

**Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General

29 July 2026

Original: English

Economic Commission for Africa**Statistical Commission for Africa**

Tenth session

Addis Ababa (hybrid), 21–23 October 2026

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

**Statistical programme of the Economic Commission
for Africa: statutory issues****Report on statistical capacity development in Africa****I. Introduction**

1. The rapidly evolving data landscape, shaped by the ongoing demands of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, regional development frameworks such as Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union, and emerging global challenges, continues to put pressure on national statistical systems in Africa. While notable progress has been made in recent years in African countries, significant gaps remain in their ability to produce timely, high-quality and disaggregated data that can serve as guidance for evidence-based policymaking and to monitor development outcomes. In this context, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in collaboration with pan-African institutions and other partners, has provided targeted capacity-building support to States across the continent, with a focus on digital transformation, institutional modernization and the use of innovative data sources and technologies to meet growing data demands and enhance the relevance and use of official statistics.

2. This report covers statistical capacity-development activities undertaken from November 2024 to April 2026, drawing on selected documents from the ninth session of the Statistical Commission for Africa, held in 2024. Following the introduction (section I), sections II and III address the institutional and organizational development of national statistical systems, respectively. Sections IV and V focus on statistical processes and technology, respectively. Sections VI and VII cover human and organizational capital development, while section VIII highlights challenges and section IX contains some points submitted to the Statistical Commission for Africa for its consideration.

II. Institutional development of national statistical systems

3. During the reporting period, the focus was on strengthening coordination, governance, statistical planning and legal frameworks for official statistics at the national and subregional levels.

4. ECA, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community, the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century and Statistics

* E/ECA/STATCOM/10/2026/1.



Norway continued to support the design, implementation and evaluation of national strategies for the development of statistics. Botswana, Burkina Faso, the Comoros, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Rwanda, Seychelles and South Sudan received support from those organizations in 2024 and 2025. ECA, jointly with the Partnership, developed new guidelines on mainstreaming enablers of transformation and modernization into the lifecycle of national strategies for the development of statistics.

5. ECA supported South Sudan in disseminating its National Bureau of Statistics Act and strengthening institutional arrangements for official statistics and Burundi in implementing legal reforms to strengthen professional independence, coordination mechanisms and statistical legislation. ECA also supported geospatial governance initiatives in Mali and South Africa through the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework. AfDB assisted countries in strengthening their legal and governance frameworks and promoted stakeholder coordination mechanisms aimed at improving the alignment of statistical systems with Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals and the priorities of the second Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa.

6. At the subregional level, the regional economic communities received support from pan-African institutions and the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century, in particular in formulating and implementing their strategies for the development of statistics. COMESA was supported in formulating its third strategy, intended to strengthen harmonization, comparability and knowledge transfer among its member States.

7. At the continental level, the African Union Institute for Statistics helped to strengthen governance and coordination arrangements by supporting the operationalization of specialized technical groups under the second Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa and worked with AfDB to draw up a road map for the formulation of strategies for the development of statistics within the Arab Maghreb Union. To maintain continuity in coordination, ECA and AfDB continued to serve as the secretariats for the specialized technical groups.

III. Organizational development of national statistical systems

8. During the reporting period, emphasis was placed on modernizing national accounts, enhancing quality assurance systems, improving data governance and building capacity for sectoral and gender statistics.

9. ECA, in collaboration with the Statistics Division and the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, held a regional workshop in Nairobi in September 2025 on data ethics, data governance and data quality in a changing data ecosystem. The workshop provided a platform for countries to share experiences and strengthen capacity in managing emerging data sources while ensuring compliance with ethical standards and good governance principles.

10. At the country level, ECA provided technical assistance to South Sudan between October and December 2025 to conduct a comprehensive data maturity assessment of its national statistical system. The assessment helped to identify institutional strengths and gaps in data governance, data management, data-sharing, and data-use practices, providing a road map for strengthening the country's statistical ecosystem.

11. AfDB continued to support improvements in data governance frameworks through the modernization of statistical systems and data infrastructure, including by supporting initiatives such as the Open Data

Platform, implementation of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange standard and the Data Innovation for Africa programme. It also supported countries in strengthening their institutional arrangements for data management, interoperability, standardization and dissemination. These efforts were complemented by the promotion of the pan-African Data Sharing Community, aimed at fostering interoperability, data exchange and collaboration among national statistical systems through a more integrated continental data ecosystem.

