



**Economic and Statistical Observatory  
for Sub-Saharan Africa**

**STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS  
OF 2011-2015 AFRISTAT PLAN  
OF ACTION  
to achieve the Millennium  
Development Goals**

**July 2009**



Economic and Statistical Observatory for Sub-Saharan Africa

**STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS  
OF 2011-2015 AFRISTAT PLAN OF ACTION  
to achieve the Millennium Development Goals**

July 2009



## FOREWORD

The 18th Session of AFRISTAT Council of Ministers, held on 16 April 2009 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), ordered the General Management of the organization to prepare a plan of action for the 2011-2015 five-year period.

Using its prerogatives and in accordance with the AFRISTAT Treaty, the Council of Ministers adopted the strategic orientations on which the plan of action will be based.

In taking this decision, the Ministers of AFRISTAT Member States not only complied with their mandate, but also sought to adapt their action to the current context. Indeed, 2015 will be the closing year of the 2006-2015 AFRISTAT Fund, which currently finances the activities of the organization. However, 2015 will also mark the completion point of the programme for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

In 2015, AFRISTAT, as a mature organization (it will celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the start of its activities in January 2016), will be the key partner of its member States in the assessment of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The orientations point to that direction. For the Ministers, this underscores the commitment by their States to provide more support to AFRISTAT activities so as to ensure its development.

A multi-year work programme, prepared with the participation of all the Member States and partner community which have always supported AFRISTAT, will translate this political commitment into concrete activities that will be implemented as annual programmes over the 2011-2015 period.

As in its previous work programmes (the PROSMIC and the 2006-2010 ASPA), AFRISTAT counts on the unwavering support of its member States and the kind assistance of development partners to ensure complete success of its new 2011-2015 programme.  
Bamako, 16 July 2007

Martin BALEPA  
Director-General of AFRISTAT

# Contents

ABBREVIATIONS	5
1. SHORT REVIEW OF STATISTICAL PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	6
2. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF AFRISTAT	14
3. AFRISTAT MISSION AND VISION, AND GLOBAL OBJECTIVE 2011-2015 PLAN OF ACTION	15
3.1 AFRISTAT MISSION	15
3.2 LONG-TERM VISION OF AFRISTAT	16
3.3 GLOBAL OBJECTIVE OF 2011-2015 AFRISTAT PLAN OF ACTION	17
4 STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS OF 2011-2015 AFRISTAT PLAN OF ACTION	17
4.1 ORIENTATION 1: CONSOLIDATE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF PREVIOUS WORK PROGRAMMES	18
4.2 ORIENTATION 2: EXTEND AFRISTAT AREAS OF INTERVENTION TO SECTOR STATISTICS AND NEW THEMES	18
4.3 ORIENTATION 3: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT ALTERNATIVE AND COMPLEMENTARY METHODS FOR SUSTAINABLE AND MORE REGULAR STATISTICAL PRODUCTION	19
4.4 ORIENTATION 4: GEAR AFRISTAT ACTION TOWARDS RESPONDING TO REQUESTS FOR ENLARGEMENT TO OTHER STATES	20
4.5 ORIENTATION 5: MOBILIZE THE RESOURCES REQUIRED FOR IMPLEMENTING THE 2011-2015 AFRISTAT PLAN OF ACTION	20
5 RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES, AND CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2011-2015 AFRISTAT PLAN OF ACTION	21
5.1 RISKS	21
5.2 CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS	22

## ABBREVIATIONS

AFRISTAT	Economic and Statistical Observatory for Sub-Saharan Africa
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
ASPA	AFRISTAT Strategic Plan of Action
CEMAC	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa States
COMESA	Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GDDS	General Data Dissemination System
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NSDS	National Statistical Development Strategy
NSO	National Statistics Office
NSS	National Statistical System
SDDS	Special Data Dissemination Standard
TFP	Technical and Financial Partner
UEMOA	West African Economic and Monetary Union



# STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS OF 2011-2015 AFRISTAT PLAN OF ACTION

## **1 SHORT REVIEW OF STATISTICAL PRORITIES AND CHALLENGES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

1. The AFRISTAT Plan of action for 2011-2015 will cover the second five-year period of the current AFRISTAT Fund. The programme will take AFRISTAT to the twentieth anniversary of the effective start of its activities. Since the start of its activities in 1996, AFRISTAT has made significant efforts to assist Member States in solving many problems relating to the regular production of statistical data required for decision making. Its activities have also been geared towards sub-regional economic integration organizations and statistical training schools, as well as other African organizations seeking to contribute to improving the statistical data of their member countries.
2. The results are deemed satisfactory by many users of African statistical data, foremost among which are the technical and financial partners (TFP). As a sign of their satisfaction, the TFPs increasingly demonstrate their trust in AFRISTAT by concluding many partnership agreements for the implementation of statistical projects for many African States.
3. The mid-term review of the implementation of the 2006-2010 AFRISTAT Strategic Plan of Action (ASPA), whose conclusions were presented to the Eighteenth Session of the AFRISTAT Steering Committee in October 2008, and the recommendations of the Committee defined the major guidelines for the work of the Observatory for 2011-2015.
4. However, it should be noted that the progress made by AFRISTAT was obtained within a constantly changing economic, social and political environment that required diverse and varied information to account for some phenomena or events, or to prepare or ensure the monitoring and evaluation of development strategies and policies. Since development is a multi-dimensional and global reality, its management requires much more than purely quantitative information to meet concerns for macroeconomic balances. This is evident today in the range of indicators required for the monitoring and evaluation of poverty reduction strategies, the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), and management for results.



5. The lack of good quality statistics is a major obstacle to decision making. For example, the world food crisis in recent years following the upsurge in oil prices has been a strong signal calling on countries to ensure closer monitoring of the food situation. It had significant impacts on the living conditions of households in African countries. In many countries, the available statistics did not help them to anticipate the crisis or provide deep analyses to explain and direct the social policies that need to be implemented. This situation was further compounded by the global financial crisis that followed. This crisis will certainly have many impacts on African economies, including a decline in public development aid and direct foreign investments, particularly for the development of statistics. In the absence of reliable statistics, the scope of its impact would not be properly determined in sub-Saharan African countries, and solutions for the impacts of the crisis on the population could have inadequately documented bases.
6. However, the world food crisis and the international financial crisis should not overshadow the old challenges faced by the States. At the international level, many initiatives directly or indirectly related to statistics should be taken into consideration. Two of them need to be underscored: (i) the Declaration of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) which gives pride of place to improvement of the living conditions of the population, and (ii) the Paris Declaration on effectiveness of official development assistance.
7. "Eradicate poverty in 2015" in the world, such is the United Nations slogan for implementation of the MDGs. To that end, the goals have a number of indicators (more than 60) whose regular assessment will help to measure the progress made towards their achievement. Countries are required to monitor these indicators for comparison purposes, in accordance with international recommendations. Each country is also required to calculate them so as to guarantee quality, and thereby avoid estimates to be made by institutions other than national administrations.

#### **Box 1 : Millennium Development Goals**

**The Millennium Development Goals are divided into eight (8) points: (1) Reduce extreme poverty and hunger; (2) Achieve universal primary education; (3) Promote gender equality and empower women; (4) Reduce child mortality; (5) Improve maternal health; (6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; (7) Ensure environmental sustainability; (8) Develop a global partnership for development.**



8. Five years to the closing date of the MDGs, the international community has recognized improvement in the availability of high quality statistics for monitoring progress in the implementation of development strategies<sup>1</sup>. However, more significant progress is required to achieve the goals. Consequently, over the next five years, AFRISTAT will be required to strengthen its support to Member States.
9. In another connection, the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness (2 March 2005) commits the signatory countries and organizations of this international agreement to continue making more concerted efforts to improve management for results and benefit more from development assistance. On September 4, 2008, the Accra (Ghana) High Level Forum adopted a new declaration known as the Accra Agenda for Action "to accelerate and deepen implementation of the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness". These two declarations, as well as the Monterrey Consensus (March 2002), lay particular emphasis on harmonization, country ownership over development, the building of effective partnerships, and the principle of accountability for results.
10. Furthermore, global economic integration raises new problems relating to issues that are assuming growing importance at the international level; these include the monitoring of international trade in goods and services, climate change and the environment, as well as measuring of the digital economy.



