy regarding the prime position occupied by economic statistics in the production, management and dissemination of official statistics as well as in the improvement of all sectors of the national economy and even in human lives, so as to achieve the objectives of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063".

Mr. Sanga went further to recall that "at the Sub-Regional level, the ECA has continued to strengthen the priority role given to the development of statistics, notably by creating, from 2012, Sub-Regional Data Centers in each of its five Regional Offices. Among other objectives, this has to do with using these proximity structures to strengthen cooperation with national statistics systems, that is, National Statistics Institutes".

The Director General of the National Statistics Institute of Niger, Mr. Idrissa Alichina Kourgueni, seized the occasion of this 27th African Statistics Day to "reiterate our call to decision makers, technical and financial partners, producers and users of data, and the public at large, to collaborate with the National Statistics Institute (NSI) and other bodies of the National Statistics System (NSS) for the production of quality data aimed at guiding decisions on economic policies, and monitoring progress towards achieving development goals, set both at national and international level".

The African Statistics Day was instituted in May 1990 by the ECA during a meeting of African Ministers in charge of planning and development.

The day is celebrated yearly, on November 18, by the African Statistics Community to continuously raise awareness on the importance and use of statistics to guide decisions based on facts, for the economic and social development of Africa.

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