12. ECA supported Togo in formulating a national quality assurance framework. The process included a diagnostic assessment of the national statistical system against 19 quality principles and the validation of the national framework. The framework provides a structured mechanism to improve the relevance, accuracy, coherence, timeliness and accessibility of official statistics.

13. At the continental level, the African Union Institute for Statistics, through its National Accounts Database System capacity development programme, supported 15 of its member States in strengthening their quality assurance processes and governance arrangements for compiling national accounts. These efforts helped to improve compliance with international statistical standards and enhance the quality and comparability of economic statistics.

14. The growing importance of alternative and citizen-generated data sources was reflected in AfDB support for the implementation of citizen-generated data initiatives in Uganda as part of its broader data innovation agenda.

15. ECA supported the stakeholder engagement processes of several countries, including South Sudan, whose gender analysis report it validated in August 2025, and Burundi, whose 2026–2028 gender statistics action plan it reviewed and endorsed in October 2025. These processes involved government institutions, civil society organizations, development partners and other data users, reinforcing inclusive governance and national ownership of statistical programmes.

IV. Advancing statistical processes

16. During the reporting period, progress was made in the modernization of production processes with the use of automated tools, standardized methods, and administrative and alternative data sources; improved interoperability; and integration of geospatial and innovative technologies.

17. ECA, AfDB and the African Union Institute for Statistics supported the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts, gross domestic product (GDP) rebasing exercises, preparations for the transition to the 2025 System of National Accounts and the integration of natural resource and satellite accounts in a number of countries. For instance, a readiness assessment for GDP rebasing was undertaken in Togo; technical assistance was provided to Eritrea in respect of the compilation of national accounts and methods of GDP estimation; and collaboration was undertaken with the Office for National Statistics of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to enhance capacity for the implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting in Africa. Fifteen countries received targeted support, in particular countries lagging in the adoption of the 2008 System of National Accounts. These efforts were reinforced through continental coordination mechanisms, including the Specialized Technical Group on National Accounts and Price Statistics, which was convened by ECA, the African Union Institute for Statistics and AfDB in June 2025 and brought together statisticians, policymakers and development partners to accelerate preparations for the

adoption of the 2025 System of National Accounts and the modernization of price statistics.

18. AfDB carried out diagnostic studies of national accounts systems in five pilot countries to assess readiness for the 2025 System of National Accounts and to identify institutional and methodological gaps. In collaboration with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), ECA and the African Union Institute for Statistics organized workshops to support countries in preparing for the implementation of the 2025 System of National Accounts and the seventh edition of the Balance of Payments Manual. Additional efforts were focused on strengthening the adoption of international statistical classifications, with training programmes encouraging countries to establish dedicated classification units within their national statistics offices and align their classification systems with emerging international standards. AfDB also coordinated the 2024 cycle of the International Comparison Programme for Africa while advancing preparations for the 2027 edition of the Programme, which is designed to strengthen the harmonization and comparability of economic statistics across the continent.

19. ECA developed semi-automated tools for compiling the African Continental Input-Output Table, integrating supply-use tables, input-output tables and trade statistics to generate trade-in-value-added and global-value-chain indicators for several countries, including Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mali, Senegal and South Africa.

20. In November 2024, ECA and the Office for National Statistics of the United Kingdom supported the Gambia Bureau of Statistics in conducting post-enumeration survey matching with census records using automated matching techniques, enhancing the efficiency and accuracy of census coverage assessment. In March 2026, the Food Security Statistics Workshop held by the African Union Institute for Statistics in Yaoundé supported Cameroon and Chad in standardizing the processing of data from household consumption and expenditure surveys to generate reliable food security indicators. AfDB supported Madagascar and Zambia in producing and disseminating their food balance sheets.

21. From February to October 2025, ECA supported countries in strengthening migration and labour-market statistics through improved use of administrative records, harmonized reporting frameworks and standardized data exchange mechanisms. In March 2025, a workshop on administrative data for migration statistics, held jointly by the Statistics Division, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Collaborative on Administrative Data in Johannesburg, South Africa, helped to strengthen the capacities of national statistics offices, labour ministries and immigration authorities across Southern Africa. Migration and displacement statistics were further advanced as the African Union Institute for Statistics published its *Guidelines on Migration and Displacement Statistics* in December 2025, which provided a harmonized framework for data compilation, exchange and reporting.

22. In 2025, ECA and the African Union Institute for Statistics held a forum on administrative data in Casablanca, Morocco, bringing together 145 participants from national statistics offices, ministries, customs administrations and central banks. The forum promoted greater use of administrative data and stronger institutional collaboration across data-producing agencies.

