



## Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
5 September 2018

Original: English

**Economic Commission for Africa  
Statistical Commission for Africa**

Sixth meeting

Addis Ababa, 1 – 4 October 2018

Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

**New strategic areas for the Economic Commission for Africa and statutory reports**

### **Progress report on the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts in Africa**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The present report serves to update and inform the Statistical Commission for Africa on the progress of the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts in Africa during the period since the previous session of the Commission, namely, from the end of 2016 to the time of writing.
2. The 2008 System of National Accounts serves as the general conceptual framework for the compilation of national accounts. The ways of implementing the system vary greatly and depend on the level of development of the national statistics system. In general, an implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts comprises setting aims and objectives with regard to organization, data collection, compilation, application and dissemination.
3. Launched in January 2014, the African project on the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts has been a continental initiative for Africa. It has brought together efforts from member States, regional economic communities, pan-African institutions (i.e., the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the African Union Commission), the Observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique subsaharienne, regional and international organizations and development partners to collaborate on the full implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts in Africa.
4. The most recent report, in November 2016, focused on the progress and achievements of phase I (2014-2015) of the project, mainly in terms of preparation, including national workplans, technical documents and advocacy campaigns, and institutional set-up. Goals were set for phase II (2016-2018), which focus on the sustained and quality compilation and reporting of national accounts on the basis of the 2008 System of National Accounts for macroeconomic policy formulation and evidence-based decision-making.

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\* E/ECA/STATCOM/6/1

5. In the past two years, as guided by the goals of phase II, considerable effort and progress have been made by countries in the areas of the compilation, application and dissemination of national accounts. This report highlights the following two aspects:

(a) Compilation of and reporting on national accounts based on the 2008 System of National Accounts, which include the compilation of supply-use tables, a critical tool for national accounts, and gross domestic product (GDP) rebasing, an exercise to better reflect the actual economies and improve the understanding of their structural changes and transformations;

(b) Application of national accounts in policy formulation and decision-making, which include the compilation of environmentally extended supply-use tables, an instrument to apply supply-used tables to examine the amount and efficiency of natural resource supply and use by countries for sustainable development management, and improve economic statistics for monitoring the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

6. This report is not comprehensive owing to limited coverage, notwithstanding the efforts made to be inclusive.

## **II. Activities undertaken to implement the 2008 System of National Accounts**

### **A. Rebasing gross domestic product**

7. GDP is the key component and the most commonly used indicator for measuring the size and the growth of an economy. While constant price data have the advantage of being additive, over time the pattern of relative prices in the base period tends to become progressively less relevant owing to changes in the structure and patterns of production, consumption and investment in an economy. It is necessary to update the base period to adopt weights that are more consistent with and better account for current economic conditions. International statistical standards and recommendations require countries to update their GDP at least once every five years.

#### *Current status*

8. Except for a few countries that have just completed or made major strides in finishing their rebasing exercises, most African countries have a GDP with a base year that is more than five years old. As shown in table 1, 14 countries have a base year between 2010 and 2013, 35 have a base year between 2000 and 2009 and 3 have a GDP with a base year before 2000. In 2016, 11 countries indicated that they had adopted the 2008 System of National Accounts and 15 planned to adopt it between 2018 and 2019. A total of 43 countries indicated that they planned to rebase their GDP to between 2010 and 2018, in which 14 of them planned to rebase their GDP between 2010 and 2014 and 29 planned to rebase their GDP using a year from 2015 onwards.

