



## Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
31 October 2024

Original: English

### Economic Commission for Africa Forum on African Statistical Development

Eleventh meeting

Addis Ababa, 28 October 2024

Agenda item 7

#### Closing of the meeting

### Communiqué

1. Representatives of African States, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, regional and subregional organizations, the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century, the World Bank and other international institutions attended the eleventh meeting of the Forum on African Statistical Development, held in Addis Ababa on 28 October 2024.
2. The meeting was held under the theme “Strengthening the mobilization of technical and financial resources to support innovation in statistical development in Africa”.
3. The overall objective of the eleventh meeting was to foster connections among countries, partners and institutions that support statistics, with a view to addressing the needs of national statistical systems for technical and financial resources to accelerate the transformation and modernization of those systems.
4. The specific objectives of the meeting were:
  - (a) To take stock of the challenges faced by countries and identify the needs of national statistical systems in developing and implementing transformation and modernization programmes;
  - (b) To take stock of the opportunities and mechanisms offered by pan-African institutions, partners and organizations to support countries in their statistical development.
5. The Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century were commended for having organized the eleventh meeting.
6. Participation in the meeting provided a platform from which attendees could specify the priority needs of national statistical systems in Africa. It also represented an opportunity for partner entities to present the different types of technical and financial support that they could offer in relation to their areas of focus.
7. Participants discussed the experiences of specific African States in transforming and modernizing methods of producing data and statistics, and mechanisms for funding their development.
8. Participants reflected on the opportunities presented under the African Statistical System, the challenges faced by the System and its evolving needs. They also deliberated on the funding of national statistical systems and various



partnerships that could enhance the African Statistical System, with a view to bridging the data gap. In addition, they discussed approaches to maximizing the efficiency of support from partners in transforming and modernizing national statistical systems in Africa. They noted that, while Africa was the region that received the most funding from development partners for data and statistics, amounting to 337 million dollars or 39 per cent of the global total in 2022, less than half the States on the continent had fully funded their national strategy for the development of statistics.

9. The Economic Commission for Africa was commended for its strategic toolkit for the transformation and modernization of national statistical systems in Africa, an important resource that could help to make them more agile, resilient and sustainable. The Commission and the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century were requested to jointly update the guidelines on national strategies for the development of statistics that had been issued by the Partnership, incorporating instructions about mainstreaming the strategic toolkit into national strategies.

10. In the same vein, the Economic Commission for Africa was requested to work with other partners to ensure that all the relevant tools that each State could use in supporting the implementation of its national strategy for the development of statistics were in a common repository, with a view to increasing accessibility and minimizing the duplication of efforts.

11. The Economic Commission for Africa was commended for the support that it had provided in relation to the conducting of digital censuses during the 2020 round of population and housing censuses in Africa, in particular by acquiring tablets for data collection and facilitating their sharing among its members.

12. Regional and other partner entities were commended for their plans to build statistical capacity in Africa and to accelerate the modernization of national statistical systems on the continent.

13. Participants requested members of the Economic Commission for Africa to assume primary responsibility for funding their own statistical systems, in order to ensure stable foundations for statistical modernization and reduce dependence on external sources of funding. Members needed, therefore, to commit to increasing budget allocations to the funding of national statistical systems. Participants also requested development partners to organize and synergize their financial support for statistical systems in Africa, within the framework of the national strategies for the development of statistics advocated by the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century, in alignment with national priorities.

14. Participants called upon stakeholders in African national statistical systems to increase their advocacy efforts, with a view to increasing funding for statistical activities. Recommended approaches to such advocacy included the forging of relationships with senior elected and public officials, the increased involvement of representatives of national statistical offices in high-level decision-making forums and the explanation to policymakers of the importance of statistical data for national development.

15. Participants requested stakeholders in African national statistical systems to ensure the provision of adequate resources for statistical activities, by addressing existing funding challenges through innovative financing mechanisms.

16. The national statistical offices of members of the Economic Commission for Africa were urged to use their statistical products to affirm their relevance, create value for policymakers and foster political will in their Governments to increase funding for statistics. South-South cooperation was encouraged, as a sustainable model that members of the Commission should embrace.

17. Participants requested stakeholders in African national statistical systems to engage with the private sector, in order to broaden avenues for the funding of such systems. Stakeholders should also foster knowledge-sharing and peer-to-peer learning, by taking part in regional assemblies, such as the Forum on African Statistical Development, with a view to exchanging best practices and innovations; by facilitating statistical development across the continent and; by strengthening staff capacity development, including continuous learning and, for the purposes of sustainability, the training of trainers in the regional economic communities.

18. The African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century were requested to make the membership of the Forum on African Statistical Development more inclusive. They were also requested to continue to modernize mechanisms for holding meetings online and monitoring progress annually, with a view to achieving greater collaboration and coordination.

19. Meeting participants requested the Economic Commission for Africa to organize the twelfth meeting of the Forum, to be held in 2026, in close collaboration with the African Development Bank, the African Union Commission, the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century and other relevant partner entities.

20. Partner entities and members of the Economic Commission for Africa were requested to reflect the above-mentioned recommendations in their work programmes.

21. All stakeholders were invited to endorse the present communiqué.

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