23. ECA piloted innovative approaches to statistical production, including the use of web scraping for price statistics, GDP estimation using administrative records, and informal sector modelling in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya and Togo. These initiatives demonstrated the potential of alternative data sources to complement traditional surveys and improve coverage, timeliness and reliability.

24. Targeted support was provided to Burundi in harmonizing agropastoral administrative data and to Cameroon in improving turnover indicators based on value added tax. ECA and COMESA used camera-based video monitoring systems at border posts as a potential tool for measuring small-scale cross-border trade, illustrating the growing application of big data and data science techniques to official statistics. Specific interventions also included support for the development of tourism satellite accounts and assistance to Sao Tome and Principe in strengthening tourism statistics.

25. AfDB promoted the use of administrative and innovative data sources through its Data Innovation for Africa programme and through projects aimed at improving the quality of socioeconomic statistics. These efforts advanced the integration of administrative records and emerging data sources into national statistical systems to enhance evidence-based policymaking.

26. During capacity-development activities relating to the modernization of national accounts, the African Union Institute for Statistics raised awareness of the importance of administrative data, encouraging States members of the African Union to integrate value added tax, customs and tax records into statistical production processes in order to improve the measurement of both the informal and the digital economies.

27. AfDB scaled up the adoption of its upgraded Open Data Platform 2.0, which incorporates the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange standard and emerging artificial intelligence capabilities to support data management, standardization, interoperability and dissemination. In addition, 41 African countries introduced National Summary Data Pages as part of their implementation of the Data Standards Initiatives of IMF, which also include the Enhanced General Data Dissemination System, the Special Data Dissemination Standard and the Special Data Dissemination Standard Plus. With support from AfDB through its Open Data Platform 2.0, Mauritius became the first African country to adhere to the Special Data Dissemination Standard Plus.

28. In 2025, ECA helped to organize a regional workshop held in Nairobi on modernizing African geodetic infrastructure as part of the African Geodetic Reference Frame initiative, thereby contributing to the development of accurate spatial data infrastructure to support statistical and development planning. Uganda received support in using geospatial census data, while several other countries received support to carry out activities in geospatial data management, digitization, georeferencing and spatial analyses. The activities supported included water productivity assessment, crop monitoring, land-use mapping, vegetation monitoring and flood analysis using geographic information system and remote-sensing technologies.

V. Harnessing technology

29. Technology plays a vital role in transforming statistical production, dissemination and access. During the reporting period, the focus was on leveraging data innovation, big data and emerging technologies, digital censuses and survey operations, open data initiatives and data exchange standards to strengthen national statistical systems and improve the quality, timeliness and accessibility of official statistics.

30. Through its Data Innovation for Africa programme, AfDB helped countries to assess their data innovation maturity and establish data innovation laboratories, thereby creating institutional environments for experimentation with big data and emerging technologies. It also promoted the use of alternative and innovative data sources in measuring development outcomes and made its practical guide entitled “*Data Innovation for Africa (DI4A) Initiative – A*

Practical Guide to Applying the AfDB's Data Innovation Maturity Model'' available as a public good.

31. AfDB further supported the modernization of statistical systems by incorporating artificial intelligence capability into its Open Data Platform and promoting data innovation across its member countries. Workshops on big data for macroeconomic analysis were held in Mauritius and Rwanda, helping to strengthen capacity in the use of non-traditional data sources and advanced analytics for economic monitoring and forecasting. In addition, the steering committee of the Data Science Hub met in March 2025 to review progress in the uptake of data science within national statistics offices, alignment of national activities with continental and subregional data initiatives and strengthening of partnerships with central banks and telecommunications operators to enhance the use of alternative data sources.

32. Considerable progress was observed in the digitization of censuses and surveys through the deployment of computer-assisted personal interview technologies, digital questionnaires, mobile data-collection platforms and real-time monitoring dashboards. ECA and AfDB supported the integration of digital tools for data collection and dissemination in the production of agricultural data and in census operations. In Guinea, experts were trained in tablet provisioning and dashboard configuration, leading to the successful deployment of a census monitoring dashboard during census operations. Botswana received technical assistance in optimizing digital questionnaires and deploying analytics modules for supervisors in its first fully digital agricultural census. ECA also supported the independent monitoring of the population and housing census pilot in Sierra Leone, assessing operational readiness, compliance with national legislation and international standards, and overall effectiveness of digital census processes.

