





MEETING OF THE AFRICAN GROUP ON STATISTICAL TRAINING AND HUMAN RESOURCES (AGROST)



















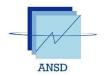




















I. Introduction

A meeting of the African Group on Statistical Training and Human Resources (AGROST) was jointly organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Centre for Data Development (C4D2) of the World Bank, in Dakar, Senegal, from 17 to 19 September 2019.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the following institutions: The Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBOS), Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS-Egypt), Instituto National de Estatistica di Angola (INE), Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie (INSD) du Burkina Faso, Institut de Statistiques et d'Études Économiques du Burundi (ISTEEBU), Institut National de la Statistique de Madagascar (INSTAT), Office National de la Statistique de Mauritanie (ONS), Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS) - University of Ghana, University of Ibadan - Nigeria, College of Business and Management Sciences - Makerere University - Uganda, Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographique (IFORD-Cameroun), Ecole Nationale de la Statistique du Niger, Ecole Supérieure de la Statistique et de l'Analyse de l'Information (ESSAI) de Tunisie, Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre (EASTC - Dar es Salam), Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée (ENSEA - Abidjan), École Nationale de la Statistique et de l'Analyse Economique (ENSAE - Dakar), UNECA and Southern African Development Community (SADC).

II. Background

Lack of human resources that can meet immense needs for statistical information created by global, regional and national development agendas, remains the key issue faced by the Africa region. Therefore, the reason for the establishment of the African Group on Statistical Training and Human Resources (AGROST), in 2009, is to promote statistical training through a better coordination between Statistical Training Centres (STCs), to harmonise curricula, to facilitate experience sharing and help STCs acquire more capabilities in terms of knowledge and infrastructure.

AGROST is one the Specialized Technical Group under the Startegy for the harmonisation of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA that reports to StatCom-Africa and CoDG.

Since its inception, thanks to ECA, AGROST meets every year for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating its activities, deciding on the strategic orientation of the group, and preparing the reports to the Statistical Commission for Africa and the Committee of Directors General of Statistics (CoDG).

Through the ongoing partnership with World Bank and Italian Cooperation, AGROST is engaged in a programme of introducing a curriculum on Household survey and enhancing member States experts to support the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in particular with regard to the Goal 1 - End poverty in all its forms everywhere. More broadly, Household surveys are a vital source of data for the 2030 and 2063 Agendas, national accounts, consumer price indices, and socioeconomic analyses for developing and monitoring the impacts of national policies. In June 2017, a partnership was established between ECA, World Bank, Italian Cooperation, the Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre (EASTC) and the École Nationale Supérieure de Statistique et d'Économie Appliquée (ENSEA) to provide theoretical and practical training on designing, implementation, and dissemination of results of household surveys to trainers from statistical training centres in Africa as well as

statisticians and officials from public institutions (national statistical offices or central banks) engaged in sample surveys.

Also, ECA is currently working with the Office for National Statistics (UK) on an exciting statistical leadership training programme for the African Statistical System. The programme aims at establishing and delivering statistical leadership training to equip senior leaders within African National Statistical Offices with the skills required to lead their organisations on a programme of statistical modernisation.

Hence, the meeting explored emergent and potential training subjects including those mentioned above and devise on the opportunities to increase the visibility and the funding of activities of the Group.

III. Objectives of the meeting

The main objectives of the meeting were:

- To take stock of activities conducted during the year 2018-2019.
- To review the Governance and the role of AGROST in light with the SHASA II.
- To examine Statistical Training Centres' Reports and Member States' needs.
- To provide guidance on the partnership entitled "Towards Modern and Innovative Household Surveys:
 Building Capacity to respond to Agenda 2063 & SDGs in Africa"
- To provide guidance on the statistical leadership training programme
- To discuss on AGROST perspective in light of regional and global development goals

IV. Expected outcomes

The main expected outcomes of the meeting were:

- A good understanding of the status of implementation of the training on Household Survey.
- Mobilizing support and engagement of Member States to statistical training
- Having an agreement on the participation of various partners to the training component
- A review of the activities of AGROST since the previous StatCom meeting.
- Identification of ways for improving the visibility of the Group
- Identification of potential sources of funding of the activities of the Group.