---

<sup>1</sup>Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Africa. Report of the MDG Africa Steering Group. New York, June 2008.

11. All these situations bring to the forefront the challenges that need to be met by national statistical systems (NSS) and their capacity to play the role of “economic and social barometer” and key instrument for decision-making analysis.
12. In another connection, new international methodological frameworks have been published, and some old frameworks reviewed and updated. In particular, relating to the last review of the National Account System (SNA 2008) recently adopted; AFRISTAT Member States will need to make significant efforts to master the new guidelines. Furthermore, the new initiatives to be implemented over the next five years include: the economic and environmental accounting system, the international recommendations on energy statistics, cycle 2011 of the International Comparison Programme, etc. Further reflection is underway to improve the frameworks for preparing social statistics, agricultural and rural statistics, education statistics, health statistics, employment statistics (including the informal economy), gender statistics, etc.
13. Similarly, the recent initiative of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to promote good practices in the dissemination of official statistics within countries through review of the standardization frameworks (GDDS/SDDS) marks a turning point in efforts to strengthen statistical programming.
14. At the regional level, new initiatives have also been taken since the launching of the last AFRISTAT medium-term plan of action for 2006-2010; they include:
  - (i) the adoption of the African Statistics Charter on 9 February 2009 by the Heads of State and Government;
  - (ii) the adoption, by African States, of a Regional Reference Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF); and
  - (iii) revitalization of the statistical function in the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and establishment of a Statistics Commission for Africa as is the case at the international level.
15. These major initiatives, coupled with participation of AFRISTAT Member States in the last cycle of the International Comparison Programme and in the AfDB capacity building programme, are opportunities and commitments that contribute to the development of statistics in Africa. In particular, beyond being a symbol, the African Statistics Charter demonstrates the will and the awareness of the most senior African political authorities in recognizing the importance and role of statistics as an indispensable and vital tool for preparing and monitoring development strategies.

16. At the sub-regional level, the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa States (CEMAC) Commission and the West-African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) Commission have included sub-regional statistics programmes in their respective common development strategies. Furthermore, the fact that some AFRISTAT Member States are also members of ECOWAS, ECCAS, COMESA and AMU gives a new dimension to the manner in which AFRISTAT should henceforth organize its interventions. Indeed, AFRISTAT should continue to strengthen synergies with these institutions<sup>2</sup> so as to contribute to promoting the harmonization of African statistics.
17. The MDG Africa Steering Group has indicated that “the Millennium Development Goals are too important to fail<sup>3</sup> ” and also confirmed the essential support role of statistics in achieving the goals. Activities initiated in many countries to promote statistics show the determination of governments to ensure the development of this tool. Within member States, the preparation of national statistical development strategies (NSDS) is increasingly becoming one of the good practices for responding to the Marrakech Action Plan appeal calling on all sub-Saharan African countries to base statistical production on appropriate strategic programming frameworks. Far-reaching reforms have also been initiated to build the organizational and institutional capacities of NSS's. With more diligence and effectiveness, these reforms are expected to provide data required for preparing, monitoring and evaluating poverty reduction strategies.
18. By introducing these reforms to the organization of statistical systems in their countries, Governments have imposed new requirements, particularly as regards the regularity and quality of statistical production. In this light, the changes could be considered as a new commitment made by the authorities of NSS's to meet the needs of a growing and demanding public.
19. Since 2008, by adopting the principle of contractualization of its working relations with each National Statistics Office (NSO), AFRISTAT has been contributing more effectively to the implementation of these commitments through specific support to meet specific needs.
20. In view of these different situations, which may change significantly over the next five years, AFRISTAT must propose appropriate and innovative solutions as regards support for building the capacities of NSS's so as to enable them to meet the diverse needs of their users.
21. Concerning the institution itself, the Observatory remains a relatively stable structure in its organization and working

methods despite an increase in the number of Member States (from 14 at establishment to 20 today), as well as a significant increase and diversification of its activities.

