Meeting of the African Group on National Accounts

Scaling up Support to Phase II of the African Project on the Implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts

Concept Note

20-22 April 2016
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
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Introduction and Background

The implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts (2008 SNA) is a global statistical initiative and commitment that provides an opportunity to improve the quality, availability, consistency, and harmonization of economic statistics and national accounts. In Africa, there is a need to create synergies at all the levels of the African statistical system in order to address the technical, financial, and institutional challenges countries encounter when collecting and processing economic statistics needed to compile their national accounts. To address these issues, in January 2008, the AGNA was created by the Statistical Commission for African (StatCom-Africa) to facilitate the implementation of the 2008 SNA on the African continent. It provides a useful forum for a direct dialogue between all stakeholders. The African strategy for the implementation of the 2008 SNA was developed by the AGNA under the aegis of the StatCom-Africa. The implementation of the 2008 SNA is the first pillar of the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA).

Since the launch of the African Project in January 2014, The Project has brought together regional and international organizations and development partners with countries to address the current challenges that African countries face in producing timely and quality national accounts, in support of good economic governance, regional integration, and sustainable development. The IMF, through its training centers in Africa (AFRITAC), AfDB, AUC, ECA, Afristat, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), jointly with Eurostat and INSEE have carried-out various activities including training workshops and technical assistance missions, in support of countries for capacity building in national accounts.

Approximately 70% of African countries have indicated that they have formulated or in the process of formulating national action plans for the implementation of the 2008 SNA. Countries that have already completed their national action plans are taking follow-up actions to move to the 2008 SNA. As requested by the African Project, three methodological operational guidebooks have been developed and currently are in the process of being finalized by ECA together with the AGNA on the use of administrative data in national accounts, compilation of the supply and use tables, and integration of the informal sector data in the national accounts.

The results of the two surveys which link the technical and financial needs of countries with the capacity of partners to provide the needed assistance are now available. The first is a survey on the assessment of training and technical assistance needs among countries; and the second is on the technical support that will be provided by the partners. In addition, based on information provided by all stakeholders and resolutions reached at the previous AGNA and Continental Steering Committee (CSC) meetings, two important documents, i.e. the Progress Report of Phase I of the Project and the Project Document for Phase II compiled at the end of 2015 have been adopted by the CSC of the Project and endorsed by the Ninth Committee of African Directors Generals of National Statistical Offices (CoDG) in November 2015.
At this juncture of completing Phase I of the African Project (2014-15) and beginning Phase II of the Project (2016-18), it is important that the key project stakeholders meet to review the progress made, share and exchange experiences and best practices, team up and establish linkages between countries and development partners to fill in gaps in the demand and supply for training and technical assistance, discuss technical and practical issues in the implementation of the 2008 SNA, and operationalize the work plans and programs at national, sub-regional, and regional levels.

In this context, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) jointly with the African Union Commission (AUC) and African Development Bank (AfDB) are organizing an AGNA Meeting to be held on 20-22 April 2016 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

**Purpose**

To take stock of Phase I and scale up support to Phase II of the African Project on the Implementation of the 2008 SNA, with specific objectives of the meeting as follows.

**Objectives of the meeting**

- Review and assess the progress of the African Project on the 2008 SNA in line with the six pillars of the Project Implementation Plan adopted for Phase I;
- Share and exchange experiences and best practices from Phase I with the aim of addressing the technical and institutional challenges and limitations encountered by countries in implementing the 2008 SNA;
- Team up and establish linkages between countries and development partners to fill in gaps in the demand and supply for training and technical assistance;
- Circulate and review the developed methodological operational guidebooks in the areas of administrative data, supply and use table, and informal sector; and
- Operationalize work plans and programs at national, sub-regional, and regional levels, including the Project Document (ProDoc) for Phase II and its implementation plans by pan-African Institutions, RECs, and countries.

**Organization of the meeting**

The three-day meeting will be organized in plenary sessions including presentations of thematic topics and breakout group discussions to focus on the following topics.

1. Review the progress made and share and exchange experiences and best practices from Phase I of the African Project: the aim of this session is to discuss the results achieved, the technical and institutional challenges encountered, and innovative solutions adopted during Phase I of the African Project.
   a. Presentation of Progress Report of Phase I
   b. Contribution of countries: progress made, challenges encountered, innovative solutions adopted to address challenges. In addition, countries can present on specific issues related to the implementation of the 2008 SNA and report on recent developments.
   c. Contribution of regional and international organizations and partner: progress made, challenges encountered, and innovative solutions developed to address challenges. In addition, regional and international organizations can provide an overview of their
work plans and statistical capacity building activities in support of the implementation of the 2008 SNA in Africa.

2. Team-up and establish linkages between countries and partners to strengthen the demand and supply matrix for training and technical assistance: the aim of this session is to provide an opportunity for countries and partners to match the training and technical assistance needs of countries with the capacity of partners to supply the needed assistance.
   a. Presentation of Needs Assessment and Partners Report
   b. Presentation and discussion of AUC-RECs workshop on national action plans
   c. Discussion of ERETES training for Anglophone and Francophone speaking countries

3. The way forward - Phase II of the African Project: the aim of this session is to present the objectives, activities planned, and the resources required during Phase II of the African Project on the implementation of 2008 SNA.
   a. Presentation of ProDoc for Phase II
   c. Methodological operational guidebooks: current status and the way forward on guidebooks on admin data; supply and use table; and informal sector.
   d. Stakeholder and partner contributions: presentations on action plans and work programs of project stakeholders on implementation of the 2008 SNA with the aim to coordinate actions and avoid duplications and strengthen coordination, monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

Every participants are invited and welcome to contribute to each of the objectives through preparing papers and making presentations. The meeting will be held with simultaneous interpretation in English and French.

Expected outcomes

By the end of the meeting participants are expected to develop and agree upon a framework to continue Phase II of the Project. Specifically, the following key outcomes are expected:

- a completed progress report of Phase I of the project;
- a concrete action plan of RECs to support their Member States in formulating and launching national action plans;
- a matrix which will match countries interested in adopting ERETES and the provision of technical assistance proposed by international organizations and partners;
- a consolidated and strengthened matrix with covering countries’ needs for training, technical and financial assistance for the implementation of the 2008 SNA;
- capacity building for countries in the use of administrative sources data, and the integration of the informal sector in national accounts; and
- a strengthened Project Document for Phase II of the African Project.

Participants

Heads, chiefs, and managers of national accounts of all the African countries will be invited: Most of them will be from the national statistical offices and some from the ministries of finance, planning, or economy, or the central banks – depending on the specific organizational setting in
each country. Managers and senior technical experts of national accounts from international, regional, and sub-regional organizations will also be invited.

Sponsorship for invited participants from countries and RECs will be provided by the three pan-African Institutions (ECA, AUC, and AfDB). Accordingly, participants will be provided with round trip economy air ticket and a daily subsistence allowance at the prevailing United Nations rate in Addis Ababa, and the Secretariat will arrange for obtaining visa on arrival and airport transfer. Representatives of international and regional organizations and development partners will be self-sponsored.

**Contact persons:**

Issues related to the organization and administrative arrangements of the meeting, please contact:

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