



**10th ASSD Executive Report
Kampala, Uganda
13-15 January 2015**



1. Introduction

The 10th Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) held in Kampala, Uganda from 12 to 15 January 2015 under the theme *“A Decade of Statistical Development; Revolutionising Censuses and Civil Registration and Vital Statistics towards Africa Agenda 2063”*; marked a special milestone in the revitalisation of statistics in Africa through the setting up and resuscitation of pertinent statistical forums and initiatives led by various stakeholders such as the African Development Bank, the African Union Commission, the United Nations Economic Commission and others. The Honourable Prime Minister of Uganda officially opened the meeting with three Government Ministers and the Governor of the Central Bank in attendance. Over 300 delegates attended the event. The highlight of the symposium was the launch of Professor Ben Kiregyera’s book on African statistics revitalisation voyage titled *“Emerging Data Revolution in Africa: Strengthening the Statistics, Policy and Decision-making Chain”*. The symposium coincided with the 10th anniversary of the African Statistics Journal.

The overall objective of the 10th ASSD was to continue to rally member States around a united statistical programme aimed at supporting the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Africa Agenda 2063 vision focusing on four topical areas of statistics: data revolution, the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, the 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses and Civil Registration and Vital Statistics. Complementing the symposium were two important meetings which took place on the margins of the 10th ASSD and whose impact will certainly accelerate the improvement of statistical management on the continent: the meeting of Chairpersons of African Statistics Councils/Boards and the meeting of African Statistics Associations. The discussion below provides a synthesised summary of the discussions and achievements of the symposium focusing on the four sub-themes of the symposium while the way forward is encapsulated in the attached annex titled Final Draft Resolutions of the 10th Africa Symposium on Statistical Development, Kampala, Uganda, 13-15 January 2015.

2. Discussion

The technical proceedings of the symposium were session-based, with each session focusing on a pertinent topic. For every topic, one or more presentations were made followed by a facilitated discussion by all participants. For some of the sessions, break-away sessions which reported back to plenary subsequently, were held. The following topics were covered: the ASSD Secretariat’s Report, APAI-CRVS, Improving Mortality Statistics in Africa through CRVS, 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses and Building the Future Now: Young Professionals at Work.

2.1 Data revolution

The African statistics community heeded the Independent Expert Advisory Group’s report on data revolution, particularly its recommendations to (i) foster and promote innovation to fill data gaps, (ii) mobilise resources to overcome inequalities between developed and developing countries and between data-poor and data-rich people and (iii) provide leadership and coordination to enable the data revolution to play its full role in the realisation of sustainable development.

To this end, the 10th ASSD put particular emphasis on (i) the use of new technologies to improve data collection, management and dissemination, (ii) the merging of unit record data and (iii)

constellational leadership and partnerships to sustain the momentum that saw the African Statistics System notch the gains achieved in the last ten years.

2.2 The 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses

The ASSD Secretariat presented a general progress report highlighting major achievements on the ASSD journey. The unprecedented performance which saw all but two African countries succeed in undertaking their population censuses in the 2010 round stood out. The peer support given to countries in and emerging out of conflict contributed in the impressive performance of African countries in this regard. Although there has been an uptake of new technologies such as PDAs in carrying out censuses by countries like Senegal, Cape Verde and Cote d'Ivoire, the meeting conceded that Africa still lags behind in the this area and efforts should be made to address the situation.

The 2010 round has not been without challenges and these include such things as the postponement of census dates by some countries, late and poor planning, lack of resources, staff turnover and inability to effectively manage outsourced activities.

2.3 The 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses

The meeting was mindful of the fact that the international community is now looking towards developing international standards for censuses conducted within the framework of the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme, using experiences of the 2010 round as valuable input. Following an international programme review on the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme, the United Nations Statistical Commission at its 43rd session in 2012 welcomed the suggestion to initiate early enough a programme of work for the third revision of the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*. Consequently, in May 2013 the United Nations Statistics Division conducted a world-wide survey on what should be enhanced, revised, added to, or deleted from, the next revision of United Nations *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*.

With the above in mind, the meeting expressed the need for Africa to pay attention to its peculiarities and therefore develop an addendum to the UN Principles and Recommendations.

2.4 Civil Registration and Vital Statistics

The 10th ASSD was the forth symposium that had CRVS as the main focus area of deliberations following a decision taken during the 6th ASSD to use the ASSD as the platform for tackling the poor continental CRVS system. The pertinent issues and deliberations on the major policy and programmatic issues, including challenges and achievements of the ongoing comprehensive assessment of CRVS systems by a significant number of countries will be presented as progress report to the upcoming third CRVS ministerial conference to be held in Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire in February 2015

Conclusion

The success of the symposium is embodied in its resolutions which map out the way forward for the African statistics community. Statistics South Africa, as the chair and secretariat of the ASSD has the responsibility of ensuring that all the resolutions are implemented. In addition to this general responsibility, it also has a responsibility to drive the following specific action items:

