


Accurate & timely data crucial for successful implementation of SDG agenda, says Chinganya

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, April 27, 2017 (ECA) – The successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development demands new data acquisition and integration approaches, says Oliver Chinganya, Director of the Africa Center for Statistics (ACS) at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

In opening remarks to a three-day workshop on Fundamental Geospatial Datasets for Monitoring Sustainable Development Goals, Mr. Chinganya said to fully implement and monitor progress on the SDGs, decision makers need data and statistics that are accurate, timely, sufficiently disaggregated, relevant, accessible and easy to use.

“The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, insists that we must leave no one behind as we transform our world by eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions,” he told delegates attending the international workshop.

“For that, managers and policy makers may need to integrate social, economic and others data in order to formulate strategic development plans.”

“Unfortunately, a quick survey of the African terrain will reveal that the spatial components of this development data foundation which are required for sustainable national planning and development, are generally not available and, where they exist, grossly outdated and uncoordinated,” said Mr. Chinganya.

The continent, he said, has a poor mapping coverage of 2.9 percent at the scale of 1/25.000 compared to Europe at 86.9 percent and Russia at 100 percent.

“Therefore, the need for building spatial information infrastructures for the collection, management, and dissemination of geospatial information is important to the African development agenda much like other basic services such as road and telecommunication networks,” the ACS Chief said.

The ECA has been advocating the development of fundamental geospatial datasets in the past two decades. Fundamental datasets are the basic layers of geo-referenced data, those upon which other thematic and core datasets are developed, he said.

“As we continue our discussions today and in the next two coming days, let us openly table some of the issues that we should address to build current and consistent geospatial datasets. For instance, how do we determine and or select the appropriate geographies? How do we collect the data: scale, resolution, precision? What are the standards to be used? What are the tools, software? What would be the role of authoritative database producers such as National Mapping Agencies,” said Mr. Chinganya.

On all these issues, he continued, I am expecting this meeting to produce solid recommendations and a check-list of desirable actions that will guarantee that we follow the right course in developing fundamental and core geospatial datasets that are suited to African issues, and ensuring that national bodies are capable of tackling the challenges of producing credible, consistent and current datasets.

The workshop seeks to provide guidance and improve the capacity of National Geospatial Information or Mapping Agencies in producing geospatial information that are referenced to internationally agreed fundamental geospatial data themes, enhancing data interoperability, and thus increase the availability, accessibility and application of geospatial information in Africa.

The ECA and the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) co-organized the meeting.

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