



The **AFRISTAT** Newsletter

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Economic and Statistical Observatory for Sub Saharan Africa

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EDITORIAL

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Dear Colleague and Dear Reader,

The AFRISTAT Directorate General is very pleased to publish this first issue of the *AFRISTAT Newsletter*, a bulletin to inform readers on AFRISTAT activities and projects that are carried out to strengthen statistical capacities in Member states. The AFRISTAT Directorate General aims to publish in the future other issues of the *AFRISTAT Newsletter*. This bulletin provides a space to countries to share experiences and announce special events. For that, we encourage you to provide special input and articles for publication. The *AFRISTAT* Newsletter is available upon request in electronic format only and is available on our web site <http://www.afristat.org>. Please remember that a more complete Bulletin, *La Lettre d'AFRISTAT* is available each quarter in French.

The last semester was particularly characterised by works on the AFRISTAT funding mechanism for the period 2006-2015. According to the initial calendar, the Council of Ministers agreed during its twelfth session on the proposed AFRISTAT capitalisation Fund and established the level of contributions. Not only Member countries, but also Central Banks and Regional Integration Institutions are expected to contribute to the Fund.

On the technical plan, despite the holidays period, the experts have continued their technical assistance missions in Member states.

During the first months of 2004, important projects will start. First a project on the "improvement on the quality of labour statistics and monitoring of information system on labour market" has been initiated by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). This project covers five countries: Cameroon, Mali, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia. AFRISTAT is responsible for the conduction of the overall project. Works will also start at the initiative of the UNDP on the Monitoring of PRSP and Millennium indicators.

On the other hand, this last semester will be marked by my definitive leave after eight years as a Director General of the regional organisation.

I wish a long live to the *AFRISTAT Newsletter* to keep you informed on the AFRISTAT activities and statistical development in Member states.

The AFRISTAT Director General

Lamine DIOP

GENERAL PRESENTATION OF AFRISTAT

AFRISTAT is an international organization established by a treaty signed on September 21, 1993 in Abidjan. It includes in total 18 member states. Fourteen states (all member of the Franc Zone) are member since the creation of AFRISTAT, these are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo. Then Mauritania (non-member of the Franc Zone) and Bissau Guinea joined AFRISTAT in 1998, while Republic of Guinea is a Member state since 2000 and Cabo Verde from 2002 (these two states are not member of the Franc Zone). Any State from Sub-Saharan Africa or Indian Ocean may join AFRISTAT.

AFRISTAT's objective is to contribute to the development of economic, social and environmental statistics in Member states, and to strengthen national capacities in these areas. AFRISTAT has regulatory powers in terms of harmonisation of statistical concepts, standards and methods. Thus, AFRISTAT seeks to meet the African concern for regional economic integration, based on the homogeneity and comparability of statistical information. This is implemented through different operations supporting the collection, processing and dissemination of statistical information or economic analyses and syntheses, following a working program set up by the Member states.

The highest AFRISTAT authority is the Board of Ministers.

The management of the Observatory is assumed by a Director General, under the authority of the Board of Directors which comprises other than the Directors of each National Statistical Office (NSO), the Directors of Research and Statistics Department of Central Banks,

representatives from economic and monetary unions to which the Member states belong, as well as special observers, some representatives from statistical services of international organisations. The Board of Directors is assisted by a Scientific Council where sit representatives of users, international organisations, universities, etc.

The current funding system was adopted in 1995. It provides for the creation of a 3.35 billion FCFA¹ capitalisation Fund of which the income and part of the capital ensure the continued funding of ongoing activities (staff salary, support missions in Member states, expert group meetings, statutory meetings, etc.) of the Observatory for an eight-year period running as of January 1, 1998. France brought 45% of the total capital and each Member state contributes equally up to 132 million FCFA. It should be mentioned that France endorsed AFRISTAT installation phase of a two-year duration, and the European Union funded a support program from 1997 to 1999.

As of today, the AFRISTAT team comprises thirteen experts who have a relevant experience in the area of economic statistics and also a significant working experience in Africa. In details, these are:

General Management

- Mr Lamine DIOP, Director General. Expertise in management of national statistical systems;
- Mr Martin BALEPA, Deputy Director General. Expertise in management of national statistical systems. Mr BALEPA has been nominated Director General in replacement of Mr DIOP as from 2nd January 2004.