33. ECA supported Namibia to strengthen its sampling frame methodologies and introduce a survey monitoring tool for the household income and expenditure survey, including automated anomaly detection alerts to enhance data quality assurance. In Malawi, ECA supplied more than 2,000 tablets to facilitate digital data collection for the country's first digital national census of agriculture and livestock.

34. ECA enhanced access to statistical information by developing the ECStats Mobile Application, a mobile statistical platform that provides open access to country and subregional profiles, dashboards and search functionalities for such users as policymakers, researchers, statisticians and journalists. ECA deployed a customized census executive monitor for the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency to support monitoring and use of the results of the 2022 population and housing census.

35. AfDB supported its member countries in modernizing data dissemination by scaling up its Open Data Platform and supporting open data initiatives such as the Africa Information Highway. These platforms continue to be upgraded through the integration of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange standard, which facilitates standardization, interoperability and efficiency in data-sharing across institutions and countries.

36. In 2025, SADC, with support from the World Bank and technical assistance from the International Labour Organization, organized a workshop on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange and data modelling for the SADC Labour Market Observatory held in Johannesburg, South Africa. The workshop built capacity in standardized labour-market data exchange and helped to strengthen labour-market information systems across the SADC subregion.

37. ECA and partners launched the African eCRVS Shared Asset initiative, a collaborative effort to harmonize and standardize electronic civil registration and vital statistics systems across Africa led by an advisory board comprising

11 members of ECA. A digital solutions framework, guiding principles, privacy and security decision tools and functional requirements aligned with international best practices were developed.

VI. Human capital and capacity development

38. During the reporting period, continental and subregional organizations strengthened the skills of statisticians, data scientists, managers and policymakers through training, leadership development, peer learning and inclusion initiatives. Capacity-building covered censuses, national accounts, administrative data, geospatial information, civil registration and vital statistics, agricultural statistics, data science, artificial intelligence and statistical leadership.

39. ECA and partners implemented extensive technical training programmes to strengthen competencies throughout the statistical production cycle. A population and housing census workshop was held in Pretoria in 2025, bringing together 214 participants in person and online from 26 African countries. Additional census-related capacity-building included training for staff members of the Lesotho Bureau of Statistics on the use of a census field monitoring dashboard and support to Botswana in developing national capacity to use the Census and Survey Processing System for conducting computer-assisted personal interviews in preparation for its forthcoming census.

40. Capacity strengthening in economic statistics was a major focus. ECA trained countries on quarterly national accounts concepts and tools, while AfDB and the African Union Institute for Statistics provided training on key national accounts platforms, such as the National Accounts Database System and the ERETES tool,¹ and capacity-building support for the compilation of purchasing power parities. A number of other capacity-building initiatives were undertaken to support the development of agricultural statistics through training on the conduct of agricultural censuses, compilation of food balance sheets and dissemination of agricultural data. Under the Statistical Capacity Building Program, AfDB sponsored postgraduate education in official statistics for 14 officials of the Somalia National Bureau of Statistics and federal member states of Somalia at the Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre in Dar es Salaam, the United Republic of Tanzania. In addition, 66 staff from the same institutions undertook short courses in data analysis and management at Makerere University, Uganda, and other local training centres in Mogadishu.

41. As regards civil registration and vital statistics systems, ECA organized subregional and national training activities on civil registration and vital statistics data analysis, reporting, vital statistics report production, the R programming language and automated reporting systems. These activities benefited participants from numerous countries, including Burundi, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, strengthening national capacity to produce timely and standardized vital statistics reports.

42. ECA delivered a workshop to government officials in Eritrea on the use of geographic information system, remote sensing, geostatistics and geospatial applications, helping to enhance geospatial and environmental statistics capacities. It also held a workshop in Windhoek for participants from Burundi and Namibia to strengthen capacities relating to climate, environmental, geospatial and disaster indicators.

43. To support data dissemination and interoperability, ECA worked with AfDB and the Office for National Statistics of the United Kingdom to organize

¹ ERETES is a software application developed by the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies of France for national accounts.

training on the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange standard, the Open SDG dissemination platform, the Open Data Platform and application programming interfaces, including workshops in Kenya, Ethiopia and Senegal.