Table 1  
**Base year of real GDP and version of System of National Accounts adopted in Africa**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Current base year</i>	<i>New base year (planned)</i>	<i>Version of System of National Accounts followed</i>	<i>Planned year for adopting 2008 System of National Accounts</i>
Algeria	2001	2011	1993 System of National Accounts	Beyond 2019
Angola	2004	2012	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Benin	2007	2015	1993 System of National Accounts	
Botswana	2006	-	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Burkina Faso	1999	2014	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Burundi	2005	2014	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Cabo Verde	2007	2015	1993 System of National Accounts	
Cameroon	2005	2015	2008 System of National Accounts	
Central African Republic	2005	-	1993 System of National Accounts	2019
Chad	2005	2018	1993 System of National Accounts	
Comoros	2007	-	1993 System of National Accounts	Beyond 2019
Congo	2005	2017	1993 System of National Accounts	
Côte d'Ivoire	2009	2014	1993 System of National Accounts	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2005	2015	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Djibouti	2009	2013	2008 System of National Accounts	
Egypt	2012	2017	2008 System of National Accounts	
Equatorial Guinea	2006	2016	1993 System of National Accounts	
Eritrea	2000	-		
Eswatini	2011	-	2008 System of National Accounts	
Ethiopia	2011	2016	1993 System of National Accounts	

Country	Current base year	New base year (planned)	Version of System of National Accounts followed	Planned year for adopting 2008 System of National Accounts
Gabon	2001	2017	1993 System of National Accounts	
Gambia	2004	2013	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Ghana	2006	2013	1993 System of National Accounts	
Guinea	2006	2017	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Guinea-Bissau	2005	2015	1993 System of National Accounts	
Kenya	2009	-	2008 System of National Accounts	
Lesotho	2004	2012	1993 System of National Accounts	
Liberia	2010	2016	1993 System of National Accounts	
Libya	2003	-		
Madagascar	2007	2015	1968 System of National Accounts	2018
Malawi	2010	2015	1993 System of National Accounts	
Mali	1997	2015	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Mauritania	2004	2015	1993 System of National Accounts	
Mauritius	2007	2013	1993 System of National Accounts	
Morocco	2007	2015	2008 System of National Accounts	
Mozambique	2009	2014	1993 System of National Accounts	
Namibia	2010	-	1993 System of National Accounts	2019
Niger	2006	2015	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Nigeria	2010	2015	2008 System of National Accounts	
Rwanda	2011	-		
Sao Tome and Principe	2008	2012	1993 System of National Accounts	

Country	Current base year	New base year (planned)	Version of System of National Accounts followed	Planned year for adopting 2008 System of National Accounts
Senegal	2000	2014	1993 System of National Accounts	
Seychelles	2006	2013	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Sierra Leone	2006	2016	1993 System of National Accounts	
Somalia	1985	-		
South Africa	2010	2017	2008 System of National Accounts	
South Sudan	2010	-	2008 System of National Accounts	
Sudan	2010	2016	1968 System of National Accounts	
Togo	2007	2015	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Tunisia	2010	2016	1993 System of National Accounts	2018
Uganda	2010	2015	2008 System of National Accounts	
United Republic of Tanzania	2007	2015	1993 System of National Accounts	
Zambia	2010	2017	2008 System of National Accounts	
Zimbabwe	2009	2017	1993 System of National Accounts	

*Source:* World Bank world development indicators; International Monetary Fund; Economic Commission for Africa surveys on the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts and on supply-use tables; national statistics office publications and websites.

#### *Activities*

9. To support countries in their efforts to update and rebase their GDP, ECA conducted technical assistance missions to Benin, Equatorial Guinea, Liberia, Mauritania, Seychelles and Togo.

10. AfDB, along with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), organized a workshop for the International Comparison Program for Africa in Lusaka from 30 January to 3 February 2017, and a catch-up workshop in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in June 2017. The Program is a global statistical initiative aimed at generating purchasing power parity estimates that facilitate cross-country comparisons of price levels and economic aggregates in real terms. At those workshops, the importance of the Program framework was reiterated, the capacity required of participants to conduct ICP activities was strengthened and an overall schedule of field and desk work was agreed.

11. The Observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique subsaharienne organized an annual seminar on national accounts for member States in Bamako in October 2017 in order to take stock of the situation, strengthen the capacity of national accountants and promote the exchange of experience among countries.

12. From 2017 to 2018, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), through its regional technical centres in Africa, conducted and will conduct 26 technical missions to Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Senegal, Togo and Uganda for GDP rebasing and benchmarking. One training is planned in Malawi in October 2018 for compiling real GDP.