National Accounts and economic synthesis

- Mr Hubert GBOSSA, expert in national accounts, Co-ordinator of Department;
- Mr. Pierre COUAILLAC, expert in national accounts;
- Mr. DOFFOU N'GUESSAN Gabriel, expert in national accounts;
- Mr Christian GIRIER, expert in macro-economy;

Survey and Statistics Department

- Mr. Prosper BACKINY-YETNA, expert in employment, labour market and poverty, Co-ordinator of Department;
- Mr Siriki COULIBALY, expert in poverty analysis;
- Mr. Patrick HERNANDEZ, expert in production sector;
- Mr. Ousman KORIKO, expert in household surveys;
- Mr Eloi OUEDRAOGO, expert in agricultural statistics.

Data Dissemination and Processing, Publications

- Mr Freeman AMEGASHIE, expert in data dissemination and processing, Co-ordinator of Department;
- Mr. Pierre BEZIZ, expert in data dissemination and processing.

Expert team comprises experts who are national of AFRISTAT Member states and also four Counsellors from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The number of French experts will progressively decrease as these will be replaced by African experts. This is so called "Africanisation" Programme.

¹ 1000 FCFA = 0,15 Euro around

This team of experts is assisted by ten locally recruited staff.

AFRISTAT can also use if needed the services of external resources such as international

consultants to carry out specific projects in the Member states. In order to better identify resources, AFRISTAT manages a directory of consultants (Form

available on line on the AFRISTAT web site: <http://www.afristat.org>). AFRISTAT headquarters are located in Bamako, Mali.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS FROM 1996 TO NOW

Institution Capacity Building

In this area, the specific objectives are as follows:

- Building the managerial capacities of the national statistical systems (particularly the NSO) through training and publicizing action as well as the design of appropriate tools;
- Defining a regional strategic framework for the coordinated and sustainable development of the national statistical systems;
- Assisting the regional integration agencies to design statistical programs adapted to their specific needs.

This has included in particular the design, between 1998 and 2000, of the regional strategic framework for statistical development: the Common Minimum Statistical Program called PROSMIC, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 19 September 2000.

PROSMIC is the reference framework for the development of statistics in Member States during the 2001-2005, a five years period. It covers six priority fields:

- Statistical co-ordination;
- National accounts;
- Economic and social short-term developments;
- Dissemination of statistical information;
- Statistics for the monitoring of living conditions of households and poverty;
- Agricultural statistics.

The UEMOA² Commission has asked AFRISTAT to carry out four different parts of the Regional Program of Statistical Support for Multilateral Surveillance (PARSTAT). These are: improvement and harmonisation of national accounts, compilation of "more comparable" GDP data, survey of informal sector in urban areas, implementation of the harmonised price index in Bissau Guinea. This project, for a total budget of more than one billion FCFA³, has been conducted between April 2001 and December 2003.

AFRISTAT also drafted, at the request of the CEMAC⁴ Commission, a two-years statistical program to improve the general level of NSOs in the six countries of the zone. This program was approved at the beginning of March 2000, and a funding program was sought.

AFRISTAT organised several seminars for the attention of the Directors of NSOs on strategies, management and also on human resources.

A technical assistance has also been provided to several

² UEMOA is the French acronym for West African Economic and Monetary Union. It covers the following countries: Benin, Bissau-Guinea, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo

³ 1000 FCFA=0.15 euros around

⁴ CEMAC is the French acronym for Central African Economic and Monetary Community. It covers the following countries: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Equatorial-Guinea, Gabon and Tchad.

Member states for the compilation of statistical development plans and for restructuring the legal and organisational framework of national statistical activities.

Finally, a detailed study on the current thoughts on fundamental principles of official statistic was carried out and published. This contains rules and standards in order to assist statistics producers in public sector to run regular activities.

National Accounts

The general objective of AFRISTAT is to assist Member States to modernize and harmonise their national accounts.

This involves:

- Implementation of the new System of National Accounts (SNA 93);
- Use of the new harmonized methods for the compilation of accounts; the choice of a new base year;
- Use of the computer assisted tool in the compilation of accounts (ERETES software).

AFRISTAT Directorate General provided assistance to Cameroon. Works are currently under way in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Mali, Mauritania, Togo and Senegal for the implementation of ERETES.

Classifications

Harmonized classifications of products and activities (respectively NOPEMA and NAEMA) were designed by a working group headed by AFRISTAT with representatives from all Member states and regional integration agencies. These harmonised classifications are based on ISIC, rev 3. The rules concerning the adoption of these classifications were approved by the AFRISTAT Council of Ministers Meeting on 19 September 2000 in Paris. The activity and products classifications are being implemented in the AFRISTAT Member States with effect from 1 January 2001. They must, as from this date, be used for the collection and dissemination of statistical information.

A seminar was also organised in 2003 for the revision by the UN Statistics Division of ISIC and CPC international classifications.