44. Data science and emerging technologies featured prominently in capacity-development programmes. In November 2024, ECA conducted a training session in Abuja on Python and machine learning for GDP nowcasting, covering predictive modelling, feature engineering and time-series analysis for economic data. ECA also disseminated technical newsletters, GDP nowcasting case studies, web-scraping protocols and estimation templates to more than 1,000 stakeholders through the United Nations Regional Hub for Big Data and Data Science in Africa. Modules on artificial intelligence and digital transformation were also integrated into the statistical leadership training programmes delivered by the African Union Institute for Statistics in Nairobi in 2025 and Cotonou, Benin, in 2026, reflecting growing demand for advanced analytical competencies within national statistical systems.

45. ECA promoted collaboration through workshops and technical forums that brought together representatives of national statistics offices, line ministries, regional economic communities and development partners to share experiences and good practices. In addition, AfDB promoted communities of practice and South-South learning through its subregional capacity-building programmes and technical assistance initiatives. Similarly, the African Union Institute for Statistics, in collaboration with AfDB, helped to strengthen collaboration through the meetings of the Institute's Specialized Technical Group on Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources and Climate Change, bringing together States, regional economic communities and partners to coordinate statistical training and capacity-building activities. Additional specialized training programmes addressed emerging needs in small-area estimation, migration statistics based on administrative data, food security statistics and agricultural data systems.

46. Gender considerations were integrated into numerous training programmes, with women actively represented in capacity-building activities relating to censuses, civil registration and vital statistics, economic statistics, geospatial data and the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange standard. For example, women accounted for over one third of participants in a continental population and housing census workshop and represented significant proportions of trainees in programmes on national accounts, civil registration and vital statistics, geospatial data and the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange standard.

47. In 2024, ECA, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), implemented the training component of the second phase of the Global Strategy for the Improvement of Agricultural and Rural Statistics. The component comprised scholarships for master's programmes in agricultural statistics and basic training in the fundamentals of agricultural statistics. The scholarships supported 48 scholars from 24 members of ECA, with women accounting for 42 per cent of beneficiaries. In April 2026, under the third phase of the Global Strategy, ECA and FAO worked with the École Nationale Supérieure de Statistique et d'Économie Appliquée to deliver a workshop in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The workshop aimed to build foundational knowledge of agricultural statistics among mid-level staff of national statistics offices and ministries of agriculture, to develop practical skills in data processing, analysis and dissemination, to introduce participants to the Generic Statistical Business Process Model and its application to agricultural survey cycles, and to foster collaboration and peer learning. The training was attended by 26 participants, 8 of whom were women, representing Botswana, Cabo Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, Mauritania, Namibia and a regional organization.

48. COMESA and AfDB promoted inclusion through targeted interventions designed to strengthen gender and infrastructure statistics in 23 countries in transition. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development led the implementation of broader socioeconomic statistics capacity-building programmes targeting vulnerable and lower-capacity countries.

49. Beyond training delivery, considerable effort was devoted to strengthening the sustainability of statistical capacity development. ECA supported curriculum reform initiatives, including a workshop at the University of Juba to review and strengthen applied statistics training, with a view to developing a pipeline of qualified statisticians for the national statistical system of South Sudan.

VII. Organizational capital development

50. During the reporting period, efforts were centred on modernizing the institutional architecture of the African Statistical System through leadership development, support to organizational change and initiatives to strengthen future talent pipelines.

51. ECA, in collaboration with the Office for National Statistics of the United Kingdom and the Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre, piloted the integration of “leadership development” and “women into leadership” modules into the Training Centre’s programmes. In this connection, a training-of-trainers workshop involving 15 participants was held in Dar es Salaam, the United Republic of Tanzania, in March 2025, and another was held in the third quarter of 2025.

52. At the continental level, the African Union Institute for Statistics collaborated with the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century to organize successive statistical leadership training programmes for heads of national statistics offices. The programmes equipped senior statistical leaders from more than 26 African countries with competencies in strategic visioning, organizational management, change management, emotional intelligence, innovation leadership and the responsible use and promotion of artificial intelligence within official statistics. In addition, AfDB supported leadership and institutional strengthening through technical assistance programmes, including support to the induction and orientation of governing board members of national statistics offices.

53. Support for organizational change and transformation included assistance from AfDB to its member countries in strengthening the institutional arrangements, governance systems and management practices needed for modern statistical systems. In addition, technical support provided under the Africa Infrastructure Knowledge Program helped to strengthen institutional capacity to produce and manage infrastructure statistics across key sectors, including energy, information and communications technology, water and sanitation, and transport.

54. ECA implemented a civil registration and vital statistics mentorship programme targeting countries with persistently low levels of civil registration coverage and completeness, including Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Ghana, Lesotho, Somalia, South Sudan and Togo. The programme provided tailored technical guidance and peer support with the aim of accelerating institutional learning and strengthening national civil registration and vital statistics systems.