22. Furthermore, sub-regional economic integration institutions (ECOWAS, CEMAC and WAEMU, in particular) are developing their own statistical capacity building programmes, which will certainly change the demand for technical support for these institutions. Breaking from its initial status as an institution for only Francophone countries mostly from the Franc Zone, AFRISTAT is currently operating in many non Member States, particularly Anglophone countries of ECOWAS (Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone) and countries of other African regions (Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and Zambia). In ECOWAS, its intervention contributes to statistical harmonization in all West African countries. The promulgation of the African Statistics Charter gives AFRISTAT new responsibilities. Indeed, it is expected that AFRISTAT will be offered new partnership opportunities to participate in capacity building and statistical harmonization activities in other regions of the continent.



<sup>2</sup>In this document, this type of institutions (sub-regional or regional economic integration institutions) refers to the Regional Economic Communities (REC) in accordance with the African Union Commission classification.

<sup>3</sup>Supra.

23. Addressing these new constraints and emerging opportunities requires AFRISTAT to very clearly redefine its long-term strategic choices, while maintaining what constitutes its strength, namely the quality of its interventions. These choices concern the conditions for intervention and its internal organization, in a spirit of complementarity and subsidiarity (and not competition) with the other sub-regional and regional institutions.
24. As regards partnership, Africa has witnessed new statistical developments in recent years. The PARIS21 Consortium meeting in November 2009 on the theme "Statistics for development" will help to "renew the partnership" between development partners and African countries. The support has been vital for statistical development in Africa. It should normally continue as part of assistance provided to countries for the implementation of development strategies.
25. In the area covered by AFRISTAT, multilateral and regional organizations have initiated new national and multinational statistical capacity building programmes. The World Bank continues to give direct support through trust funds to NSO and statistical training schools. The International Monetary Fund, through its technical assistance centres (AFRITAC-Centre and AFRITAC-West), provides support to Member States to improve statistical production for the real sector. AFRISTAT is pursuing negotiations with the United Nations Development Programme for the financing of the second phase of the MDG Indicators Monitoring Programme in more than twenty African countries. After a successful first phase, the African Capacity Building Foundation renewed its confidence in AFRISTAT to continue implementing the project for strengthening labour market information systems in five African countries over the 2009-2011 period. Under the supervision of the African Development Bank, AFRISTAT coordinated the implementation of the 2005 round International Comparison Programme in about twenty African countries. After this first experience, the AfDB and AFRISTAT are continuing to collaborate in the implementation of the Statistical Capacity Building Programme, which the AfDB initiated for 2009 and 2010. This collaboration will certainly be maintained in similar future programmes. AFRISTAT is pursuing negotiations with other partners, such as the Islamic Development Bank, to obtain more support for its Member States.
26. As regards bilateral partners, AFRISTAT and its Member States receive significant support from France through its official bodies (Co-operation administration, French Development Agency, NSO and Research Institute for Development). The support is given through its participation in the AFRISTAT Fund, financial subsidies for activities and technical assistants

to supplement and reinforce the expertise of AFRISTAT and some countries. Other countries, such as Sweden, also intervene in the statistical capacity building of NSS's of AFRISTAT Member States.

**Box 2 : Recommendation of the MDG Africa Steering Group on Statistics (June 2008)**

**Governments, with support from development partners, should finance and implement bankable National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) to strengthen data systems and develop statistical capacity across Africa. In particular, support is required for the 2010 census round, the creation of national systems for civil registration and vital statistics, and the infrastructure to conduct enhanced and comparable socio-economic surveys across Africa. Approximately US\$ 250 million\* will be required annually in external financing to support needed investments and associated operating expenditure. Support for NSDS should be provided within the framework of the Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa (RRSF)."**

\* An estimated US\$85million for censuses, US\$ 50 million for household surveys, US\$ 80 million for Civil Registration/vital statistics, US\$ 20 million for institutional development and US\$ 15million for other training activities.

27. In light of the context outlined above, the AFRISTAT Plan of action for 2011-2015 should continue with previous activities, while introducing innovations in its interventions. The innovations should also concern the institutional framework of the Observatory so as to meet the growing pressure of demand for technical support from many African countries, irrespective of sub-region.
28. Continuity entails maintaining the major activities initiated since the start of AFRISTAT activities, or enabling Member States to attain a high level of statistical development through common programmes and projects. It also entails assisting countries that have not attained the level, to go beyond the common level by proposing new working tools.
29. More than ever in the past, the 2011-2015 Plan of action should also be a programme of innovation. It should be considered as the development of alternative working methods to improve statistical production in Member States, as well as the introduction of new work areas into NSDS. Innovation should not be the responsibility of AFRISTAT alone, but also of Member States and their partners, to meet the need for new statistical products.