*Issues, challenges, and the way forward*

13. The following issues and challenges are noted:

(a) There are still many countries in Africa where the base year is more than five years out of date and requires more efforts for rebasing and back-casting;

(b) Successful GDP rebasing requires sufficient data sets with broad coverage to reflect the structural change of the economy. Data collection is costly. A challenge for many countries in Africa is to acquire the political support needed for statistical services to be delivered effectively;

(c) GDP rebasing calls for better coordination in data collection and better use of the data. National statistics offices should therefore coordinate with related line ministries and make good use of raw data from censuses and surveys conducted for regularly developing and updating supply-use tables;

(d) Countries can request technical assistance from development partners for GDP rebasing when needed;

(e) ECA will organize a capacity-building programme in support of countries in Africa to conduct GDP rebasing, thereby providing an opportunity for staff of national statistics offices and line ministries to participate and to strengthen their technical capacity.

## **B. Compiling supply-use tables**

14. Supply-use tables are one of the most important accounts and tools in the System of National Accounts. They are recommended as the first and core step in the compilation of national accounts and are a part of the minimum requirement data set. They provide a framework for checking and reconciling the consistency and completeness of national account data from various sources. Moreover, they are powerful analytic tools not only for the study of the national economy and the industrial structures in an economy, but also for the study of the links among various economies at a global level, including the analysis of the global value chain and trade in value added.

*Current status*

15. According to the survey on the availability of supply-use tables conducted by ECA from November 2017 to February 2018, approximately 60 per cent of the countries in Africa have compiled them. A total of 23 countries have supply-use tables at constant prices and 38 planned to compile new ones in 2017 and beyond. Among the countries with supply-use tables, 60 per cent used information and communications technology (ICT) tools such as ERETES, NADABAS and SAS.

Table 2  
Availability of supply-use tables and years covered

Country	Years covered	With supply-use tables at constant prices?	Information technology tool used	Planned year to compile next supply-use tables
Algeria	2015	No	Excel/ERETES	2017
Angola	2009		Excel	2018
Benin	2015	Yes	ERETES	2017
Burkina Faso	2015	Yes	ERETES	2018
Burundi	2014	Yes	ERETES	2017
Cameroon	2014, 2015, 2016	Yes	ERETES	2018
Central African Republic	2016	Yes	Excel/ERETES	2018
Chad	2016	Yes	Excel/ERETES	2019
Comoros	2015	Yes	ERETES	2018
Côte d'Ivoire	1996-2016	Yes	ERETES	2018
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2015	Yes	Excel/ERETES	2018
Djibouti	2013	Yes	Excel/ERETES	2018
Egypt	2008/09, 2010/11, 2012/13	No	Excel	2017
Equatorial Guinea		Yes		2018
Gabon		Yes		2017
Ghana	2004	Yes	Excel	2018
Guinea	2014, 2015, 2016	Yes	Excel	2019
Kenya		No	NADABAS	2019
Madagascar	2007	Yes	Other	2017
Mali	2014	Yes	ERETES	2017
Mauritania	2014, 2015	Yes	ERETES	2018
Morocco	2016	Yes	ERETES	2018
Mozambique	2016	No	NADABAS	2017
Niger	2014, 2015, 2016	Yes	Excel/ERETES	
Nigeria	2010	No	Excel	2019
Senegal	2014	Yes	ERETES	2017
South Africa	1993-2015	No	EXCEL/SAS	
Togo	2014	Yes	ERETES	2018
Tunisia	2011, 2012, 2013, 2014	Yes	Excel	2017
Uganda	2009/10	No	Excel	2018
United Republic of Tanzania	2007	No	Excel	2017
Zambia	2010	No	Excel	2019
Zimbabwe		Yes	Excel	

Source: ECA survey on supply-use tables, November 2017.

*Activities*

16. To support countries in revising, updating and applying supply-use tables for economic policy research and analysis, ECA, with the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), has initiated and been undertaking a capacity-building programme on the compilation and application of supply-use tables in Africa. The programme consists of a series of activities in three phases: an e-training module, a face-to-face seminar and follow-up national workshops and on-site technical assistance. Resources and reference materials used for the e-training include three ECA handbooks/guidebooks: the Handbook on Supply and Use Tables, the Guidebook on Using Administrative Data in National Accounts and the Guidebook on Accounting for Informal Sector for the Compilation of National Accounts.

