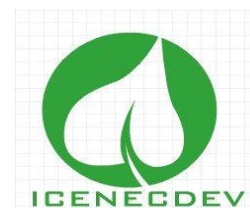
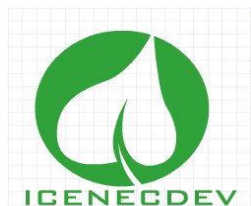


ICENECDEV

**International Center for Environmental Education and
Community Development**



A Report

The Role of Civil Society Organizations in the Statistical Process in Africa

Organised by

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

African Centre for Statistics

Statistical Development Section

24-26 October 2017

Introduction

Civil society sector is instrumental in promoting local economic development, alleviating poverty, (The first goal of SDGs) advocating policy change, contributing to good governance and campaigning for the SDGs. For CSOs(Civil Society Organisations) to deliver effectively and efficiently , they needs to be strengthened. Critical engagement on the SDGs can increasingly become the approach for many CSOs, adapting, extending, updating, and localizing the goals, as appropriate to their own situation. However; this engagement require sustainable inflow of information and official statistics from the statistical authorities simultaneously coupled with a reliable outflow of information from the CSOs to the NSOs(National Statistic Offices), hence an inclusive and broad National Statistic Systems(NSS) will be emerged. Moreover, increased of advocacy and awareness, dialogue and a true partnership between all developments partners including CSOs is vital if eradication of poverty is to be achieved by 2030 according to the SDGs(UNECA Concept Note June 2017)

Goal and Objectives

The main objective is to strengthen collaboration and coordination between NSSs and CSOs that will improve accountability among CSOs, government institutions and citizens, hence extending the scope of use and production of official statistics to promote evidence based dialogue and decision making

Specific objectives are:

- 1.To integrate, coordinate and mainstream data provided by CSOs into the NSSs and to propose mechanisms of integration and coordination of CSO contribution to NSSs;
- 2.To facilitate CSOs to utilizing official statistics to support greater citizen participation in the socio economical and transparent political processes;

Description

Fongoh Eric of ICENECDEV and other civil society organizations and National Statistics Offices of Cameroon Nigeria,Egypt, Tanzania,Kenya,Gambia,Somalia,South Africa ,Ghana and Cabo Verde

Participated in an expert 3 day intensive workshop on the Role of Civil Society Organizations in the Statistical Process in Africa, at the United Nations Centre in Adis Ababa,Ethiopia between the 24-26 October 2017.

According to the Director of the African Centre for Statistics of the Economic Commission for Africa **Oliver J.M.Chinganya** during the opening of the workshop emphasised on the importance of civil society organisations in generating information and data . **Oliver J.M.Chinganya point to the fact that Civil society organisations are** not only consumers of data but producers of data and the marriage between civil

society organisations and National Statistics System is paramount to avoid duplication of efforts and improve quality in the statistical process.

Director of the African Centre for Statistics of the Economic Commission for Africa **Oliver J.M. Chinganya** emphasised that integrating Civil society organisations as part of the producers of statistics with the National Statistics Offices will legitimise and improve the quality of data and

The Moderator Joseph Tinfissi ILBOUDO, Chief Statistical Development Section African Centre for Statistics (ACS), and Dr. Khogali Ali, (Mathematical Statistics) collective provided the workshop objectives and detail work programme for 3 days (24-26 October 2017)

The Consultant professor Antonio Duarte, presented the 9 chapters on the Hand Book of the role of the Civil Society organisations in the Statistical Process in Africa as part of the activity in the 3 –day workshop.

The participants were grouped and deliberated on the following points

- Detail review of the chapters of the hand book,
- Benefits of Civil society organisation participation in the Statistical Process,
- Role Civil society organisation to Enhance the National Statistical Systems
- Challenges and Mechanism/instruments to integrate civil Society Organisation within the National Statistical System
- Capacity requirement for civil Society Organisation to channel data to the National Statistics Offices
- Type of Official statistics required by Civil Society Organisations
- Strategies/Methodology to measure the Impact of the Civil Society Organisations and National Statistical Offices within the National Statistical Systems.