## 2 STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF AFRISTAT

30. As a young international organization, it is difficult to fully assess the effectiveness of AFRISTAT or its incapacity to fulfill its mission over the long term. However, based on studies already conducted on its operation and/or successive evaluations of the implementation of its last two five-year work programmes, it is possible to determine its strengths and weaknesses, and identify some opportunities that could strengthen its intervention capacities after thirteen years of operation.
31. According to partners and Member States, AFRISTAT has become an indispensable actor in statistical development in sub-Saharan Africa<sup>4</sup>. As the only African inter-governmental organization responsible for statistics and their development, the Observatory is a statistical skills centre that can provide appropriate technical assistance to its Member States. It is also a framework for exchange and dialogue between African statisticians. For its Member States, AFRISTAT has been able to carry out professional training activities to address insufficiencies or complement the training programmes followed by statisticians working in NSO. This aspect is a recognized success story for AFRISTAT. Although the Observatory does not have the political and economic power of other African institutions, its focus on statistics alone gives it legitimacy, without such legitimacy being considered as a panacea or absolute weapon.
32. On-the-job training and further professional training are also success stories for AFRISTAT. Admittedly, it does not exercise "monopoly" in this area; but alliance of the skills and statistician community within AFRISTAT has enabled the institution to select good themes and organize appropriate training courses.
33. AFRISTAT is a partner that participates in works which contribute to sub-regional integration or implementation of international recommendations. In this area, it is evident that AFRISTAT support and leadership have helped to implement statistical development programmes required for the preparation of common policies (see statistical harmonization works for CEMAC and WAEMU).

---

<sup>4</sup>Assessment of AFRISTAT (The European Evaluation Consortium and PLANI-STAT Europe. April 2003). Most of the observations here are contained in this assessment and the report 'Improving relations between AFRISTAT and its partners' (D. Byk & J.L. Bodin. February 2009), contribution to the study 'Institutional Diagnosis of AFRISTAT'.



34. However, these strengths should not overshadow the weaknesses of the institution and criticisms which naturally stem from the possible contradiction between national and regional needs, and between the priorities of support beneficiaries and those of AFRISTAT. The few difficulties currently facing the organization are only the price of its success stories: with its current staff and budget, the Observatory cannot meet the growing requests for assistance.
35. With the growth in activity and number of experts, the beneficiaries of AFRISTAT support have noted greater diversity in the levels of experts recruited. Indeed, this mainly stems from the eternal problem of inadequate own resources which makes it difficult to always attract the maximum number of experts with solid experience to work for AFRISTAT.
36. At the international level, statistics have developed exceptionally. The need to measure progress, ensure proper monitoring and evaluation of development strategies, and be accountable to beneficiaries of development actions and partners opens new horizons for statistics. Similarly, at the sub-regional and regional levels, integration policies increasingly require harmonized evaluation methods so as to ensure appropriate comparisons and thereby accelerate concerted development of countries. At the country level, the monitoring and evaluation of national development strategies requires reliable and regularly calculated indicators. Over the 2011-2015 period, the need for high quality statistical information will even be stronger. The past five years, with their multiple crises, have made African governments increasing aware of the need for strong information systems to cope with events for which they are not always prepared. These are occasions that require AFRISTAT to further consolidate its role.

### **3 AFRISTAT MISSION AND VISION, AND GLOBAL OBJECTIVE 2011-2015 PLAN OF ACTION**

37. AFRISTAT's mission is defined in the treaty establishing it, and its vision for the next few years is the same as defined in the 2006-2010 AFRISTAT plan of action. Consequently, the overall goal of this programme is maintained for the next five years, while taking into account some new centres of interests within the current context.

#### **3.1 AFRISTAT Mission**

38. Over the 2011-2015 period, the mission of AFRISTAT will remain as follows "...to contribute to the development of economic, social and environmental statistics in Member States, and strengthen their skills in this area". It will continue to "collaborate with national statistical agencies of Member

States and support them in collecting, processing and disseminating basic statistical information and in conducting macro-economic analyses and summaries. It will not replace these agencies in collecting, processing and disseminating basic statistical information in their countries" (Art. 2 of the Treaty establishing AFRISTAT).

