

**Statistical Commission  
Thirty-seventh session  
7-10 March 2006**

**Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda**

**Items for information: Population and housing censuses**

**Background document  
Available in English only**

**2006 AFRICA SYMPOSIUM ON STATISTICAL  
DEVELOPMENT: “THE 2010 ROUND OF POPULATION  
AND HOUSING CENSUSES”**

**CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA**

**30 JANUARY - 2 FEBRUARY 2006**

**RESOLUTIONS**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2006 marks the end of the 2006 Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) held in Cape Town, South Africa. The focus of this historic meeting was five-fold:

1. To encourage all African countries to undertake a population and housing census in the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses;
2. To reach consensus on recommendations on the revision of the United Nations Principles & Recommendations from an African Perspective;
3. To reach consensus on core topics and tabulations of relevance to African censuses;
4. To focus and foster linkages in MDG-related statistical activities and census campaigns; and,
5. To provide a platform for comprehensive exchange of experiences on countries' participation, technical assistance, information, and data dissemination.

The 2006 Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) was indeed a historic event for the statistical community in Africa as forty-three African countries met to deliberate on issues of statistical development and the challenges that are posed for the national statistical office in Africa.

This high participation rate being noteworthy in itself – focused on the discussion of purpose, planning and management of the 2010 round of Population and Housing Censuses and its means for people in Africa. Beyond the signaling of how important the census is, by making the effort to attend, delegates participated actively in sharing experiences and challenges facing their countries.

The continued dialogue amongst African statistical agencies can only improve our census taking, as well as signaling to our governments and citizens how important the conducting of a census is. We should seek and create opportunities to continue this dialogue and advocate the value of census derived information, to encourage the mobilization of resources need.

Through working in concert, African statistical agencies should be more effective in promoting census taking, which has the ability to capture the imagination of policy makers, funders and citizens alike, because of the sheer scale and exclusivity of the operation involved. Resources mobilized for the undertaking of a census may also contribute to the building of infrastructure and capacity for intercensal statistical collections.

We as African statisticians therefore, seized by the demand for development information and imperatives of regional integration and the information that supports such regional integration seek to address four challenges:

- Capacity building in Africa;
- Institutional Reform;
- Leadership and Management; and
- Advocacy and Resource Mobilization.

We have taken note of subsequent meetings we have held for the 2000 round of population and housing censuses at a smaller scale in South Africa in 2001 on census costs, in South Africa in 2003 on census dissemination and for the 2010 round of Population and Housing Censuses in Cameroon in 2005 on advocacy and resource mobilization and the decision that emanated out of that to meet in 2006 in South Africa.

Based on the **2006 Africa Symposium on Statistical Development: The 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, which** was held in Cape Town, South Africa on 30 January – 2 February 2006, delegates at the Symposium representing national statistical agencies from forty-three (43) African countries, including representatives of the regional bodies and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) resolved the following:

### **Resolution 1**

In line with the recommendations that have come out of this meeting on the 2010 round of Population and Housing Censuses, and recommendations from Africa on the revision to the United Nations Principles and Recommendations, it is recommended that the African statistical community meet on an annual basis to further deliberate on current but key issues as they affect statistics and the socio-economic and political economy of our continent in the context of NEPAD and the mandate of the African Union.

### **Resolution 2**

All African countries represented at the Symposium agreed that all African States should conduct a census in 2010 round of population and housing censuses in line with the resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nation on 22 July 2005.

### **Resolution 3**

The Symposium recommended that a comprehensive capacity building program be initiated. Such a program should focus on the following areas:

- a. The capacity of the national statistical agencies in addressing the broad needs of the organization from survey and statistical skills, project management skills and general management skills. A detailed needs analysis should be done within each agency to guide our regional and continental efforts to develop the capacity of each agency;
- b. The need to engage with universities to ensure that appropriate undergraduate and post-graduate programs are developed to prepare students that can be absorbed by the statistical agencies; and

- c. The need for national statistical agencies to take steps to increase the broad public awareness of its role in society and cultivate a culture of learning in mathematics and statistics amongst Africa's youth and the African population in general.

#### **Resolution 4**

Sustainable statistical systems will be developed in Africa by:

- a. Reversing the decline of African statistical systems partly through census taking;
- b. Improving data coverage and quality for MDGs;
- c. Aligning National Statistical Systems with the African Union and NEPAD programmes (after the example of the European Union);
- d. Deliberately including gender in National Statistical Systems;
- e. Lobbying governments to invest in reforms of their National Statistical Systems by political support, undertaking legal reforms, institutional reforms, and adequately funding the development of their National Statistical Systems; and
- f. Developing National Statistical Development Plans.

#### **Resolution 5**

The Symposium acknowledged the range of technical and financial support of the United Nations system funds and programmes, other international agencies, and development partners and exhorts these organizations to extend their support to ensure the success of the 2010 round of Population and Housing Censuses. However, the Symposium specifically:

- a. Urges the Economic Commission for Africa to provide critical leadership for the implementation of the 2010 round of Population and Housing Censuses in Africa;
- b. Urges UNFPA to provide technical and financial support in census planning and implementation to countries in the promotion of advocacy and resource mobilization for the 2010 round of censuses;
- c. Encourages the United Nations Statistics Division to extend its technical support to capacity building in Africa through the establishment of International Statistics Development Centres;
- d. Urges the ECA to support the south-south cooperation and continue the convening of Symposia on the progress of countries in the implementation of the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses; and

- e. Urge the African Union to include statistics as one of its programme areas and ensure that other regional initiatives such as the NEPAD have a statistics component.

### **Resolution 6**

To encourage institutional reform in Africa,

- a. The Symposium recognized the need for appropriate institutional arrangement, and to this end would ensure that in each country legislation will be reviewed against the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.
- b. Where appropriate African regional bodies will develop protocols to guide the implementation of institutional reforms.

### **Resolution 7**

The coordination role of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa needs to be strengthened. It was resolved that:

- a. A Bureau of Statistics or “Friends of the ECA” be established. The following countries will constitute the interim structure to advise the Executive Secretary of the ECA on matters of statistical development in Africa:
  - Mozambique
  - South Africa
  - Uganda
  - Kenya
  - Rwanda
  - Egypt
  - Tunisia
  - Senegal
  - Ghana
- b. The ECA must develop its own capacity to fulfill the co-ordination role envisaged by the Symposium.
- c. ECA must promote the preparations for the 2010 round of Population and Housing Censuses and must prepare a report on the state of readiness of all countries on the continent by January 2007 and follow up report each of the following years.

### **Resolution 8**

The Symposium reviewed the UN Principles and Recommendations for Population & Housing Censuses (Revision 1) and adopted a set of recommendations after extensive discussion in breakaway groups and approval in full plenary on the following areas:

- a. Standards and frameworks
- b. Census planning and management
- c. Promotion of Censuses: Making value visible

These recommendations are outlined in Document **ASSD2006/02** (available at the Symposium website at [www.statssa.gov.za](http://www.statssa.gov.za))

### **Resolution 9**

By endorsing the tradition of annual African Symposia on Statistical Development, African countries present accepted the invitation of the Republic of Rwanda to host the **2007 Africa Symposium on Statistical Development** in January 2007.