

# Africa Infrastructure Knowledge Program

## *Bulletin No. 1, March 2011*

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## Strategy and Implementation Progress

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This is the first issue of the Bulletin that the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group has launched as part of its communication strategy to inform key stakeholders about progress in executing the Africa Infrastructure Knowledge Program. The Bulletin will be produced on a quarterly basis and can be accessed online at the following address: [www.afdb.org/en/knowledge/publications/](http://www.afdb.org/en/knowledge/publications/)

### I Overview

#### The AfDB's Africa Infrastructure Knowledge Program

The **Africa Infrastructure Knowledge Program (AIKP)** is a successor program to the Africa Infrastructure Country Diagnostic (AICD) which grew out of the pledge by the G8 Summit of 2005 at Gleneagles to increase substantially ODA assistance to Africa, particularly the infrastructure sector, and the subsequent formation of the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa (ICA). This was against the background that sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) suffers from a weak basic infrastructure base, and that this was a key factor in the SSA region not realizing its full potential for economic growth, international trade, and poverty reduction.

The October 2005 inaugural meeting of the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa in London recognized the need for a coordinated program to generate a common quantitative baseline. The meeting, therefore, commissioned the World Bank to undertake such a study, which would:

- assist individual countries in benchmarking the relative performance of their infrastructure sector and formulating their own country-specific strategies in the light of regional experience;
- assist donors in designing appropriate support for infrastructure reform, finance, regulation and investment;
- allow an improved evaluation of the collective efforts to meet Africa's needs by establishing a baseline of the current situation on the continent; and
- act as a core reference document on all strategic issues relating to infrastructure and hence a vehicle for building consensus about the appropriate response to Africa's infrastructure problems

The AICD study broke new ground with primary data collection efforts covering network service infrastructures (ICT, power, water, road transport, rail transport, sea transport and air transport) from 2001 to 2006 in 24 selected African countries that between them account for 85 per cent of the sub-Saharan Africa population, GDP, and infrastructure inflows. The countries are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

The study also represents an unprecedented effort to collect detailed economic and technical data on African infrastructure relating to fiscal costs of each of the sectors, future sector investment needs, and sector performance indicators. As a result, it has been possible for the first time to portray the magnitude of the continent's infrastructure challenges and provide detailed and substantiated estimates on spending needs, funding gaps and the potential efficiency dividends from policy reform.

The AICD has produced continent-wide analysis of many aspects of Africa's infrastructure agenda. The main findings were synthesized in a Flagship Report entitled *Africa's Infrastructure: A Time for Transformation*, published in November 2009. This report targeted policy makers and necessarily focused on the high-level conclusions. The report attracted widespread media coverage, feeding directly into discussions at the 2009 African Union Commission Heads of State Summit on Infrastructure. The Flagship Report has helped to draw global

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attention to Africa's infrastructure challenges and is shaping the way that policy makers view these sectors. In addition to the Flagship Report, the AICD has produced a wealth of analytical products hosted through the AICD web portal which include:

- technical volumes with detailed findings on the ICT, power, transport and water sectors;
- country reports analyzing infrastructure performance and funding gaps at the national level;
- regional reports documenting the extent of regional integration of infrastructure networks;
- a series of on-line databases, web-based models, and interactive atlases; and
- numerous research papers

The World Bank implemented the AICD as a one-off special study. The Steering Committee in July 2008 recognized the strategic importance of sustaining the data collection effort on infrastructure in Africa. It therefore recommended that the diagnostic round of studies be extended to the remaining African countries, including those in North Africa over the period 2009-2010 (Phase II); and that once the initial round was completed, the project be transferred to the African Development Bank to serve as a repository of infrastructure data on Africa and to ensure that there would be sustainable collection of infrastructure indicators for the continent going forward..

It is against this background that The Africa Infrastructure Knowledge Program (AIKP) has been initiated at the AfDB. The AIKP has a longer term perspective and provides a framework for generating knowledge on infrastructure on a more sustainable basis. The achievement of this objective will depend on the harnessing of capacity at two levels, within AfDB and within the region. Within the region, AfDB will continue to facilitate the building of suitable capacity in the countries and sub-regional organizations (SROs) to collect, process, and manage country databases on infrastructure statistics. The proposed framework entails that national statistical offices (NSOs) mainstream the collection and compilation of infrastructure statistics into their routine statistical data gathering and compilation activities. Some NSOs are already doing that in a limited number of sectors but not across all infrastructures sectors. The objective therefore is to cover all sectors, and to have all countries do it. This will ensure that in-country capacity will not be limited to the NSOs, but will extend to other sector statistics data producing agencies in the national statistical system (NSS).

