
Preface

This publication is a follow up to the highlights published in April 2008. It presents much more detailed final results for the estimates of purchasing power parities of countries that participated in the 2005 ICP-Africa program. The results include estimates of real GDP and its major components, namely, household consumption, government consumption and gross capital formation.

The 2005 International Comparison Program was the largest ICP round ever conducted, covering 146 countries grouped into six regions: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Eurostat and OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), Latin America, and Western Asia. A regional organization in each region coordinated the project to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the operation and implementation of the program. The ICP Global Office, located in the Development Data Group of the World Bank, provided overall coordination for the project. The African Development Bank (AfDB) coordinated the 2005 ICP-Africa.

The AfDB launched the ICP-Africa program in 2002 with the aim of generating comprehensive and comparable measures of real per capita expenditure on the gross domestic product (GDP). Because the AfDB encouraged greater participation of African countries, 48 countries took part in the 2005 ICP comparison. Together they comprised about one-third of the countries worldwide and about half of non-OECD countries that participated in the global comparison. Unlike programs in the other regions, the ICP-Africa program also served as a platform for improving the national statistical systems of the participating countries. ICP-Africa was a broad-based capacity-building effort involving African and international partnerships.

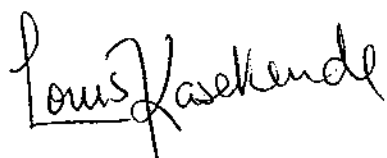
The 2005 ICP-Africa program is a key milestone because for the first time, an African institution coordinated the program from

the beginning to the end. It was also the first time that almost all countries on the continent participated in the comparison. In the 2005 round, the diversity of the countries in terms of size, geography, culture and statistical capacities was overcome as the 48 countries worked diligently and consistently to generate price and national accounts data that are largely comparable. Additionally, the estimates in this round are far more robust than those in previous rounds, largely because of improvements in methodology, data collection, data review and data processing. Finally, 2005 ICP-Africa established the technical repertoire and institutional requirements on which future rounds can draw and build on.

When embarking on this program, the AfDB understood that a lack of adequate resources compromised previous ICP rounds. When the U.N. Statistical Commission endorsed the 2005 round, it stressed the need for both sound governance and adequate resources. In response, the AfDB mobilized more than US\$ 36 million to support ICP and capacity-building activities in participating countries from 2002 to 2007. The Bank Group provided approximately 80 percent of these resources with other partners accounting for the rest.

I sincerely thank those who contributed to making the 2005 ICP-Africa round a success. We also appreciate the financial and technical support that the AfDB received from the World Bank and the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID) directly and through the U.K. Office of National Statistics (ONS-UK). I also extend my appreciation to the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), the Japanese authorities and the Indian Trust Fund for their financial contributions and the Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques (INSEE) in France and the U.K. Office of National Statistics, which provided invaluable technical support to the program. Last but not least, I thank the dedicated staff of the AfDB Statistics Department and, most importantly,

the national coordinating agencies, the four subregional organizations—Observatoire Économique et Statistique d'Afrique Sub-saharienne (AFRISTAT), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Southern African Development Community (SADC)—and other government agencies in each of the 48 participating countries for their in-kind and financial contributions, collaboration and commitment.



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