39. The key principles that have always guided the operation of the organization will be maintained and strengthened; they include:

- "the status as international public service organization at the service of Member States under which AFRISTAT operates on a non-profit basis for its Member States;
- subsidiarity which allows for proper assignment of responsibilities between AFRISTAT and the beneficiaries of its activities;
- the status of AFRISTAT as a regional organization working towards sub-regional integration and that can extend its activities to other sub-Saharan African States;
- partnership which aims at developing synergies between AFRISTAT and Member States, and between AFRISTAT and institutions and organizations working for the development of statistics in Africa, so as to ensure more appropriate sharing of the fruits of cooperation ;
- secure financing for AFRISTAT activities from a capitalization fund which allows for greater transparency in the implementation of activity programmes and greater sustainability of activities" (P. 7, 2006-2010 ASPA).

### 3.2 Long-term Vision of AFRISTAT

40. The efforts made by AFRISTAT since the start of its activities to assist its member States in statistical development have led to significant progress. NSS's have made enormous progress in their operation as a result of the development of statistical culture and the programming of statistical activity, which is becoming a reality. Different levels of significant results have been recorded in the following areas: organization of statistical systems, national accounts, economic analyses and forecasts, consumer price indexes, household surveys on the living conditions, industry and services statistics, information systems for monitoring and evaluation of development policies and programmes, and dissemination of statistical information.

41. Over and above this significant progress, AFRISTAT and its Member States need to consolidate the achievements and continue with activities to achieve even better results. In particular, its activities should be reinforced to enable it to more effectively assist Member States in their quest for solutions to

improve the working conditions of their NSS's in terms of methodology and organization of production.

42. The vision of AFRISTAT will therefore remain the same as for the preparation of the 2006-2010 ASPA. It will seek to "entrench statistics into the day-to-day activities of Member States as an instrument of economic integration and an indispensable tool available to all for the formulation, implementation and monitoring-evaluation of programmes and projects: political leaders, government policy-makers, the private sector and civil society». (P. 9, 2006-2010 ASPA).

### **3.3 Global objective of 2011-2015 AFRISTAT Plan of action**

43. The overall goal of AFRISTAT Plan of action for 2011-2015 is to "assist each Member State in the formulation, implementation and monitoring-evaluation of a national statistical development strategy consistent with the other development strategies" (P. 10, 2006-2010 ASPA).
44. First of all, efforts will be made to consolidate achievements by implementing routine activities in previous programmes. Secondly, initiatives will be introduced to improve statistical production in each Member State. To that end, it will be necessary to identify the potential of each NSS and propose sustainable implementation plans, taking into account the human resources as well as the required material and financial resources that can be mobilized by AFRISTAT and the NSS's concerned.

## **4 STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS OF 2011-2015 AFRISTAT PLAN OF ACTION**

45. The above context requires AFRISTAT to orientate its activities in five directions over the 2011-2015 period:
  - (i) consolidate the achievements of previous work programmes in line with regional and international statistical development frameworks;
  - (ii) introduce new themes into the statistical production plan of Member States in line with new needs expressed by Member States or the international community;
  - (iii) develop and implement alternative methods for those normally used in Member States to ensure sustainable and more regular statistical production;
  - (iv) provide a response to requests for enlarging AFRISTAT to other States; and

- (v) mobilize the resources required for the development of AFRISTAT and, more particularly, the implementation of its 2011-2015 Plan of action.
- 46. The orientations around which the 2011-2015 Plan of action will be built are as follows.