The group work on each of the mentioned points culminated into discussion on the outcome of the plenary sessions for results and recommendation as outline below:

CONCLUSION

- The legal and institutional framework of NSOs at the level of most African countries does not favor the emergence of CSOs as official data producers.
- CSOs generate a lot of information from different sectors. However, this information is not transformed into official statistics, with obvious losses for its own activities and with repercussions at the country level.

- There is a lack of human and financial resources at the CSO level to deal with data-producing activities.
- CSOs face various financial difficulties and qualified human resources. In addition, there is also a lack of awareness of the importance of producing and using statistical data in their actions.
- CSOs also face constraints in the production and dissemination of data, mainly due to the weak synergy with the NSOs and the weak capacity of their technicians.
- It is noted that CSOs are interested in producing their data, following the quality standards. However, CSOs often adopt their own methodologies for data collection, and in other cases they are defined by their partners.
- There is a great deal of openness on the part of CSOs to adopt standardized data collection models that may be proposed by the NSO, thus facilitating the work of systematizing CSO data.
- NSOs have an interest in having CSOs as data producers and therefore propose respect for certain prerequisites such as: the SSN law should provide for the possibility of CSOs to be data producers or incorporate this possibility at the NSDS; CSOs must have technical skills in statistics and have a quality framework; there should be established mechanisms of collaboration, for example through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs).
- CSOs are aware of the importance of using statistical data for decision-making. Therefore, in their activities, especially in the elaboration of projects, justification of funds put their dispositions, they use statistical data of several domains, emphasizing the management and use of soils, forests and protected areas, environmental data and on climate change. They are also great consumers of health, education and transport data, socioeconomic data (GDP, CPI), SDGs, Population, poverty, employment and labor market, income, Infrastructures, HDI.
- CSOs face several challenges that need to be overcome in order to enable effective cooperation with the NSOs, with a focus on improving their information systems, allowing for the sharing of data, for example via online

- portals; the need for NSOs to substantiate their requests for information and provide feedback on the data they receive from CSOs.
- Regarding Data Revolution and Big Data, CSOs can play a significant role, as they produce a great deal of data that is not considered statistics and also supports the promotion of administrative records.
 - It is necessary to transform the data generated by CSOs into statistics, which entails the creation of technical conditions, with a strong investment in ICT, such as technological infrastructures, servers and software required to produce statistics. Mechanisms must be created through which technology and innovation can be shared and used for the common good.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review the statistical legislation of most African countries in order to create the conditions that favor the production of official statistics by CSOs.
- Definition of a clear framework of institutional collaboration between CSOs and NSOs that provides funding, awareness-raising, sharing and production of statistical data. When this is not defined in the law, it is fundamental to adopt mechanisms at NSDS level, or signatures of institutional collaboration protocols clarifying the roles of each institution.
- Greater awareness among CSOs of the importance of producing and using official statistics.
- CSOs should work closely with the NSOs at all stages of statistical production.
- Strengthening the technical and financial capacity of CSOs to meet the demanding task of producing statistics.
- To have human resources properly trained to produce evidence, useful in the foundation of their projects.
- Fundamental work in CSO awareness, but also with its partners, on the importance of using statistical data in their activities.

- To have a permanent dialogue between CSOs and NSOs, so that the data produced is useful to data users and that there is an effective complementarity in the process of producing statistics.
- Strong investment in the training of CSO staff in the fields of methodology, data collection, production, analysis and dissemination, in accordance with best international practice.
- Greater synergies between CSOs, NSOs, International Organizations and other government agencies
- CSOs need to improve the information system so that they can share their data.
- Improve coordination of activities executed by all producers, including CSOs in order to avoid overlap and waste of time and resources.
- CSOs should invest heavily in the production of data in order to translate their actions into evidence, in numbers, and thus to measure the real contribution of CSOs to the economy at the level of countries, region and continent.
- Invest in ICT, with emphasis on the technological infrastructures, servers, softwares and hardware required to produce statistics.
- Create the conditions for mapping CSOs, in order to have a well-organized and structured register, fundamental for the management of the different actions undertaken. It will be an opportunity to set up a database and at any time to draw representative samples for studies that quantify and qualify CSOs on particular phenomena.

PHOTOS





Group Photo with Participants



Participants Working Sessions