

AFRICAN CENTRE FOR STATISTICS

Monthly update of activities and events- August 2024

18th StatsTalk-Africa monthly webinar series

On 6th August 2024, ACS convened its 18th StatsTalk-Africa monthly webinar series that provide a space for dialogue about data, statistics, and innovative tools with data experts and users. This particular webinar focused on: the transformative potential of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in economics and statistics. Over 110 participants attended the event, which highlighted various applications of GenAI, such as text-generating models, and Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) to simplify data querying from national accounts websites and development reports. The webinar showcased how Large Language Models (LLMs) are being used as virtual tutors in national accounts and the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA). This event underscored the UNECA's commitment to leveraging AI to advance economic research and statistical analysis, fostering collaboration among stakeholders to accelerate progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063.



The webinar recording can be accessed through the [event webpage](#). Access previous StatsTalk – Africa Webinar Series at [HERE](#)

Eastern Africa Regional Statistics Program-for-Results

Guided by the continental second Strategy for Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA2), the Eastern Africa Regional Statistics Program-for-Results (EARSP-for-R) is currently supporting the implementation of the aggregated national statistics programs of Kenya, Rwanda, and



Tanzania to strengthen the harmonization, availability, and use of core economic and social statistics.

ACS is the implementing verification agency of the EARSP-for-R, it undertook verification of a subset of the EARSP Disbursement Linked Results using agreed verification protocols in Tanzania and Rwanda.



Modernizing Statistical Legislation: Strengthening Governance, Stakeholders' Engagement, and Innovation

5th – 7th August 2024, within the framework of the Development Account 14th Tranche (DA14) project, a meeting was jointly organized by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics (AITRS), and hosted by the Department of Statistics, Jordan (DOS). The event focused on the three DA14 target countries of the Arab States region: Jordan, Palestine, and Tunisia. ACS articulated the African experience in engaging with users and other stakeholders. The objectives included to:



- Facilitate a comprehensive understanding of robust legal frameworks essential for modernizing national statistical systems.
- Share international best practices and standards in statistical legislation and data governance.
- Build the capacity of statistical staff to adopt new technologies and methodologies for data collection, processing, and dissemination.
- Encourage collaboration among national statistical offices, policymakers, and data communities to enhance the quality and relevance of official statistics.

The event provided an opportunity for bilateral and multilateral meetings with the delegations of Palestine and Tunisia to address specific country-level interventions and findings from the regional meeting.

In-country capacity strengthening in production of a Vital Statistics report



Within the framework of transformation and modernization of statistical system, ACS in collaboration with the Office of National Statistics UK (ONS-UK), embarked on development of a training course for statistical computing and graphics of CRVS tailored towards cleaning and processing of

CRVS data to produce a vital statistics report based on the [standard guidelines and template](#) using R programming language. In addition, an R package called *crvsreport* was designed to extend the functionality of the base R system for vital statistics to output tables. This is being rolled out in a phased manner starting this August. The first workshop took place in Kampala, Uganda from 5th to 9th August and the second one from 19th to 23rd August 2024 in Lilongwe, Malawi.



This workshop aimed at strengthening the capacity of CRVS stakeholders to systematically organize existing data from civil registration for production of a vital statistics report using R programming language. The training focused on the use of R programming language, R studio and GitHub. The CRVS report content is available at <https://tech-acs.github.io/crvsreportpackage>. The vital statistics report is aimed at providing evidence on the performance of civil registration systems and making these results available for policy and planning for the country.

Strengthening applied research capacity for CRVS practitioners



21st to 28th August 2024. The Director led a team from ACS to undertake a mission to Eritrea. The mission intensively discussed and finalized the ECA short-term support programme to address the data gaps in key strategic indicators and strengthen the national statistical system.

The programme will support the Gross Domestic Product and key macroeconomic aggregates estimates for recent years and develop the capacity of the national statistical office to undertake the fourth Eritrea Population and Health Survey

(EPHS).

The mission joined ECA's Executive Secretary delegation, which visited Eritrea from 26th to 28th August 2024.

The President of Eritrea received the delegation. The delegation also had strategic meetings with key ministries and the president's economic advisor. The delegation also visited the Gergera dam and its integrated project. [Twitter](#)



Leaving No-one Behind Methodology



19th to 21st August 2024. ACS in partnership with UN ESCAP held a training in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on Leave No-one Behind Methodology using data from the Demographic and Health Surveys.

The method has been applied to SDG16.9 in the Asia and Pacific Region and will be applied to the African Region. The platform is used to generate evidence and improve the understanding of how various circumstances intersect and create inequality in access to basic opportunities

and services accessible at [ESCAP LNOB platform](#).

Prior to the training an online seminar was held focusing on leveraging data and innovative tools to monitor inequalities in Sustainable Development Goals.

Strengthening applied research capacity for CRVS practitioners



26th to 30th August 2024. ACS in collaboration with UNESCAP held a joint workshop in Dubai, UAE on strengthening applied research capacity for CRVS practitioners for the 2024 cohort one under the CRVS Applied Research Training (CART) Initiative. Philip Setel, Vital Strategies gave a keynote address reflecting on research priorities for CRVS systems improvement.

The workshop was attended by 34 participants from 17 different countries in the Asia Pacific and Africa regions. They are conducting operational research to improve CRVS systems in low- and middle-income countries (N=21; 62%) and studies making use of vital statistics based on registration records (N=13; 38%). A second cohort of researchers will soon start.

Training on Small Area Estimation Techniques for National Statistical Offices in Africa



26th to 30th August 2024. The ACS-UNECA, the UNSD, and the East African Community (EAC) partnered to offer an in-depth, five-day training program. The training provided a comprehensive understanding of methodologies for Small Area Estimation (SAE), hands-on experience in applying these techniques, and practical knowledge to implement SAE in their respective countries. This was preceded by a foundational eLearning course on Global training on disaggregated estimates using SAE methods in R programming language. The training was attended by 14 African countries.

AFRIGIST Governing Council Meeting



African Institute for Geospatial Information Science and Technology (AFRIGIST), formerly known as the regional centre for training aerospace survey under the auspice of UNECA is a bilingual inter-governmental institution (operating in English and French). It is dedicated to developing geospatial science and technology capacity in Africa. The Governing Council of the AFRIGIST (including ACS) held the 55th council meeting at Obafemi Awolowo University in Ile Ife, Osun State.

ACS Bids Farewell to Departing Staff Members



In August 2024, ACS bid farewell to two of its staff that left to continue with service elsewhere. Ms. Ana Carolina Peixoto Deveza and Ms. Anjana Dube.



Upcoming events

StatsTalk-Africa

ACS has scheduled the 19th StatsTalk -Africa webinar series on Tuesday, 18th September 2024, from 15:00 to 16:30 hrs EAT, which will focus on: Leveraging the UN Global Platform to foster innovation in African NSOs. It is organized by the United Nations Regional Hub for Big Data and Data Science in Africa in partnership with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). The webinar aims to introduce the platform to African NSOs, highlighting how it can be utilized to enhance their research projects, improve data processing capabilities, and support the adoption of cutting-edge technologies in statistical analysis. By participating in this webinar, African NSOs will gain insights into the platform's features, ongoing projects, and the potential for collaboration, all of which are crucial for advancing statistical capacity and meeting the evolving demands of data-driven decision-making.

Register in advance for this meeting [HERE](#). Contact the StatsTalk-Africa Core Team, statstalk-africa@un.org

Click [HERE](#) for more information on current and upcoming events of UNECA.



Global and continental statistical events

Here are some global and continental statistical [events](#) that will take place in September 2024:

Thank you.