Infrastructure data currently come from a largely decentralized information network system in African countries. The data collection framework therefore entails that infrastructure agencies compile sector infrastructure data at base level, transmit the data through a country data collection team to an apex agency, in this case the NSOs, to process the information before transmitting to AfDB for further validation, quality control and dissemination. With this arrangement, all necessary infrastructure statistics data would become available at one nodal point and coordination between data collection agencies and the NSOs will be facilitated.

The two key institutions in the data collection process therefore are the AfDB and NSO/Country Data Collection Team. The AfDB as a centralized actor: commissions country teams to collect raw data; undertakes quality control of raw data collected; collects supplementary data from global databases; processes raw and global data to derive infrastructure indicators; processes household survey data to capture for welfare indicators; manages the online dissemination of infrastructure data over the Bank's Data Portal; generates tabulations and graphs for web dissemination; undertakes policy analysis and knowledge products for dissemination over the web site. The NSOs and country teams at the decentralized level: collect country raw data using standard data collection templates; submit draft templates to AfDB for quality control; and undertake any revisions before submitting final templates.

The framework also provides for gradual transfer of capacity to undertake conversion of raw data variables into derived indicators and quality control of collected data with technical assistance and on-site training, depending on the level of development of country statistical infrastructure.

## **II Progress made so far**

Following the mandate of the AICD Steering Committee in July 2008, staff at the AfDB and the World Bank began to work together on the transition process. Key milestones have included the following:

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- **Transfer of AICD databases:** The AfDB has since 2011 assumed responsibility for the infrastructure website including maintenance of the AICD databases. The website was launched on 11 March 2011.
- **Development of a framework for sustainability:** The AfDB has formulated the AIKP as a framework for ensuring the sustainability of infrastructure data collection in African countries.
- **Training of National Statistical Agencies:** In April 2010, the AfDB-World Bank organized a joint regional training workshop in Hammamet, Tunisia, to familiarize infrastructure statistics focal persons from 42 NSOs and representatives of key sub-regional organizations with the AICD study.
- **Joint AfDB/World Bank Team Retreat:** In May 2010, the AfDB and World Bank teams held a joint retreat to transfer knowledge of the detailed procedures for data collection and analysis and to reach a common understanding of the conceptual framework for implementing the Africa Infrastructure Knowledge Program going forward.
- **Training Workshops for Phase II Countries:** The Bank organized two sub-regional training workshops on the data collection instruments in Lomé, Togo (August 2–6, 2010) and Hammamet, Tunisia (October 5–8, 2010) for 10 African countries.
- **Africa Infrastructure Statistics Handbook:** A draft Africa Infrastructure Statistics Handbook, which provides the methodological basis for ongoing data collection efforts has been prepared. The Handbook incorporates an IT component as a tool to systematize and facilitate data collection, validation, and processing.
- **Phase II Data Collection Activities:** The AfDB and World Bank have shared responsibility for the second phase data collection, which started in 2010, covering 27 countries. Data collection has successfully been completed in 17 countries<sup>1</sup> and efforts are underway to launch collection in the remaining 10 countries<sup>2</sup> later in 2011. The 24 countries originally covered in Phase I will undertake data collection in 2011 and Phase II countries in 2012. The plan is to conduct surveys every alternate year from now on. The Africa Infrastructure Statistics Handbook will guide the data collection, quality control, and data processing procedures. It is expected that countries would subsequently mainstream and budget for infrastructure statistics so that it becomes part of regular activity of the national statistical system.

## IV Next steps

In the next few months, the following activities will be undertaken as part of the AfDB efforts to build suitable capacity in the countries to collect, process, and manage infrastructure statistics.

- An Expert Group Meeting will be convened in April 2011 to discuss and validate the Africa Infrastructure Statistics Handbook, early enough to guide the data collection and processing procedures under the AIKP.
- Two training workshops will be organized to train country officials on infrastructure data collection instruments
- Data collection in the remaining 10 countries will be launched soon
- Technical assistance on data collection, processing and analysis will be provided to Phase II countries that have already completed data collection
- AfDB will support the 24 Phase I countries to undertake a second round of data collection in 2011
- Data Validation and Processing sub-regional Workshops will be organized in collaboration with AFRISTAT, COMESA, ECOWAS and SADC on the validation and processing of infrastructure data

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<sup>1</sup> These are Angola, Botswana, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo Republic, Djibouti, Gabon, Gambia, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Sao Tome & Principe, Sierra Leone, Swaziland Togo, Zimbabwe

<sup>2</sup> They are Algeria, Burundi, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Libya, Morocco, Seychelles, Tunisia,

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- An NSDS Workshop will be organized for African countries to facilitate the mainstreaming of infrastructure statistics into national statistical activities
- The AfDB will launch fund raising activities with development partners to supplement AfDB resources

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