#### **4.1 Orientation 1: Consolidate the achievements of previous work programmes**

- 47. The consolidation of achievements covers all the activities scheduled by AFRISTAT in 2006-2010 ASPA for which tangible results were obtained, as well as those which did not record significant progress during the period. All the components of the 2006-2010 strategic programme are concerned.
- 48. As regards consolidation of achievements, AFRISTAT will :
  - strengthen or ensure the establishment of an organization of NSS's that can adapt to the requirements of statistical production while resolutely opting for the principle of management for results;
  - provide technical support to NSS's for the production of reliable and comparable statistical data in line with requests made by users and based on resources that can be mobilized, particularly as regards national accounts and economic forecasts, sectorial information systems and other areas for which AFRISTAT has already expertise;
  - promote popularization of statistical culture by improving practices in the dissemination and use of statistical data, and help NSS's to assume ownership over them;
  - contribute to the development of human resources in statistics, particularly through on-the-job training of senior staff and applied research so as to develop methodologies adapted to the realities of NSS's;
  - develop and boost the "observatory" function of AFRISTAT through collection of socio-economic data on Member States and conduct of economic and statistical studies so as to contribute more effectively to analyses of economic trends in Member States;
  - introduce the quality approach to work in NSO's; and
  - pursue institution building of AFRISTAT and development of its own resources.

#### **4.2 Orientation 2: Extend AFRISTAT areas of intervention to sector statistics and new themes**

- 49. Statistics are developing and are increasingly taking on new areas<sup>5</sup> . At the international level, new initiatives are being taken and recommendations made to process these new themes. Over the 2011-2015 period, AFRISTAT will embark on

these new areas and assist Member States in the implementation of related international recommendations.

50. Foremost among the new areas, AFRISTAT will extend and reinforce its intervention to Member States in the production and improvement of sector statistics. This activity will require the strengthening of working relations between AFRISTAT and the appropriate administrative services of Member States. The priority areas are agro-food and legal statistics, as well as statistics relating to the labour market, health, education, civil registration, energy, transport and tourism.
51. The second aspect concerns a number of topical issues to which AFRISTAT has not yet paid special attention: governance, decentralization, environment and climate change, statistics on digital economy and gender, etc.
52. In these two cases, AFRISTAT will reinforce or develop new partnerships with international organizations dealing with these issues. It will also provide appropriate expertise on these issues by reinforcing its current staff through recruitment of adequate competent workers or further training for those currently working.

#### **4.3 Orientation 3: Develop and implement alternative and complementary methods for sustainable and more regular statistical production**

53. This orientation complements the previous one. The collection of statistical data still largely depends on cumbersome and costly surveys. Processing of administrative sources is limited and needs to be enhanced to derive maximum benefits: more exhaustive coverage of sources of information, relatively less cost of data collection and processing, regular availability of data, assured self-development for the services involved, etc.
54. For example, it is becoming increasingly important to develop satellite accounts and social accounts matrixes to better understand the functioning of some sectors, particularly education, health, tourism and the environment. These tools are based on the regular availability of data, for which administrative records are a key source.



<sup>5</sup>These new areas include new themes that are not yet covered by AFRISTAT.

#### **4.4 Orientation 4: Gear AFRISTAT action towards responding to requests for enlargement to other States**

55. AFRISTAT's position and achievements over the years have made the institution a model in capacity building for NSS's and success in its area. This position today requires it to provide support beyond its initial sphere of intervention made up of francophone countries. The 2011-2015 AFRISTAT Plan of action will enable the Observatory to acquire institutional and financial resources to respond favourably to the requests.
56. This issue will also be considered under AFRISTAT contribution to sub-regional economic integration institutions whose common development strategies require harmonized data. Indeed, AFRISTAT's key position will enable it to propose methodologies for harmonized processing of statistical data.
57. Technical and financial partners are expected to provide AFRISTAT with the support required for implementing this proposal.

#### **4.5 Orientation 5: Mobilize the resources required for implementing the 2011-2015 AFRISTAT Plan of action**

58. Implementation of the 2011-2015 Plan of action will require additional human resources (see 4.2) and more funding for not only the scheduled activities but also for support to be provided to sub-regional economic integration institutions (see 4.4) and the corresponding material resources and equipment.
59. Furthermore, the current AFRISTAT Fund will close on 31 December 2015. AFRISTAT will need new financial resources to cover the 2016-2025 decade, within a context of enlargement of its interventions not only to new geographical regions but also to new statistical areas (see 4.2). In order to avoid sudden break in activity on the eve of the 2016-2025 decade, adequate resources must be available at the end of 2015 to provide the institution with resources to operate normally. The comprehensive study on the institutional restructuring of AFRISTAT<sup>6</sup> will, before the end of 2015, evaluate the 2016-2025 AFRISTAT Fund and propose a new institutional and organizational plan for the institution.