17. From September to November 2017, more than 300 participants from 41 countries participated in the e-training. Among them, more than 100 participants from 34 countries registered for the final assessment, demonstrating their confidence in and commitment to compiling supply-use tables in their countries.

18. A total of 36 participants from 29 countries gathered in Addis Ababa in February 2018 to take part in the face-to-face seminar, together with development partners from ECA, WTO, the Statistics Division, AfDB, OECD and the Observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique subsaharienne. The topics included further discussion of the related concepts and compilation techniques, data source, ICT tools, the application of supply-use tables and organizational implementation for supply-use table project. Participants agreed to update their methodologies used in supply-use tables compilation by following the 2008 System of National Accounts and adopt the international statistical standard classifications, including ISIC, CPC, COICOP, and using the most recent ICT tools, such as ERETES, the IMF supply-used table balancing tool and NADABAS.

19. From April 2018 to the time of writing, and at the request of countries, ECA conducted technical assistance missions to Eswatini and Seychelles. Activities included assessing data availability, designing workplans, conducting a data user-producer seminar, facilitating the collaboration between national statistics offices and line ministries, checking and verifying the assumption and estimation made for the intermediate uses and inputs and assisting in the balancing of supply-use tables.

20. The National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies of France and the Observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique subsaharienne organized a workshop in Bamako in December 2016 to train a team of experts on ERETES aimed at responding to and supporting future demands for the ERETES system in the English-speaking countries of Africa. During the forty-ninth annual session of the Statistical Commission, held in New York from 6 to 9 March 2018, the National Institute organized a side event, in collaboration with Eurostat and the Observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique subsaharienne, on national accounting tools, in particular on ERETES.

21. From 2017 to 2018, the Observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique subsaharienne provided several technical assistance missions to countries on national accounts, classifications, the development of action plans and the compilation of social accounting matrices. The countries included Benin, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo. A seminar organized by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies of France and the Observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique subsaharienne on business registers and classifications was held in Libourne, France, from 3 to 11 July 2017.



22. From 2017 to 2018, IMF conducted and plans to conduct 171 technical assistance missions to 52 African countries on supply-use table balancing, national accounts and macroeconomic statistics. It also has conducted and plans to conduct seven training sessions on national accounts in 2018 to strengthen the capacity of national accountants.

*Issues, challenges and way forward*

23. To compile supply-use tables, it is necessary for national statistics offices and partner organizations to do the following:

(a) Raise the awareness among policymakers of the importance and usefulness of supply-use tables for providing quantitative information and answers for policy formulation and to mobilize resources for revising, updating and compiling supply-use tables;

(b) Strengthen the close collaboration among various line ministries and data producers and users to improve the process for data collection and reconciliation and fill in the data gaps for supply-use table compilation;

(c) Have international organizations and development partners provide guidance on advanced ICT tools and methodologies and continue to offer capacity-building programmes on the compilation and application of supply-use tables to help countries to overcome the lack of technical capacity and expertise;

(d) Promote the application of supply-use tables, including integrating the resulting data from them, into the global trade in value added database and lay the foundation for African countries to compile environmentally extended supply-use tables, thereby contributing directly to monitoring the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **C. Developing environmentally expended supply-use tables**

24. By applying the framework and approach of the System of National Accounts, the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting, an international statistical standard, introduces a way to integrate environmental and economic accounts. Following the System, an environmentally extended supply-use table allows countries to examine their supply and usage of environmental resources in the context of their economies. Compared with supply-use tables, environmentally extended supply-use tables add one column for the sector of the environment and two blocks of rows describing, first, the input from the environment to the economy and, second, the residuals from the economy to the environment. It allows a country to address environmental issues in an informed manner and directly measure the progress being made in monitoring the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. System of Environmental-Economic Accounting-based environmentally extended supply-use tables directly inform 14 indicators in 8 Goals.

