



Distr.: GENERAL

E/ECA/STATCOM/2/10  
8 January 2010

ENGLISH  
Original: French

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

Second Meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa  
(StatCom Africa-II)

*17 – 22 January 2010  
Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia*

## **Report of the Working Group on Statistical Training**

**UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL COMMISSION FOR AFRICA - STATCOM AFRICA**  
***Thematic Report on Statistical Training*****Background and context**

Training and human resources development have been identified as one of the major challenges facing National Statistical Systems in Africa. To meet that challenge, a number of initiatives, working groups and statistical training projects have been launched in Africa. Among them are:

- The PARIS21 working group on statistical training and human resources development in Africa;
- The StatCom-Africa working group on statistical training;
- The working group on statistical training of the African Statistical Coordination Committee (ASCC);
- The statistical training project (and its working group) of the African Capacity-Building Foundation (ACBF).

The fact is that these many initiatives have not strengthened the capacities of National Statistical Systems (NSSs) in Africa. Also, there had not been a genuine coordinating agency for statistical training activities in Africa. Against this backdrop and to meet national needs, Africa's major technical and funding partners plan to intensify their dialogue and to set up a single mechanism for coordination and dialogue on statistical training in Africa.

**The Ouagadougou meeting of April 2009**

To improve stakeholder perceptions and harmonize their approaches to the issue of statistical training, a meeting was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on 13 April 2009. Participating in the meeting were representatives of Statistical Training Centres (STCs), National Statistics Offices (NSOs), subregional, regional and international organizations. The idea was to find a way to coordinate all existing initiatives for statistical training in Africa. Accordingly, the meeting came up with two specific resolutions on:

1. The establishment of a single working group on statistical training and human resources development in Africa to replace all other groups working on this issue; and
2. The organization of a forum on statistical training during the first half of 2009.

**The Bujumbura Forum of June 2009**

The above Forum on statistical training and human resources development was held in Bujumbura, Burundi on 18 and 19 June 2009. It brought together 58 representatives of African STCs, statistics departments of African universities, NSOs, subregional, regional and international organizations having a special interest in statistical training and human resources development in Africa.

The main objective of the Forum was to set up a single, permanent mechanism for sharing the required information and best practices in statistical training and human resources development among NSSs with a view to the generation and use of quality statistics in national development.

Participants made the following three main recommendations:

- The creation of the African Group on Statistical and Human Resources Development (AGROST) as a single working group for statistical training in Africa. This working group was to report every other year to StatCom-Africa.
- AGROST was to replace all groups working on statistical training in Africa and have a permanent secretariat reporting to it.
- Pending the establishment of such secretariat, participants requested ECA, PARIS21, two representatives from STCs and two from NSOs to serve as a temporary secretariat for AGROST.

### **From Bujumbura to StatCom-II**

Since the Bujumbura Forum, the following activities have been undertaken:

- Finalization of the Terms of Reference:
  - for AGROST (August 2009)
  - for the AGROST permanent secretariat and its director (August 2009)
- Finalization of the list of AGROST members (August 2009)
- Finalization of the work programme priorities of AGROST (August 2009)
- Mobilization of financing for the permanent secretariat (August 2009 to January 2010)

**To enable AGROST to implement its statistical training and human resources development activities, the temporary secretariat would like StatCom to:**

- **Officialize the creation of AGROST under StatCom authority.**
- **Decide within which institution AGROST secretariat should be located.**

**In the interest of the permanent secretariat, it would be advisable for StatCom's technical and financial Partners to commit to provide sustainable financing for AGROST and its permanent secretariat.**

**Once these conditions are met, the permanent secretariat of AGROST could be established by September 2010 and AGROST could hold its first meeting before the end of 2010.**