



**WORKSHOP ON IMPROVING STATISTICS FOR FOOD
SECURITY, SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT: ACTION PLAN FOR AFRICA**

19 - 21 JUNE 2012

KIGALI

STATEMENT

BY

OLIVER CHINGANYA

**MANAGER, STATISTICAL CAPACITY BUILDING DIVISION
THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK**

Guest of Honour, The Hon. Minister of Agriculture

FAO Representative to Rwanda

Your Excellencies

The Director General, National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda

Invited Guests,

Ladies and gentlemen

1. On behalf of the African Development Bank, I would like to welcome you all to this regional workshop. I would like, in particular, to welcome participants who have come from other African countries. In a special way, I would like to extend special welcome to the Guest of Honour, the Hon. Minister for Agriculture of Rwanda, for agreeing to come and grace the official opening of this workshop.

2. Hon. Minister, you are most welcome. It is our hope that you and your colleagues at highest political and policy level in the agriculture and rural sector across Africa will remain engaged in improving the evidence base for informing policy, planning, decision-making, monitoring and evaluation of development policies, programmes and projects on agriculture and the rural economy.

3. This workshop has drawn participants from *** countries in Africa and is the first such workshop to be organized under the Action Plan for Africa. Let me also take this opportunity, on behalf of the Bank, to thank the Government of Rwanda for agreeing to host this important regional workshop. As you may all know, agriculture and the rural economy are the back bone of most of our countries' economies. They contribute at least 40% to GDP and over 75% to total exports for most African countries; provide upwards of 80% of employment; and most industries and services in the countries are based on the two sectors. Therefore, the central and strategic role of agriculture and rural sector to the national economy makes the sector the key to general improved economic performance, increased incomes and raising of standards of living of households as well as poverty eradication in most of our countries.

4. In spite of the important role of agriculture and the rural economy in Africa, agricultural and rural statistics remain in a sorry state in many countries - they are wanting in terms of quantity, quality and dissemination. This is in spite of a number of initiatives on statistical development that have been put in place and implemented in Africa over the years. The situation has been exacerbated by new data requirements to inform policy on

emerging development issues such as food vs. bio-fuels, global warming, environment, gender, and food security.

5. It is against this backdrop of under-development and under-performance of the agricultural statistical systems in Africa and other developing countries that a **Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural Statistics** was designed and endorsed in February 2010 by the United Nations Statistical Commission. The purpose of the Global Strategy is to provide a framework and methodology that will lead to the improvement of national and international agricultural and rural statistics to guide policy analysis and decision-making in the 21st century.

6. I am happy to inform you that Africa was the first region (continent) to initiate the implementation of the Global Strategy by designing an Action Plan (AP) aimed at improving the coverage and quality of the minimum core data set, focusing on both national and regional priority data needs; greater integration of agricultural statistics with national statistical systems; and the increased and sustained capacity of the systems to meet the needs of users in the future. Its impact will include improvements in the coverage and quality of the minimum core data set, focusing on both national and regional priority data needs; better

integration of agricultural and rural statistics in national statistical systems; and the increased and sustained capacity of the systems to meet the needs of users in the future. The Action Plan will be implemented by countries with support mainly from the African Development Bank, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

7. This Action Plan comprises three **technical components** - technical assistance, training and research - as well as a governance mechanism and a detailed country assessment, which should form the basis for the three technical components. This workshop aims in the first instance to bring you up to speed on the Global Strategy, the Action Plan for Africa and the components of the Action Plan. The workshop will then go into the governance mechanism and country assessment which are designed to provide a basis for the technical components.

8. Let me say a few words about the country assessment. The assessment aims to establish statistical needs and capabilities of each country, the state of the data they currently produce and disseminate, the methodology used, their readiness to begin implementing planned activities under the Action Plan, etc. This

information is required prior to the implementation of the technical components of the global strategy. In this workshop, we will systematically present the instruments to be used for country assessment.

9. This workshop was planned to be intensive and interactive. I urge all of you to take every opportunity the workshop presents to gain crucial knowledge about what is planned to improve agricultural and rural statistics in Africa and how we hope to achieve it through the Action Plan for Africa of the Global Strategy.

10. Before I end my statement, I would like to assure you of the commitment of the bank to the full implementation of the Action Plan. At the Bank, some actions have already been taken including the recruitment of a coordinator, successful organization of the first Steering Committee meeting which was held in Tunis, Tunisia in July 2012, and production of a Bulletin on Implementation of the Action Plan.

11. I wish you good deliberations and I want to thank you all for your kind attention.