*Current status*

25. While a few countries on the continent have compiled a limited number of environmental accounts, many of them remain in an early stage of development of environment statistics. There is low capacity on the part of governments to collect, compile and disseminate environmental statistics and environmental-economic accounts. As a result, there is a gap in terms of environmental data on the continent, resulting in the inadequate monitoring and measurement of progress towards achieving environmental sustainability and sustainable development. Of the 40 African countries that replied to a survey conducted by ECA in May and June 2018, 14 indicated that they had compiled at least one System of Environmental-Economic Accounting-compliant account, with a

further 20 planning to compile them. Most countries that are planning to develop such accounts have prioritized water, forestry and energy accounts as the most pertinent to their national priorities.

Table 3

**Current status and efforts of countries regarding the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting**

<i>Country</i>	<i>With System of Environmental-Economic Accounting account</i>	<i>Plan to compile/expand</i>	<i>With supply-use tables</i>
Algeria	No		Yes
Angola	No	No	Yes
Benin	No	Yes	Yes
Botswana	Yes	Yes	No
Burkina Faso	No	Yes	Yes
Burundi	No	Yes	Yes
Cameroon	No	Yes	Yes
Cabo Verde	No	Yes	
Central African Republic	No	Yes	Yes
Comoros	No	Yes	Yes
Côte d'Ivoire	No	Yes	Yes
Democratic Republic of the Congo	No	Yes	Yes
Equatorial Guinea	Yes	Yes	Yes
Eswatini	No		No
Gabon	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ghana	No	Yes	Yes
Guinea	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kenya	No	Yes	Yes
Lesotho	No	Yes	
Mali	No	Yes	Yes
Mauritania	No	Yes	Yes
Mauritius	Yes		
Morocco	No	Yes	Yes
Namibia	Yes	Yes	No
Niger	No	Yes	Yes
Nigeria	No	Yes	Yes
Rwanda	Yes		
Senegal	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sierra Leone	Yes	Yes	
Somalia	No	Yes	No
South Africa	Yes	Yes	Yes
South Sudan	No	No	No
Sudan	No		No
Togo	No	Yes	Yes
Tunisia	Yes	Yes	Yes
Uganda	Yes	Yes	Yes
United Republic of Tanzania	Yes	No	Yes
Zambia	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zimbabwe	No		Yes

*Source:* ECA survey on environmentally expended supply-use tables, May-June 2018, and ECA survey on supply-use tables, November 2017-February 2018. Blank means information is not available from the surveys.

### *Activities*

26. To support member States in building a foundation of environmental statistics for the compilation of environmentally expended supply-use tables, ECA, with the Statistics Division and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), has managed a capacity-building programme on the Framework for Developing Environmental Statistics since June 2017. A total of 203 participants from 37 countries signed up for the phase I E training and 69 from 24 countries registered for the final assessment. The phase II regional seminar was held in Nairobi in September 2017, and participants from nine countries attended the event. Currently, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Gambia, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea, Malawi, Namibia and Senegal are working to compile the national compendiums on environmental statistics in their countries with the technical support of ECA, the Statistics Division and UNEP.

27. To meet the needs of member States in the compilation of environmentally expended supply-use tables, ECA is carrying out a capacity-building programme to assist countries. The programme has three phases. The first was e-training held from March to May 2018. More than 300 participants from 49 countries took part and more than 170 from 45 countries signed up for the final assessment. The topics covered included System of Environmental-Economic Accounting methodologies on agriculture, emissions, energy, land, waste and water.

28. The second phase was a face-to-face seminar that was held in Pretoria, South Africa, in July 2018. A series of sessions provided participants with hands-on, step-by-step guidance on the compilation of the six System of Environmental-Economic Accounting accounts: agriculture, air emission, energy, forestry, waste and water. During the week-long seminar, more than 30 participants from 17 countries successfully completed the exercises.

29. The third phase consists of national workshops and technical assistance to help four pilot countries to compile one System of Environmental-Economic Accounting account in a year's time. Countries that attended the phase II seminar were invited to express their interest to ECA to be included as pilot countries for phase III. The selection of countries is based on the priorities, readiness and quality of data of the countries, as well as human and financial resource availability.