---

<sup>6</sup>The 18th Session of AFRISTAT Council of Ministers, held on 16 April 2009 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), decided that such a study should be conducted; its results will be available before the end of 2012.

## 5 RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES, AND CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2011-2015 AFRISTAT PLAN OF ACTION

60. Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure smooth implementation of the AFRISTAT Plan of action for 2011-2015. In addition to endogenous factors, attention will also be paid to conditions which AFRISTAT will not be able to control. Indeed, Member States (through their national statistical development strategies) and technical and financial partners (backed by their support programmes and projects for the States and AFRISTAT) are required to contribute significantly to the success of the programme.
61. In addition to the technical conditions, it is also important to take into account the political contexts of Member States, as well as major international events that may impact positively or negatively on the implementation of AFRISTAT Plan of action for 2011-2015.

### 5.1 Risks

62. The major risks that could undermine implantation of the plan include:
- (i) Non-ownership of the plan objectives by AFRISTAT experts or profound changes to the strategic orientations of the plan during implementation;
  - (ii) Inadequate commitment by States to finance the implementation of NSDS and low absorptive capacity of assistance by the NSS's;
  - (iii) Drastic reduction of AFRISTAT resources for serious exogenous reasons; and
  - (iv) The consequences of a serious global crisis (or serious national crises) creating an unfavourable environment or inconsistent with the overall approach of the programme.





63. In addition to participation by all AFRISTAT experts and NSO's<sup>7</sup> in the preparation of the programme, measures will be taken to acquaint all stakeholders with the contents of the programme. Sensitization activities (internal upgrading workshops, coordination meetings, interventions by experts in meetings of national statistical councils of Member States, programme dissemination sheets, etc.) will be undertaken throughout the period to facilitate ownership. In the same vein, AFRISTAT will pursue advocacy activities for statistics with authorities responsible for statistics in Member States. Better organization of statistical coordination in Member States, with the participation of AFRISTAT, will help to reduce or even eliminate some risks.

## 5.2 Conditions for Success

64. Despite the above risk and in view of its expertise, AFRISTAT fulfills the conditions for implementing its 2011-2015 Plan of action. As regards the consolidation of achievements, the efforts made in implementing the 2006-2010 ASPA remain constant. The new activities (Orientations 2 to 4) will be introduced as the AFRISTAT Steering Committee provides adequate additional staff to be recruited from the AFRISTAT Fund and financing from partners. AFRISTAT will also establish relations with TFPs interested in the new areas of work.
65. With respect to financial resources, the current pace of mobilization of contributions is unsatisfactory. However, the governments of Member States have undertaken to disburse all their contributions<sup>8</sup>, and this will provide AFRISTAT with adequate financial resources for the implementation of the 2011-2015 Plan of action, excluding external contributions.
66. The efforts made by AFRISTAT will be well received by NSS's, which will in turn make similar statistical capacity building efforts to implement their NSDS. On this point, success will depend on the capacity of governments to organize coordination within NSS's and ensure constant and close collaboration with TFPs
67. In addition to resource mobilization, the countries will need to pursue institutional changes in NSS's so as to make them more capable of producing more. In this light, NSO will need to strengthen their autonomy, which will make them more credible.

<sup>7</sup>A project group has been formed to prepare the Plan of action. The NSO of five member States participate in the group.

<sup>8</sup>The representatives of member States adopted the resolution to pay their contributions by 31 December 2009 (Cf. 18th Session of AFRISTAT Council of Ministers, *op. cit.*).



**EXCELLENCE FOR STATISTICAL  
DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA**



Bénin



Burkina Faso



Burundi



Cameroun



Centrafrique



Comores



Congo



Côte d'Ivoire



Gabon



Guinée



Guinée-Bissau



Guinée Equatoriale



Mali



Mauritanie



Niger



Sénégal



Tchad



Togo



International Organization

BP E 1600 Bamako, Mali

Tel. +223 20 21 55 00 / 80

Fax : +223 20 21 11 40

E-mail : [afristat@afristat.org](mailto:afristat@afristat.org)

Web site : [www.afristat.org](http://www.afristat.org)