Macroeconomics and Short Term Economic Analysis

The objective is to assist the NSOs to design and disseminate regular bulletin and analytical notes on the economic situation and where necessary, develop and use an adapted model for a detailed economic analysis in each country.

The activities in this field started in 2000 with the arrival of the Expert in macroeconomics.

Seminars on the analysis of the economic situation and economic forecasts are organized on a regular basis from 2000. These made it possible to acquaint participants with the work undertaken in Member states. Works for revised economic situation note and bulletin have been started in Mali and Mauritania. These will serve as a model for the other Member states.

The action planned for the future, namely assisting in the drafting of economic situation notes according to a model which is both harmonized but adapted to the reality of each state and promoting a harmonized method of analysis of economic forecast, will ensure a better understanding of the economies and will improve the analysis made at the level of each state and at the level of economic integration zones to which they belong.

Price Statistics

The AFRISTAT Directorate General participated actively in the execution of the UEMOA consumer price index project, which reached its final phase in December 1997 with the official adoption of the Harmonized Consumer Price Index (HCPI) by the UEMOA Council of Ministers. Works have been finalised for Bissau-Guinea only in 2002.

The first phase of a project to compile an HCPI for CEMAC Member states took place during the first half of 1998. Today, the base prices for the year 2000 were collected for the nine towns selected and the price collection will continue according to the methodology adopted by the six CEMAC Member States.

Technical assistance was provided to Cabo Verde, Guinea, Mauritania and Comoros for the implementation of similar projects.

Agricultural Statistics

The general objective of AFRISTAT in this field is to assist Member States to develop efficient agricultural information systems.

The strategy adopted to reach this objective relies on the development of a close collaboration with the other agencies operating in the field of agricultural statistics particularly with the FAO and

the Inter State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), in order to reach complementarities and synergy of actions in Member States.

AFRISTAT organised jointly with FAO several technical seminars on integrated systems of agricultural statistics for food security, on supply utilisation accounts and also on livestock statistics.

Among the fields for which there were no official approved methodologies for the collection of statistics AFRISTAT chose to work, to begin with, on the estimate of fruit production and market garden production. A project to work on transhumance statistics is currently assessed.

Employment and Informal Sector

The field of employment and the informal sector is important for AFRISTAT Member States in two respects. The informal sector has been found to be an important provider of employment and all the economic policies must include this parameter; in addition, the contribution of the informal sector to the GDP is significant sometimes exceeding that of the modern sector.

In 1997, a seminar was organised on the informal sector and economic policies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Proceedings of this seminar were published both in English and French languages.

AFRISTAT published in 1999 jointly with DIAL a research centre in development economics based in Paris, a guideline of harmonized concepts on employment and the informal sector.

Surveys on the informal sector (1-2-3 surveys) are currently underway in seven Member states of UEMOA area.

Several projects are currently under way. These include the monitoring of Millennium indicators and Development

Goals funded by UNDP and a project on the "improvement on the quality of labour statistics and monitoring of information system on labour market " funded by ACBF.

Business statistics

Business statistics play an important role in the monitoring of economic activity (particularly in the monitoring of the short term economic situation) and serve as an input in particular for national accounts.

Activities in this area started in 1999. The following specific objectives are targeted:

- Assisting Member States to set up a business register to be updated regularly;
- Designing the standard tools for the exploitation and processing of statistical and tax declarations of enterprises for the monitoring of the activities of enterprises in the modern sector and in national accounting;
- Define and establish a system adapted for the production of statistical information on the activities of small and medium scale enterprises as a supplement to the existing operation on major enterprises and on the informal sector.

A survey on existing business statistics in Member states was carried out in 2000-2001. Results were presented during a seminar organised in June 2003. AFRISTAT is currently drafting a detailed working program for all Member states.

Data Dissemination and Processing, Publications

The general objectives of AFRISTAT in the field of data processing are as follows:

- Designing for Member States a common methodology for the collection and processing of basic statistical information;
- Improving the dissemination and use of statistical information in all Member States particularly by developing databases

accessible to the different economic and social agents in the region;

- Providing support to the activities of National Statistical Offices of Member States in the field particularly through training.

AFRISTAT is providing technical assistance to Member states for the development of their own web sites. These are expected to be on line in December 2003 for eight countries and December 2004 for the remaining ones.

AFRISTAT is providing technical assistance to Senegal on the framework of a French funding, for the implementation of a statistical database. Expertise works have also included Benin and are currently under assessment in Guinea.