30. The World Bank launched Wealth Accounting and the Valuation of Ecosystem Services programme in 2010 for environmental accounting. In Africa, a few countries are involved in the programme. Botswana and Madagascar were the initial implementing countries, each with two or three accounts compiled. Rwanda joined the programme in 2013 and has compiled a land account. Zambia came on board in 2017.

31. During 2017-2018, the Statistics Division included Kenya and Uganda in its ninth tranche Development Account project. The project provided assistance for national statistics offices and relevant stakeholders in the compilation of selected accounts in accordance with country priorities and data availability. Kenya has compiled energy accounts and Uganda has compiled water accounts under this project.

### *Issues, challenges and way forward*

32. The best practices to compile environmentally expended supply-use tables successfully include the following:

- (a) Prioritize accounts to identify which ones should be compiled first;
- (b) Obtain strong support from governments, policymakers and stakeholders, and mobilize domestic resources;

(c) Have national statistics offices work closely with related line ministries for sharing and making use of environmental data;

(d) Seek financial resources from both internal and external sources. For example, the Global Environment Facility can provide financial support for System of Environmental-Economic Accounting projects;

(e) Take the environmentally expended supply-use tables approach by using high-quality environmental statistics and extending conventional supply-use tables. This will make the compilation of environmentally expended supply-use tables easy and efficient;

(f) Once data and resources are ready, seek technical assistance from international organization and development partners;

(g) Encourage countries to share experiences and best practices for System of Environmental-Economic Accounting projects and promoting South-South cooperation on the continent.

#### **D. Improving economic statistics for monitoring the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals**

33. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a global agenda adopted by world leaders. It underscores the need for timely and quality data to continuously monitor and evaluate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in order to know where the world stands and how to chart a path forward. Of the 240 indicators that are part of the Goals, 63 are economic in nature or require economic and financial statistics to compile. While the 2008 System of National Accounts provides a general framework and principles for the compilation of economic statistics, in order to meet the needs and demands of the indicators for economic statistics and data, there is also a need for more specific metadata and guidelines. In addition, the availability of the data sources required is essential to monitor the indicators.

##### *Current status*

34. There are significant gaps and discrepancies in the availability of values for the indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals and their data sources among the 54 African countries. Tier I indicators are supposed to be those that are conceptually clear, with an internationally established methodology and standard, in which data are regularly produced by countries for at least 50 per cent of countries and of the population in every region where the indicator is relevant. As shown in table 4, in Africa, of the 36 tier I economic indicators, only one third are frequently monitored and reported on for the entire continent. In other words, the tier I definition may not be fully applicable in Africa. One may infer that indicators from tiers II and III are even less informed<sup>†</sup>. This observation calls for a further review and investigation of the underlying collection, processing and dissemination of the data sources at the country level.

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<sup>†</sup> The availability of the indicators in countries can be found from the Sustainable Development Goals database hosted by the Statistics Division, which has been developed as a platform for global monitoring of the various dimensions and subdimensions of the Goals. Available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database>.

Table 4  
Availability of Sustainable Development Goal tier I economic indicators, 2010-2015

Country	Number of indicators available (of 36)	Country	Number of indicators available (of 36)	Country	Number of indicators available (of 36)
South Africa	24	Cabo Verde	20	Chad	17
Ethiopia	23	Cameroon	20	Eswatini	17
Senegal	23	Côte d'Ivoire	20	Guinea	17
Tunisia	23	Gambia	20	Guinea-Bissau	17
United Republic of Tanzania	23	Malawi	20	Libya	17
Egypt	22	Mali	20	Mauritania	17
Ghana	22	Niger	20	Central African Republic	16
Kenya	22	Nigeria	20	Eritrea	16
Madagascar	22	Sudan	20	Gabon	16
Mauritius	22	Zambia	20	Liberia	16
Morocco	22	Benin	19	Sao Tome and Principe	16
Mozambique	22	Burkina Faso	19	Seychelles	16
Togo	22	Congo	19	Comoros	15
Uganda	22	Lesotho	19	Djibouti	15
Angola	21	Namibia	19	Equatorial Guinea	15
Botswana	21	Rwanda	19	Sierra Leone	14
Democratic Republic of the Congo	21	Zimbabwe	19	Somalia	14
Algeria	20	Burundi	17	South Sudan	11

Source: ECA survey report, "Survey on Economic Indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa: Availability of Indicators and Related Data Sources" (ACS/ESNA, September 2017).