V. Proceedings

Opening statements

The meeting was officially opened by the Director General of the Agence Nationale de la Statistique et de la Démographie (ANSD), Senegal at 10.00 am Senegal time. In his statement, Mr. Babacar Ndir stressed on the need for statistical training on various domains in the context of Global, Regional, Sub-regional and national development agendas.

In his opening note, Mr. Oumar Sarr, a representative of ECA, pointed out the role of AGROST with regard to the need for meeting challenges related to statistical human resources.

Furthermore, Mr. Hugues Kouadio, the Director of ENSEA-Abidjan and AGROST Chairperson, highlighted the main achievements of the group since its inception and the role it plays on key subjects.

Election of the bureau

After the adoption of the agenda of the meeting, the participants elected the following bureau for the next two years:

Chair: ENSEA-Abidjan

1st Vice Chair: SSAE – Makerere University - Kampala

2nd Vice Chair: ESSAI - Tunis

3rd Vice Chair: IFORD - Yaounde

Rapporteur : EASTC - Dar es Salam

A Brief history of AGROST

The presentation recalled the circumstances under which AGROST was established; there were multiplicity of Regional groups in charge of statistical training. The ToRs, as elaborated for the Group at its inception were presented and the following key achievements were spelt out:

- Elaboration of Statistical Training Program for Africa
- Development of four baseline studies
- Implementation of a training program on agricultural statistics through the Global strategy for improvement of agricultural and rural statistics
- Implementation of a training program on household surveys through a partnership between World Bank (C4D2), Italian Cooperation, UNECA, ENSEA-Abidjan and EASTC-Dar es salam.
- Organization of regular annual meetings

The presentation was concluded by outlining of the main challenge of AGROST funding.

Statistical Training in the Region - Reports from STCs

Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS) - University of Ghana

RIPS was established in February 1972. Funding for RIPS was largely from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) while the government of Ghana hosted RIPS by providing infrastructural facilities at the University of Ghana. Member States were also expected to make regular financial contributions towards the research and training programmes and activities of the Institute. In late 1999, the UNFPA withdrew its funding and the institute started experiencing challenges. Since its creation RIPS has managed to produce 817 graduates (657 males and 160 females) at PgD/MA, Mphil and PhD levels. In addition to teaching and research, RIPS assists other institutions in short-term training programmes. The main identified challenges include:

- High cost of post graduate studies
- Lack of funding or sponsorship
- Limited space for Lecturers & Research Fellows and students
- High cost of software licenses and applications

<u>University of Ibadan, Department of Statistics</u>

The Department of Statistics was established in 1965 and started functioning in 1973. The programmes include: 1) Professional Diploma in Statistics (PDS); 2) Bachelor Degree (B.Sc); 3) Postgraduate Diploma in Statistics (PGDS); 4) Master Degree (M.Sc); 5) Doctorate Degree (PhD); and 5) Distance Learning Programme in Statistics. The department produces an average of 3000 Masters and 250 PhDs graduates every year. Beside statistical matters delivered, the department also conducts an Internship Training programme and an IT capacity building programme. Also the department has developed is a large partnership across the continent and the world.

Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographiques (IFORD)

The main mandate for IFORD is training in the area of demography and conduct researches on population issues. IFORD also assists countries in the implementation of M&E of projects and programmes on population. In 2018-2019, IFORD had enrolled 138 students distributed gender-wise as follow: 117 students in level of Master degree and 21 in the level of PhD. Currently the main challenges include: 1) lack of scholarships since UNFPA has stopped offering the scholarships; 2) low capacity of countries to sponsor their own students; 3) graduated students have problems to integrate in the labour market; and 4) lack of resources for improving lecturers' skills.

