



Economic and Social Council

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Economic Commission for Africa
Statistical Commission for Africa
Ninth session

Addis Ababa, 30 October–1 November 2024

Concept note

I. Introduction and rationale

1. The Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) established the Statistical Commission for Africa, an intergovernmental entity, in 2007. The Statistical Commission operates within the framework of the policies and procedures of the United Nations and is overseen by the Conference of African Ministers.
2. African countries are represented in the Statistical Commission by the heads of national statistical offices, the heads of the statistical units of the regional economic communities, the heads of statistical training centres, geoinformation system experts, information and communications technology experts and regional and international development partners.
3. Representatives of such entities as the Forum on African Statistical Development and the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa regularly report on the progress that they have made to the Statistical Commission for Africa.
4. The ninth session of the Statistical Commission for Africa will be held under the theme “Unleashing the potential of African innovation in statistical development”, which reflects the imperative to challenge traditional approaches to statistical development by using disruptive innovation to bridge the statistical literacy divide on the continent. By harnessing African innovation and technology to revolutionize data collection, analysis and dissemination processes, Africa will leverage home-grown solutions, foster a culture of innovation in statistical practice and be propelled towards achieving its development goals.
5. The events scheduled to be held alongside the ninth session include:
 - (a) Preliminary events, including:
 - (i) The eleventh meeting of the Forum on African Statistical Development;
 - (ii) A meeting of young African statisticians, as part of the Takwimu Young African Statisticians Programme.
 - (b) The tenth meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa, which will be held under the theme “Harnessing the potential of geospatial intelligence for a disaster-resilient Africa”, will be held in parallel with the ninth session of the Statistical



Commission. The two entities will also meet jointly on several occasions over the course of the week, with a view to highlighting the strong connections between geospatial information systems and statistics.

II. Objectives

6. The Statistical Commission for Africa is the regional equivalent of the Statistical Commission of the United Nations, which is the highest body in the statistical system of the United Nations. The Statistical Commission for Africa is the highest decision-making body in Africa and is responsible for setting statistical standards and promoting the adoption of best practice in data and statistical concepts and methods. It supports the implementation of those standards, concepts and methods at the national, subregional and regional levels.

7. The sessions of the Statistical Commission for Africa provide an opportunity for participants to discuss progress and developments in African statistical systems and the links among African and global statistical systems, with a view to ensuring that Africa is not left behind in global statistical initiatives. During the sessions, representatives of members of ECA are able to meet international partners to discuss their needs.

8. The ninth session will offer members of the Statistical Commission the opportunity to take stock of ongoing global initiatives and seek ways to mainstream and take ownership of new and updated methodologies to enhance their statistical capacity. An emphasis will be placed on the imperative to challenge traditional approaches to statistical development by using disruptive innovation to bridge the statistical literacy divide in Africa. Participants will discuss the ways in which national statistical systems can leverage the innovation and technology solutions that originate in Africa to respond to data needs adequately.

III. Expected outcomes

9. Holding the ninth session of the Statistical Commission in parallel with the tenth meeting of the Regional Committee is expected to lead to the following outcomes:

- (a) Greater dissemination of methodologies for leveraging home-grown solutions and innovation to modernize statistical systems;
- (b) Stronger collaboration among statisticians and geospatial experts;
- (c) Increased awareness of the opportunities for statistical support from partners.

IV. Role of the Economic Commission for Africa

10. As the secretariat of the Statistical Commission for Africa, ECA will organize and service the event under the guidance of the Bureau of the Statistical Commission.

11. ECA, through the African Centre for Statistics, will provide the necessary support for the following activities:

- (a) Drafting parliamentary reports;
- (b) Preparing all related technical documents;
- (c) Identifying presenters, facilitators and chairs for the meetings to be held during the session;

(d) Mobilizing regional and international partners to attend and contribute to the event;

(e) Mobilizing resources to cover meeting expenses, including costs related to advocacy and communication, support staff, venue and hospitality services, printing and interpreting;

(f) Preparing outcome documents, which will include the recommendations and final report on the session.

V. Venue and date

12. The ninth session of the Statistical Commission for Africa will be held from 30 October to 1 November 2024 at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa.

13. All preliminary events will be held on 28 and 29 October 2024.¹ Institutions and countries that are willing to organize preliminary events are requested to contact ECA through the address provided in section VIII before 20 July 2024.

VI. Languages

14. The ninth session of the Statistical Commission for Africa will be held in plenary sessions, for which simultaneous interpretation in English and French will be provided.

15. Simultaneous interpretation will not be provided for side events nor for break-out sessions that may be organized for more in-depth discussions.

VII. Participants

16. Official national delegations to the Statistical Commission for Africa shall be led by the heads of national statistical offices. In addition, given the objectives of the meetings, representatives of other national statistical entities and geospatial and civil registration experts will also participate.

17. Observers from intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, national, subregional, regional and international organizations, the academic community, research institutions, the private sector and related industries are invited to attend. In addition, the attendance of African statisticians who have played a notable role in promoting statistics in the region is welcomed. Observers may attend all sessions except those designated as closed-door sessions and may participate in discussions; they may not, however, vote on any issues.

VIII. Contact information

18. For more information, please contact the Chief of the Statistical Development, Data Innovation and Outreach Section, African Centre for Statistics, ECA, Joseph Tinfissi Ilboudo (office tel.: +251 11 544 5533; mobile: +251 92 416 3430; email: ilboudo@un.org).

¹ The programme containing all the events will be shared in due course.