#### Activities

35. In September 2017, the African Centre for Statistics of ECA conducted a desk survey on the economic indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals to shed light on their availability and related data sources. The desk survey consisted of an identification of the economic indicators from the monitoring framework of the Goals, searching for data sources required to produce estimates for these economic indicators, an assessment of the availability of the values of the indicators and a comparison of the availability of data sources at the country level to generate the values for the indicators. The findings of the desk survey provided a synthesized view of data sources, indicators and their availability and how effectively they had been used for the indicators of the Goals.

36. To address the challenges of indicator and data gaps and to share experience, ECA hosted an Expert Group Meeting in Addis Ababa from 14 to 16 November 2017. There were experts from Angola, Botswana, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Gambia, Guinea, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, as well as from the International Energy Agency, the International Labour Organization, the International Telecommunication Union and the Statistics Division. The meeting helped to clarify how data are to flow from countries through custodian agencies into the Sustainable Development Goals global database and the important roles to be played by countries and custodial agencies. By taking the lead in collecting, producing and disseminating data, countries should exploit the most recent ICT tools and follow the metadata to ensure the best quality and availability of data, while custodial agencies would be charged with being the caretakers of the production of the indicators of the Goals and the stewards of the methodology behind each indicator. To this end, custodial agencies must ensure that the metadata produced to meet the needs are clear and that they participate in technical assistance missions when needed.

37. To make the findings of the survey and the Expert Group Meeting actionable and to seek support from policymakers to improve the data, ECA hosted an event to raise the awareness of government ministers of the issues at the fifty-first session of the Commission and the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, held in Addis Ababa from 11 to 15 May 2018. More than 160 people registered for the event. By inviting senior officials from member States to share their experience regarding the Sustainable Development Goals and talking with the media, the event reached a wide audience, including policy analysts, decision makers and the public. The event helped to address the following issues effectively: the data gaps for the economic indicators of the Goals in Africa, the challenges that countries are facing in data collection, production and dissemination, and the experience and best practices that can be replicated in other countries and by international and regional agencies.

38. AfDB organized a training workshop on statistical business registers for COMESA and Southern African Development Community countries in May 2018. The workshop was attended by participants from Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. Live demonstrations and guidance on generic statistical business register systems were carried out. To date, such systems have been implemented or are under implementation for Botswana, Eswatini, Ethiopia and Mauritius, and a guideline for statistical business registers in Africa has been drafted by AfDB.

39. The African Union Commission and Eurostat developed and launched the pan-African Statistics Programme with the aim of supporting Africa's regional integration agenda by strengthening the African statistics system and improving the quality and availability of statistics for policy formulation and decision-making. The Programme has identified the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts as its first pillar. It is committed to engaging in strategic priority areas, namely, strengthening resilience, peace, security and governance, and to mobilizing investment for the sustainable structural transformation of Africa.

40. The Economic Community of West African States organized a regional workshop on the harmonization of national accounts statistics, held in Abuja from 27 to 29 June 2018.

41. The World Bank conducted technical assistance missions to several countries, including Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, to update economic accounts through its Africa regional statistics team to countries. In general, its activities are focused on the collection of basic data, and, for this purpose, it finances surveys and censuses.