School of Statistics and Planning (SSP)

The Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (ISAE), the forerunner of the School of Statistics and Planning (SSP) was established as an autonomous body within the legal framework of Makerere University in July 1969. Under the United Nations Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA) and the plan of the Coordinating Committee for Statistical Development (CASD), the SSP was designated as one of the regional statistical training centres in the African region and was supported to spearhead professional training in official statistics for the English-speaking African countries. Since 1969, the SSP has trained a total of over 5000 statisticians, planners, applied economists and demographers. The Centre for Population and Applies Statistics (CPAS) is part of SSP and manages consultancy and research, to provide capacity training and research to Ministries, Department and Agencies in Uganda. The training programmes include: 1) Undergraduate programmes; and 2) Post-graduate

programmes 3) Short-term courses and workshops. As challenges, the followings are key: 1) Lack of space; 2) Lack of fellowships; and 3) Inadequacy of equipment.

Ecole Nationale de Statistique et d'Analyse Economique (ENSAE) – Senegal

ENSAE went from a basic Statistics College (in 1966) to a High School that delivers programme for Ingénieurs statisticiens économistes (ISE) (since 2008). The main mission of ENSAE is: 1) To provide initial training of statisticians and economists for the NSS; 2) To conduct or participate in research activities, particularly on statistical methods adapted to African contexts; and 3) To contribute to the promotion and dissemination of statistical culture in Senegal. ENSAE performs for the following levels of education: 1) Technicien Supérieur de la Statistique (TSS); 2) Ingénieur des Travaux Statistiques (ITS); and 3) Ingénieur Statisticien Economiste (ISE). The school is also in partnership with various entities within the continent and across the world.

Institut National de la Statistique (INSTAT) - Madagascar

INSTAT, in cooperation with the Institut National de Formation Administrative (INFA) and ENSEA-Abidjan, established, in 2010, the training of Senior Technicians: Assistants and Adjoints Techniques de la Statistique. This tripartite cooperation project is in line with the activities planned in the National Statistical Development Strategy (NSDS). This would involve the possession of qualified personnel who could strengthen the National Statistical System. At the maximum number of 25 per promotion and at the rate of a normal organization of the entrance competition every 2 years, the training is in its 6th cohort. The biggest challenge remains the mobilization of financial resources. This lack of funding has a significant impact on the course schedule. Another major challenge is the availability of teachers from INSTAT to deliver training on sectoral statistics.

Ecole Supérieure de la Statistique et de l'Analyse de l'Information (ESSAI) – Tunisia

Created in 2001, ESSAI celebrated its thousandth graduated student with the 2018/2019 promotion. More resources are needed, especially premises adapted to the size and ambitions of the school. Together with the National Statistical Institute (INS) and the National Statistical Council (NSC), ESSAI has been involved in the implementation of a capacity-building programme for the 52 Public Statistics Structures. Currently, the school is setting up a MASTER in data science in collaboration with other Tunisian institutions. ESSAI, in partnership with Mauritania, is participating in the statistical training that has started in Nouakchott.

INE de Angola

Angola is in a process of creating a National Statistical School. The process is at legal step validation. Further, a training plan is being elaborated by end of the current year to respond to the strong need of capacitating staff to provide indicators on SDGs.

<u>Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre – (EASTC) - Tanzania</u>

The Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre (EASTC) was established in 1965 to provide professional training in Official Statistics to employees of the National Statistical Offices of the then East African Community (EAC) at the levels of Certificate and Ordinary Diploma. In the year 2012 EASTC was transformed into a Higher Learning Institution whereby degrees: Bachelor of Official Statistics, Postgraduate Diploma in Official Statistics, Master of Official Statistics, Postgraduate Diploma in Agricultural Statistics, and Master of Science in Agricultural Statistics. Soon the Centre will be offering Bachelor of Data Science and Bachelor of GIS and Informatics to be followed by corresponding degrees. EASTC has continued to provide support to NSOs in data analysis short courses as well as

data collection through developing of ICT statistical programmes meant to be working tools, but in the process allowing for data collection.

Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée – (ENSEA) - Cote d'Ivoire

Established in 1961, ENSEA delivers diploma for Ingénieurs Statisticiens Economistes (ISE), Ingénieurs des Travaux Statistiques (ITS), Adjoints Techniques de la Statistique (ADS) and Agents Techniques de la Statistique (ATS). Further and more recently, ENSEA conducts courses at levels of Master: Masters in Agricultural Statistics, Master in Data Science and Master in Actuarial studies. The school also conducts a programme for PhD. Besides the training function, ENSEA assists government departments that provide services to continuously improve skills of their staff. Moreover, ENSEA conducts researches and fosters strong international relationships.

Training needs in line with SDGs and Agenda 2063 - NSO Reports

Institut National de la Statistique-Niger

In terms of the short, medium and long-term human capacity-building actions adopted by the INS, the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Formation en Statistique (ENSFS) which was training middle managers, has now been transformed in a higher school called Ecole Nationale de Statistique (ENSTAT-Niger). ENSTAT-Niger will conduct training programme at ITS level as per the Network of African Schools of Statistics (RESA). Students are sent to regional statistical training at various levels with World Bank and SWEDD Project support. The current programme is about on-job training on data processing and field workers and also for INS and the whole NSS staff.

Office National de la Statistique – ONS - Mauritanie

An Institut Supérieur des Métiers de la Statistique (ISMS) has been established to train middle managers at bachelor level. This bachelor will soon be harmonized at CAPESA level under the title 'Statistical Analysis' (AS) and will replace ITS. The ISMS will host the first promotion of 60 graduates from September 2019. It will be housed in the new ESP engineering cycle building pending the construction of its own premises. The recruitment process for teachers is under way. Later in 2020, the training at ISE level will start.

Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS-Egypt),

CAPMAS provides two types of training:1) Statistical Training; and 2) Information Technology Training. Its National Center for Statistical Training plays a leading role in the promotion of statistical work, whether at the national or regional level. The center organizes several basic and specialized training programs and also summer programmes for university students.

Institut National de la Statistique et de la Démographie – INSD - Burkina Faso

In support to the training of students, Burkina Faso annually offers 10 scholarships for AD and 20 scholarships for high level students in the major schools since 2014-2015. In addition, TFPs and Development Programs provide sponsor for students scholarships. However, there is still challenge on the scholarship with regards to the number of students to sponsor in RESA schools. It is planned to start a national statistical training centre in 2020.

Institut de Statistiques et d'Études Économiques du Burundi (ISTEEBU)

The first school year of the Bachelor's Cycle is open in the new Institut de Statistique Appliquée (ISTA) at Burundi University. Four departments are concerned: 1) Department of Statistical Engineering; 2) Department of Statistics and Probability; 3) Department of Actuarial; and 4) Other programmes pending on the NSS demands. Support is also given to candidates for PhD and to the training of trainers. Further, continuous learning receive support from the school.

Training capacity building programmes

Leadership Training Programme

Learning gained from the delivery sessions aims to inspire improvements and changes within an organisation at the senior and middle management level to champion changes in behaviours and ways of working within an NSO. It is designed to test and develop core leadership skills with regards to the 5 dimensions discussed in October 2018 as essential to a modern statistical leader:

- **Communication** The training will help leaders gain a greater understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. They will be offered techniques and feedback to develop their communication skills which will including questioning, listening and presentation skills.
- People Leadership The training provides tools and techniques to allow leaders to understand their teams and the individuals within those teams. This will enable them to motivate and manage their teams' performance more effectively.
- **Strategy -** The training enables leaders to look at their organisation strategically using pragmatic tools and techniques. This will allow them to better manage transformational change initiatives.
- Knowledge The training is focused on the leaders' abilities to manage processes and transformation at
 a high level. Leaders will be encouraged to develop and use knowledge of processes, techniques and
 culture to develop their personal influence and enable more commitment from their organisation and
 partners.
- Integrity The training gives leaders an opportunity to look at the perceptions people have about their leadership skills and personal strengths and weaknesses and their integrity.

