

# Editorial

This volume of the Journal focuses on gender statistics, consistent with the priority that pan-African institutions are attaching to the development and use of gender statistics to inform policy and monitor progress toward gender equality and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The new focus on gender in national policy and development in pursuit of equality and women's empowerment has been constrained by a lack of gender statistics in much of Africa. Indeed, Africa has lagged behind other regions of the world in the development and use of gender statistics, with attendant consequences. Realizing the need to urgently address this issue, the pan-African institutions have in recent years scaled up efforts to create greater awareness among African statisticians about gender issues and concerns and the need to mainstream them into national statistical systems, programs, and activities. In this connection, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) organized a high-level policy dialogue on gender statistics in Uganda in June 2008, followed by a first regional workshop on gender statistics in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in December 2008. This was subsequently followed by a global forum on gender statistics in Accra, Ghana, in January 2009. The Kampala City Group on Gender Statistics was launched in October 2009 to provide a forum where African stakeholders and partners could discuss issues related to the development of gender statistics, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), and the monitoring of the MDGs. In addition, the ECA has been working on engendering population and housing censuses and is finalizing an *African Gender Handbook for Censuses and Surveys*. Moreover, a Gender Statistics Network (GESTNET) has been set up to promote the exchange of information among stakeholders in the area of gender statistics. Furthermore, subregional workshops on gender statistics have been organized mainly by ECA, some of which have been followed up by national workshops. So the theme of this volume of the *African Statistical Journal* is very much in line with the broader efforts being made to improve the production and use of gender statistics in Africa.

This volume sees the publication of four highly topical articles. The first deals with the gendered allocation of time in the household and in the wider economy, as a major issue in the evolving discourse on time poverty. In analyzing the allocation of social roles between men and women, the article shows first how this allocation leads to time poverty among women; second, how this impacts progress toward the achievement of the MDGs; and third, how by using time-use survey methodologies and tools, it is possible to collect sex-disaggregated time-use data to help policymakers incorporate time poverty analysis as one of the components of overall

poverty reduction strategies and MDGs assessment and monitoring. The second article presents a profile of gendered poverty in Nigeria for the period 1980–1996. It examines the determinants of gendered poverty and specific measures that can be taken to reduce it, using the 1996 National Consumer Survey dataset. The third paper presents results from an empirical study conducted in 2009, which focuses on boys' underperformance in school in the Seychelles, while broadly examining their home socialization patterns. The article establishes that while boys have more freedom to roam around, they also have very narrowly defined gender roles, which places them at a disadvantage to girls, who tend to develop more rounded personalities and closeness to their mothers, whereas many Seychellois men have little say in the lives of their children. The fourth and final article argues that female labor force participation (FLFP) is the prime indication of the extent to which females participate in the economic activities of society. It shows that despite the advances in female educational attainment and the expansion of the market economy, female labor force participation rates are still low in comparison to those of their male counterparts. Using data from the 2008 Quarterly Labor Force Survey of Statistics South Africa, the paper studies the dynamics of the South African labor force. The results reveal an association between the level of educational status and female labor force participation.

Since the last volume of the Journal appeared in May 2010, several events have been organized with the aim of boosting statistical capacity in Africa. We highlight the main ones. First, the 2011 round of the International Comparison Program for Africa (ICP-Africa) was launched in Nairobi, Kenya, in June 2010. In addition to collecting data on prices and compiling national accounts to compute Purchasing Power Parities (PPPs), the new program, like its predecessor 2005 round, will go beyond data collection to build the sustainable capacity of African countries in these areas.

Second, the First Conference for African Ministers responsible for Civil Registration was successfully held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from August 13–14, 2010. This was the first time that statisticians in Africa had organized a ministerial conference focusing entirely on statistics. We would like to congratulate them on this feat and to encourage them to continue to scale up advocacy for statistics at such high level. Civil registration is the conventional data source for the generation of continuous and complete vital statistics that provide key health and demographic statistics, including many of the MDGs indicators. Furthermore, civil registration produces various legal and administrative information that forms the basis for safeguarding basic human rights, including children's and women's rights; it also furnishes critical information for the decentralization and democratization processes

currently progressing in most African countries. Nonetheless, nearly all African countries lack adequate civil registration and vital statistics systems and this has been largely attributed to a lack of political commitment. The conference was, therefore, organized to help bolster such commitment and to raise the profile of the importance of such civil registration systems.

Third, Africa has taken the lead in the implementation of the Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural Statistics. As mentioned in the previous issue of the Journal, this Strategy was endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in February 2010. It was developed in response to the declining quantity and quality of agricultural statistics and the need to provide data to support emerging data requirements and to integrate agriculture in national statistical systems. A five-year implementation plan of the Strategy in Africa has been developed and was presented at the 5th International Conference on Agricultural Statistics, held in Kampala, Uganda in October 2010. The conference made useful inputs into the African implementation plan of the Strategy.

We trust that you will find this volume of the journal interesting and informative.

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