*Issues, challenges and way forward*

42. The following issues and challenges are noted:

(a) An integrated database of national accounts and economic statistics is necessary in order to include national accounts statistics, government finance surveys, balance of payments data, data sources on business sector activities, agriculture, household economic activities and informal sector economic flows;

(b) Data from household surveys are useful for the compilation of many tier I economic indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals. Given financial constraints, surveys covering several indicators, such as integrated household surveys, should be conducted as a first priority;

(c) The onus is on countries to collect, compile and disseminate the produced indicators, and their national statistics systems need to execute plans for enhancing their production of these indicators;

(d) At the regional level, work is under way through capacity-building programmes to support countries in improving statistics for the indicators. These stem from the clear identification of gaps and needs in the countries, including at the regional level;

(e) Custodial agencies should support strengthening national statistics systems, improving technical capacity and promoting data reporting and the dissemination of the indicators.

### III. Conclusion

43. With regard to the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts, countries in Africa, supported by regional and international organizations and development partners, have made tremendous efforts and progress in the following areas in the past two years: updating and rebasing GDP, compiling and applying supply-use tables, developing environmentally extended supply-use tables and improving economic statistics for the indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals.

44. GDP is a key indicator measuring the size and the growth of the economy. While a third of African countries have rebased their GDP in the past 10 years, few have done so in the past five years. Rebasing is recommended to be done at least every five years to reflect the structural changes of economies. It is encouraging that 43 African countries plan to rebase their GDP figures to 2010 and onwards. National ownership through strong political back-up, sufficient data sets, good coordination among stakeholders and technical assistance support from international and regional agencies and partners remain the vital components leading to the success of the exercise.

45. A supply-use table provides a solid basis for rebasing GDP and producing environmentally expended supply-use tables. The supply-use tables provide detailed information on the structure of the economy, describe the role that a country plays in global value chains and inform a country's trade in value added. In Africa, while 29 countries have compiled a supply-use table at least once, 19 have done so in the past five years. Countries should strive to compile and update their supply-use tables regularly, maintaining as much detail as possible, and promote their dissemination for wide use and application. More technical support and capacity-building are needed from international and regional agencies and development partners.

46. Extended from conventional supply-use tables, the environmentally expended supply-use tables are an important tool to incorporate environment and natural resources into the economy for better management and policymaking. Currently, fewer than 10 countries on the continent have produced environmental-economic accounts. It is more effective and efficient to compile System of Environmental-Economic Accounting accounts by taking an environmentally expended supply-use table approach, namely, to derive from the national account-based supply-use tables. The best practice shows that it is good for countries to identify accounts most pertinent to national priorities, gain support from the authority, cooperate with related line ministries and maximize the use of existing data and minimize duplicate data-collection efforts.

47. National statistics offices and national statistics systems play a pivotal role in the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of data and statistics required for the success in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The System of National Accounts, being the overall framework and guiding principle for all economic statistics, has an important role to play. One quarter of the indicators of the Goals are from the economic pillar. In Africa, only half of the tier I economic indicators are available. Filling in the gaps will require efforts from both countries and custodial agencies. The latter need to improve their metadata regarding definitions, methodologies and best practices. Countries need to make good use of most existing data sources and improve their data-collection efforts.

48. In producing the above-mentioned indicators, accounts and economic statistics, countries are encouraged to adopt the 2008 System of National Accounts and the most recent internationally recognized standards and classifications. The application of ICT tools, such as ERETES, NADABAS and the IMF GDP balance tool, will go a long way towards having countries overcome technical barriers. Strong political commitment and resource support, good coordination among stakeholders within each country and the provision of the technical support by regional and international organization and development partners are indispensable for the implementation of the project going forward.

## **IV. Points for discussion**

49. The Statistical Commission is invited to discuss the following:

(a) Acknowledge the progress that countries have made on GDP rebasing and express its view on international recommendations to rebase GDP every five years;

(b) Review the key factors that hindered countries from compiling supply-use tables in accordance with the 2008 System of National Accounts and recommend action to overcome those challenges, and to more frequently update supply-use tables;

(c) Evaluate the importance of environmental accounts with regard to sustainability, natural resource management and environmental policy, and prioritize environmental-economic accounts;

(d) Assess the coverage of the economic indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals, examine which data sources are underutilized in developing these indicators and take action to better utilize these sources, taking an integrated economic statistics approach;

(e) Review practices on the continent and emphasize the importance of adopting the 2008 System of National Accounts, the most updated international standards and classification system, and the most recent ICT tools.