Capacity development in household surveys for welfare analysis

<u>Aim:</u> to contribute to developing a sustainable system for monitoring the SDGs and other key development policy goals by supporting capacity development on household surveys in Statistics Training Centers & National Statistics Systems

- ✓ MOU signed by nine institutions in Rome in June 2017 by eight entities
- ✓ A larger training program aimed at increasing the capacity of statisticians and officials from public institutions in partner countries
- ✓ The initiative adopts a Training of Trainers approach firstly targeting instructors from training centers: training, updating curricula & teaching material
- ✓ The program will subsequently support the regional training centers as they train national statisticians

- ✓ Strengthening regional statistical training programs in household surveys will increase the sustainability of household survey systems around the world
- ✓ Initial financial support is from Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- ✓ Managed by the WB's Center for Development Data (C4D2), Rome
- ✓ Other partner institutions provide technical support
- ✓ The Bank of Italy provides training facilities in addition to technical support.

Achievements:

- ✓ Four C4D2 Training Initiative courses have taken place: Nov 2017, May 2018, Nov 2018, June 2019
- ✓ About 100 participants in total have attended the C4D2 courses in Italy.
- ✓ 4 Short courses conducted by EASTC & ENSEA
 - ✓ "Designing Household Surveys to Measure Poverty & Wellbeing"
 - ✓ "CAPI and Survey Solutions"
- ✓ Short Courses attended by 80 participants in total from national statistical systems in Africa
- ✓ Used material and knowledge from the C4D2 training
- ✓ Internships at C4D2 in Rome and other countries

Why is this initiative unique?

- ✓ builds on existing curricula on Household Surveys at the training centers
- ✓ ensures course harmonization across training centers on household surveys
- ✓ builds a network of household survey experts breaking the language barrier
- enables the trainees to have a better command on recent literature and evidence on designing household surveys
- ✓ upgrades existing household survey courses with up-to-date material on measuring consumption aggregates

Challenges

✓ Current funding will end in Oct 2020 - life after?

Making the project more visible also attracts a lot of demand against the limited resources

Opportunities

- ✓ Demand for the training remains high
- ✓ There are opportunities for partnerships
- ✓ Changing data ecosystem requires continued updating of teaching material and knowledge of facilitators

AGROST perspectives

Funding

The AGROST training institutions are known in Africa for providing quality statistical training programmes and therefore stood a better chance to attract funding from such institutions like the World Bank, IMF, UNSD, PARIS21, ONS UK and the Pan African Institutions with good project proposals. For instance, the World Bank is taking a different approach to support statistical activities including capacity building. AGROST can benefit from the new initiative with a very good and convincing project proposal. It has started working with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and capacity needs assessments were conducted. AGROST can equally do a capacity needs assessment and come up with very good training programmes to address these capacity needs as they can perform better in this area than the RECs. AGROST would need to put its house in order by ensuring that capacities of its training institutions are properly assessed, and areas of comparative advantage are identified for each institution so that the best is provided to the beneficiaries and the quality statistics that we are all yearning for is produced. Another opportunity is that AGROST may need to approach the RECs for a joint implementation of the regional projects as they are the service providers rather than hiring services from beyond the region. This can be done when it is absolutely necessary.

The United Nations system through its specialized structures such as UNFPA and UNICEF, which use a lot of statistical data to evaluate their cooperation with African countries, can be used to finance AGROST's statistical training programmes and other activities.

Visibility

AGROST should take opportunities of fora to improve its visibility such as: 1) African Statistics Day; 2) Union for the Study of the African Population; 3) International Union for the Scientific Study of Population. During these fora, AGROST can participate by hosting a stand to present its products. AGROST can even offer its services to participate in the organization of these African conferences.