AFRISTAT developed its own web site <http://www.afristat.org> which is on line from June 2000. It contains comprehensive information on AFRISTAT activities, as well as on statistical systems in member States. The site includes the following items : presentation of AFRISTAT, activities, publications, NSOs and other national statistical stakeholders in Member states, statistical data, news and events. A selection of key papers in English is also available on the web site.

AFRISTAT is providing technical assistance to member states for the establishment of statistical databases. AFRISTAT has provided technical assistance to Member states for the implementation and maintenance of ERETES in order to compile national accounts, and also until 1999 for the CHAPO software used for the compilation of consumer price indices. This was then transferred to UEMAO commission.

AFRISTAT issues on a quarterly basis, an information bulletin called "La lettre d'AFRISTAT". The objective is the review of the Observatory's

activities and relationships with regional partners and non-regional partners. The "Lettre d'AFRISTAT" is printed in 800 copies. This bulletin in French is completed by the "AFRISTAT newsletter" which is issued in English.

In 1999 and 2000, compendiums of statistical information in Member states were published on paper copies: and are also available on AFRISTAT web site. Data were collected for the main socio-economic indicators from 1990. The NSO is the main source of information which is also completed with data compiled by other stakeholders of the national statistical system (statistical services of Ministries, Central Banks, etc.). This work required to recruit national consultants in each NSO and to mobilise several AFRISTAT experts for data checking and publishing.

All socio-economic data collected by AFRISTAT from Member states (short term and structural statistics) are stored in a regional database, called 2gLDB. This database was initially developed by the World Bank.

Future Development Programs and Activities

According to the adopted capitalisation Fund, funding is available for regular AFRISTAT activities up to 2005.

Until 2005, work will continue on statistical works under way in Member states, and other development projects will be carried out when funding is available.

AFRISTAT has just finalised a wide study on its future and its role vis-à-vis NSOs and other international statistical offices in Africa after December 2005. This study set the main working priorities for the period 2006-2015 and the financial scheme to be in place after 2005. Member states agreed to renew the capitalisation Fund with an increase part financed by Member states. Organisations

of regional integration, Central Banks and Development Banks are invited to contribute.

Additional funding will be sought from other multilateral and bilateral donors.

Main Activities of the Directorate General from April 2003

-- National Accounts Component of the PARSTAT Programme

Works have continued for the implementation of the ERETES module, a tool for the compilation of national accounts according to the 1993 SNA, in seven countries of the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union.

Works are currently underway to finalise the first current year in Benin, while in Côte d'Ivoire definitive national accounts data have been released for 1998 and 1999. In the other countries, namely Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal and Togo, works are focusing on the base year.

The third regional meeting on national accounts was held in Bamako from 22 to 26 September 2003. Discussions were conducted by AFRISTAT experts.

The main objective of this meeting was to assess progress on the implementation of the ERETES module, to exchange experiences on the statistical processing of Fiscal and Border Documents, on provisional and preliminary accounts, as well as on the 3.2 version of the ERETES module.

-- Informal Sector Component in the PARSTAT Programme

Definitive data and analysis have been finalised for the Phase1 survey (on employment) in Côte d'Ivoire and Niger, while data correction has been carried out on Phase1 and Phase2 (informal activity) in Senegal.

Final analysis report is available for the Phase2 survey in Togo.

-- Other Activities of the Directorate General

The Deputy Director General carried out a mission in Nouakchott from 12 to 19 July at the request of the Mauritanian NSO for a mid-period evaluation of the Master Development Plan.

The IMF and AFRISTAT signed a third agreement for an assistance for the improvement of real sector statistics as identified in the framework of the implementation of the General Data Dissemination System in all UEMOA countries. This contract will cover the period august 2003-january 2004.

Domains which are covered include: general assistance, national accounts, production indices, price indices and labour market indicators.

These missions will be carried out by AFRISTAT experts in close cooperation with the AFRITAC Centre.

An agreement has just been signed between AFRISTAT and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to strengthen statistical capacities in Democratic Republic of Congo. Missions have been already been conducted in December for the revision of the CPI, for preparation work of a survey on informal sector (1-2-3 survey) in Kinshasa and for the preparation of candidates to African schools of statistics.

-- Data Dissemination and Statistical Databases

In the framework of a project to strengthen statistical capacities, the Directorate General is providing technical assistance to each Member state to develop and maintain a autonomous web site. A

training seminar was organised in Bamako in May. Web sites for eight countries are expected to be on line in December 2003, while the sites for the remaining countries are expected to be available in December 2004.

An expert visited the DPS in Senegal and organised a practical training seminar on the creation of an interactive CD-ROM for the dissemination of national accounts data. Methodology can easily be adapted to other subjects and also to other countries.