- To develop a repository of lessons learnt and best practices emanating from the 2010 round of population and housing censuses, with particular emphasis on use of technology, as a base for the 2020 round of population censuses;
- To develop a project document for the establishment of Statistics Operations Centres of Excellence in Senegal and South Africa to build capacity for best practice;
- To develop a framework for sharing experiences and best practice especially in the use of modern technology;

ANNEXURE

**Final Draft Resolutions of the 10th Africa Symposium on Statistical Development
Kampala, Uganda, 13-15 January 2015**

1. We, the representatives of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and Civil Registration Authorities (CRAs) of African States, supported by the African Development Bank (AfDB), the African Union Commission (AUC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the government of South Africa, and other development partners, gathered in Kampala, Uganda from 13 to 15 January 2015 during the 10th Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD,) under the theme *“A Decade of Statistical Development: Revolutionising Censuses and Civil Registration and Vital Statistics towards Africa Agenda 2063”*;
2. **Appreciating** the Government of Republic of Uganda’s successful hosting of the 10th ASSD and the hospitality of its people;
3. **Celebrating** the achievements made in the African statistics fraternity under the theme *“A Decade of Statistical Development: Revolutionising Censuses and Civil Registration and Vital Statistics towards Africa Agenda 2063”*;
4. **Celebrating** the overall progress made in the African statistics system over time traced in the book titled *“The emerging data revolution in Africa: Strengthening the statistics, policy and decision-making chain”* launched during this symposium;
5. **Encouraged** by the unprecedented population census coverage recorded in the African continent in the 2010 round of population and housing censuses;
6. **Encouraged** by the strides made in the implementation of the APAI-CRVS programme since its inception in 2010;
7. **Noting** the global emerging data revolution trend and the contribution that Africa continues to play in this regard;
8. **Appreciating** the need to improve the African continent’s capability and capacity to increase the coverage of the African population in the 2020 round of population and housing censuses;
9. **Noting** the ongoing efforts made by some countries and Pan-African institutions and United Nations agencies to support to the Young African Statisticians programme;
10. **Noting** the progress made towards the launch of the African Institute for Statistics to be based in Tunisia;

11. **Noting** the coming into force of the African Charter of Statistics following its ratification and signing by the required number of Member States (in line with UAC protocols), the importance that was placed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Governments in July 2010 in Kampala, as they adopted the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA) and called the AUC, ECA, AfDB and countries, to come up with pillars for its implementation;
12. **Concerned** about the increasing weakening of the working relationships among the Pan-African development institutions;
13. **Motivated** by the increasing need for statistical data to monitor and evaluate the implementation of African Union's vision 2063 on the backdrop of the post-2015 development agenda;

Hereby resolve that:

- 14.1 Countries that could not undertake censuses in the 2010 round should reduce on their data gaps through establishment of population registration systems or through implementation of population estimation surveys;
- 14.2 The ASSD Secretariat should develop a repository of lessons learnt and best practices emanating from the 2010 round of population and housing censuses, with particular emphasis on use of technology, as a base for the 2020 round of population censuses;
- 14.3 The ECA should lead a process to develop an addendum to the United Nations Principles and Recommendations for 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses to take care of African specificities;
- 14.4 Countries should prepare for the 2020 round of the Population and Housing Censuses by developing comprehensive country plans; putting new, relevant and efficient data collection and management technologies and quality at the centre of all efforts aimed at revolutionising population censuses;
- 14.5 Countries should continuously advocate for and make available data and thematic reports for academic purposes;
- 14.6 Stats SA and ANSD-Senegal in partnership with the UNFPA, AfDB, ECA and AUC should consult IGBE to develop a project document for the establishment of Statistics Operations Centres of Excellence in Senegal and South Africa to build capacity for best practice;
- 14.7 Stats SA and ANSD -Senegal in partnership with the UNFPA, AfDB, ECA and AUC should develop a framework for sharing experiences and best practice especially in the use of modern technology;
- 14.8 Countries that have not undertaken in-depth assessments of their CRVS systems are encouraged to do so;

- 14.9 Countries should use CRVS to generate mortality and causes of death statistics that meet the quality criteria of being representative, continuous, timely, comparable, detailed, accurate and disaggregated and; and create operational seamlessness between National Statistics Offices, Civil Registration Offices, Health Ministries, and other relevant ministries;
- 14.10 Countries are encouraged to use technology such as GIS to strengthen statistical development and merge unit record data;
- 14.11 We support the resolutions of the forum of Chairpersons of African Statistics Councils/Boards adopted to form a permanent forum that meets annually on the margins of the ASSD;
- 14.12 We support the resolutions of the forum of African Statistics Associations, particularly to create a network and meet annually on the margins of the ASSD.
- 14.13 National Statistics Offices must upscale their support to the Young African Statisticians programme and involve young African statisticians in ongoing work to build their capacity;

We hereby urge:

- 15.1 Pan-African institutions, namely AUC, ECA and AfDB to sustain the momentum that saw the African Statistics System notch the gains achieved in the last ten years and ensure unity;
- 15.2 Governments to expedite the review of statistical legal frameworks to strengthen professional independence of NSOs in fulfilling their mandates.

— — — — —