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Meeting on the draft Strategic Plan 2014-2018 of the African Union Institute for Statistics



Dakar, Senegal -17 October 2013: Today marked the opening of a three-day meeting on the draft Strategic Plan 2014-2018 of the African Union Institute for Statistics (STATAFRIC). The meeting was organised by the statistics division of Economic Affairs of the AUC.

From identifying the key priority areas to be reinforced by statistics, to developing a continental strategy for the production and dissemination of harmonised statistics, this three days meeting covers a wide topic.

Following the opening remarks of both the Director General of ANSD (National Agency for Statistics and Demography/Agence nationale de la statistique et de la démographie) and chairperson of the Statistics Council of the Republic of Senegal, the Economic Affairs Director of the AU Commission recalled the creation of the Institute of Statistics of the African Union, referred to as STATAFRIC and also, the Decision on the Establishment of the Pan African School of Statistics in 2012 by the Heads of State and Government.

This testifies, said Dr. René N’guettia Kouassi, the political will of African Leaders to strengthen the capabilities of the system for statistics through the continent. Furthermore, Dr. Kouassi mentioned that both future pan-African institutions will bring to our continent the appropriate responses to the major challenges Africans are facing to develop their own Statistics.

On his opening remark, the Director also explained that The lack of a developed African Statistics is a collective challenge that all AU member states should recognize. “No single country or institution, regardless their resources can cope with this challenge. Therefore the reason to stress on the need for unity and cohesion of the continent by the member state is essential” said the Director.

After the opening remarks the floor was open for discussion. The participants gave both criticisms and appreciations in the different sectors of each individual member state performance. The members of the meeting commented that the areas of politics and corruption are the major challenges that require a shift for a more developed African Statistics. The lack of a proper dissemination and advocacy mechanism for the credibility of the African Statistics was another critical problem mentioned on the meeting.

Even though there might be knowledge based statisticians in the continent the lack of capital based statisticians is also another aspect that should attract attention. “Trust in the information derived from the African Statistics should be based on the independancy of the system from all the relays of politics and cultural challenges that we have in Africa” said the Director for the Economic Affairs of the AUC

The discussion went to great lengths on the strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA) which deals with the continental effort that directly supports the African Integration agenda. The participants discussed on the implementation of ShaSA and the elaborated methodological guideline.

The signing and ratification of the African Charter on Statistics (ACS) was also another element of discussion during the first day of the meeting. To date, 22 member states of the African Union have signed the charter and only nine countries have already ratified it. It is for this reason that the AUC has made the call for all the remaining countries to sign and to ratify it at the soonest time possible.

The day's discussions was concluded after a discussion on the statistical Model Law for African Countries to follow with the business plan for the AU institute for statistics. The meeting will continue until Saturday, discussing on the Panafrican Statistical Training Center, support and statistical capacity building programmes of collaborating countries and institutions as per the program.

More than 40 participants have joined the meeting, representing member countries, institutions and Experts In statistics.

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