- 1) Documentation of activities in the STCs and NSOs there is a need for a one stop shop where AGROST activities can be provided and accessed.
- 2) Creation of a platform for sharing training resources.
- 3) Create effective and functional network (e.g. WhatsApp group) for real-time information sharing.

CONCLUSIONS

Express need for a virtual platform to increase visibility of the group and its activities; also the platform may help sharing materials on training.

SHaSA II should give a large place for training of trainers in order to enhance skills of lecturers

Encourage collaboration between regional schools and national schools to assist latters in developing their training programmes

Call upon partners to help sustainability of statistical training centres given the fact that majority of them (in particular for the new born STCs) still count on partnership to conduct their programmes

The Group noticed that females are not well represented in the students population; therefore, the group call upon countries and STCs to prioritize training of females

Participants raised the issue of the cost of training; thus, countries and STCs should to think in how to mitigate cost of training

In order to strengthen collaboration between STCs, it is recommended to STCs to jointly conduct researches and to organize frequently study tours for sharing experiences

Harmonisation programmes and curricula is still challenge; so STCs are invited to continue working on the harmonisation as done for the HHS curricula by ENSEA-Abidjan and EASTC-Dar es salam.

Many students struggle for getting employment after their graduation; therefore STCs should explore best ways of finding employment for their graduated students.

Group to think about the multiplicity of diploma and how to align and harmonise them for equivalence purpose

Suggestions for sustainability of the different centres: self-funding (as the example of EASTAC for software development, or the Centre for Applied Statistics which is managed on a business model).

There is need to consolidate on the existing successes and to urgently scale up the level of activities within the group and the continent in general. In this respect, the following activities can be conducted in 2019 - 2020.

- 1) Promoting mobility of staff and students among member institution.
- 2) Explore the possibility of mobilizing funds for AGROST activities from industries, individuals, institutions and governments in the continents to run the training activities in the STCs.
- Organize series of specialized training programmes in partnership with big institutions such as Central Banks, Industries (Oil, Telecommunications, Power, Airlines, Finance, Media, etc), Government Agencies & Ministries, NGOs, etc
- 4) Statistical advocacy inclusion of statistics as a subject by the national and regional examination bodies, e.g. WEAC.
- 5) Connect with African Statistical Association (AfSA) to organize an international statistical conference that will bring producers, users and researchers of statistics together.

Recommendations - Setting up an African e-learning platform dedicated to statistical training, this platform would offer online graduate training in statistics (one can start with a Master's degree for example).- Promote exchanges between the different training institutions of both teachers and students, for example, one visiting professor per year per institution.- Working to strengthen the independence of NSOs from political powers - To promote the development of the tools necessary for the harmonisation of statistical systems within different countries (i.e.NSOs and different statistical structures).

Creation of centres of excellence on Statistics for Southern African countries (English). Identification of hosting country in terms of accessibility, infrastructures already in place, human resources/trainers.

The group commend efforts made by the C4D2 of the World Bank for the implementation of the Household surveys training programme.

The group encourage C4D2 to continue the programme and to seek means for expanding it to the rest of Statistical Training Centers.

Further, the group call for online training on household surveys methods.

The group welcome the leadership training programme and urge ECA and ONS-UK to start the implementation of the programme.

However, the group expressed his concern on the programme without a baseline study on the real needs of countries. Also, the group call for the involvement of experts from countries in the delivery of the courses.

Participants urge ONS to inform on the planning for the rest of countries and in particular for piloting francophone countries.

Regional institutions capacity building programmes

The group call upon regional institutions to largely inform on the online courses they organise and also to diversify the subjects.

$Annual\ meeting\ of\ the\ African\ Group\ on\ Statistical\ Training\ and\ Human\ Resources\ (AGROST)$

Dakar, Senegal

17 to 19 September 2019

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