55. In collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, ECA continued to run the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Applied Research and Training Programme, bringing together researchers and practitioners from 11 countries in the first cohort and 14 in the second cohort.

A third cohort is currently participating in the programme. Participants have benefited from structured learning, applied research opportunities and cross-regional knowledge exchange.

56. The Takwimu Young African Statisticians Programme continued to support young statisticians through mentorship and leadership development, professional networking opportunities and innovation challenges. The Programme is meant to encourage peer learning and improve the integration of young professionals into national, subregional and regional statistical systems. To further promote excellence and professional exposure, the African Union Institute for Statistics sponsored five young African statisticians to participate in the sixty-fifth World Statistics Congress in The Hague in 2025.

57. ECA supported assessments of inequality in civil registration and vital statistics in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Kenya, Namibia, Togo, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. These assessments generated evidence of disparities in birth, death and marriage registration and informed policy reforms aimed at creating more inclusive and responsive civil registration and vital statistics systems.

VIII. Challenges

58. Many national statistical systems operate with limited institutional capacity, insufficient national budget allocations and high dependence on external financing. Weak inter-agency coordination and the absence or limited enforcement of legal frameworks for data-sharing between national statistics offices and administrative data producers further constrain the effective production and integration of data. In addition, the transition to new international statistical standards, including the 2025 System of National Accounts and the seventh edition of the Balance of Payments Manual, requires substantial investment in statistical infrastructure, stakeholder engagement and technical expertise that many countries struggle to finance. The proliferation of parallel statistical initiatives also risks causing a duplication effort and increasing the reporting burden on members of ECA.

59. Underinvestment in civil registration and vital statistics systems remains a major challenge, affecting the completeness of demographic and vital events data. The limited number of formal data-sharing mechanisms between civil registration authorities and national statistics offices reduces interoperability and delays the integration of administrative data into official statistics. Coverage of the informal economy remains difficult to achieve owing to methodological complexities and the insufficient use of administrative data sources. Furthermore, restricted access to data in some countries constrains the verification and validation of statistical outputs. Capacity limitations are also evident in the shortage of professionals with advanced skills in data science, artificial intelligence, big data analytics, geospatial technologies and classification management. Additional challenges include coverage gaps among members of ECA where Arabic and Portuguese are spoken and limited resources for regular data-collection exercises such as International Comparison Programme price surveys.

60. Weak digital infrastructure, unreliable connectivity and limited access to modern statistical technologies hinder the efficiency of data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination. In some countries, in particular those affected by fragility or with geographically remote areas, connectivity constraints limit access to geospatial platforms and reduce the effectiveness of digital solutions. The sustainability of infrastructure upgrades is uncertain, raising concerns about the long-term viability of newly introduced technologies. Insufficient technical capacity to implement advanced methodologies, including artificial intelligence-driven analytics,

environmental-economic accounting and administrative-data-based estimation techniques, further restricts the adoption of innovative statistical approaches.

61. Weak data governance remains a cross-cutting challenge affecting the effectiveness of national statistical systems. Many countries lack robust legal, institutional and operational frameworks to support data-sharing, confidentiality, data protection and interoperability across institutions. Limited formal arrangements for exchanging administrative data reduce opportunities for data integration and evidence-based policymaking. Challenges related to data quality assurance, metadata management and timely data access constrain the production of reliable and comparable statistics. These weaknesses are particularly evident in the integration of administrative records, civil registration data and geospatial information into national statistical systems.

IX. Points for consideration by the Statistical Commission for Africa

62. The Statistical Commission for Africa is requested:

(a) To take note of the statistical capacity-development activities undertaken by pan-African institutions and other development partners during the reporting period;

(b) To call upon members of ECA and partners to increase investment in statistical systems, in particular in civil registration and vital statistics, national strategies for the development of statistics, administrative data, geospatial infrastructure, agricultural statistics, gender statistics and digital census systems, and in national accounts to facilitate regular GDP rebasing and prepare for the implementation of the 2025 System of National Accounts;

(c) To recommend the accelerated adoption of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange standard, the Open SDG platform, the Open Data Platform, mobile statistical platforms and interoperable digital tools to support Sustainable Development Goals reporting, data dissemination and statistical product innovation;

(d) To request partners to support sustained leadership training, youth engagement, applied research, peer learning and communities of practice to build the next generation of African statistical leaders;

(e) To call upon development partners to scale up their support to the African Statistical System.