-- Short-term Economic analysis

The AFRISTAT Directorate General organised in June and in December two seminars to analyse short term economic developments in West Africa countries. A similar seminar for CEMAC countries was held in Libreville in October.

The AFRISTAT Directorate General organised in November on European funding a training course on short-term economic analysis and seasonal adjustments for staff of the "Direction de la conjoncture économique et de la prevision" in Côte d'Ivoire. A second session will be conducted in the future weeks.

-- Business Statistics

The AFRISTAT Directorate General organised in June the first meeting for enterprise statisticians. Topics covered : business register, data processing and methodology of the industrial production index.

-- Poverty Analysis

The AFRISTAT Directorate General organised in June a seminar on "Micro-simulation techniques to assess distributive effects of economic policies". This seminar was conducted by DIAL experts.

In May, M. Lamine Diop visited Abuja to set up an agreement with the ECOWAS Secretariat for the harmonisation of statistics project. He also attended the CODI meeting in Addis Ababa (organised by the ECA) and a seminar on "Governance and statistics" (organised by PARIS21 and the ECA).

In May Mr. Martin Balépa, attended the CODI meeting in Addis Ababa as well as a meeting organised by the AFDB on the International Price Comparison programme. Mr Balépa also visited Kinshasa (Zaire) to set up an assistance programme in statistics.

Mr. Freeman Amegashie attended in June a seminar organised by the UEMOA Commission to exchange experiences on the use of the CHAPO software for the compilation of price indices.

Mr. Lamine Diop and Mr. Pierre Beviz attended the meeting on the launch of the project of strengthening statistical capacities of the NSO of Senegal. This project is funded by the World Bank.

Mr. Hubert Gbossa attended a seminar in Lome in June on the new version of EUROTRACE software for the compilation of foreign trade statistics.

Mr. Christian Girier and Mr. Patrick Hernandez attended a seminar in June in Ouagadougou to review methodological proposals concerning the harmonised Industrial production index in UEMOA countries and the development of a short term economic analysis note at regional level.

The UN Statistics Division organised a seminar in June in New York to assess progress in the area of social statistics and draft an action plan for improvement. Mr Prosper Backiny attended this seminar.

Mr. Lamine Diop and Mr. Hubert Gbossa attended on July 4th in Paris, the eighth Steering Committee of the 8-ACP-TPS 155 project. Discussions focused on the coordination of the statistical training network in Sub Saharan Africa. They successively attended the 15th Conference of the Directors of high schools in statistics.

An AFRISTAT Delegation, conducted by Mr. Gbossa attended the 11th meeting of the Technical Committee for the monitoring of assistance programmes of the UEMOA (Bamako, 13 to 17 July).

Mr. Martin Balépa attended in July 2003 in Addis Ababa the first meeting of the steering Committee of the International Price Comparisons programme (IPC).

Mr. Martin Balépa et M. Siriki Coulibaly, attended on August 6 and 7 in Bamako, the first meeting of the ACBF/ILO Steering Committee for the "improvement on the quality of labour statistics and monitoring of information system on labour market". AFRISTAT is leading this project. Beneficiary states for this project are: Cameroon, Mali, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia.

Mr. Lamine Diop attended from 13th to 20th August the International Statistical Institute Session in Berlin.

Mr. Eloi Ouedraogo, attended the 25th international Conference

of agricultural economists in Durban, South Africa, from 17th to 22nd August, on the topic "Give a new form to the agricultural contribution to society".

The United Nations Statistics Division organised from 22nd to 26th September an expert meeting on the improvement of fecundity and mortality statistics for French speaking countries in Africa. Mr Prosper Backiny attended.

Mr Lamine Diop attended on 1st and 2nd December the meeting of the Statistical Advisory Panel of the Human Development Report Office of the UNDP in New York.

Mr. Hubert Gbossa attended from 8-10th December the UN working group on the revision of the ISIC classification. This meeting was held in New York.

Mr. Prosper Backiny attended in Geneva from 24th November to 3rd December the Conference of Labour statisticians and from 8th to 9th December the UN ECE international Conference on information society.

Mr Hubert Gbossa conducted an AFRISTAT delegation comprising Mr Beviz, Mr Doffou and Mr Koriko at the meeting on the Launching of activities for the harmonisation of national accounts and consumer price indices in ECOWAS countries (Accra 3-5 December).

Mr Siriki Coulibaly attended in Tunis from 6 to 12 December the international Conference on poverty analysis. This was organised by the Union for African Population Studies (UAPS)

The AFRISTAT newsletter can be obtained on a simple request, and is available on Internet :

<http://www.afristat.org>

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