

African Statistics Day 2023



Theme: *“Modernizing data ecosystems to accelerate the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA): the role of official statistics and Big Data in the economic transformation and sustainable development of Africa.”*

STATEMENT BY THE CABINET SECRETARY, THE NATIONAL TREASURY AND ECONOMIC PLANNING, PROF. NJUGUNA NDUNG’U DURING THE 2023 AFRICAN STATISTICS DAY CELEBRATIONS



I am pleased to join the Continent in celebrating this year’s African Statistics Day. The theme of this year’s celebrations is *“Modernizing data ecosystems to accelerate the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA): the role of official statistics and Big Data in the economic transformation and sustainable development of Africa.”*

Creation of the African Continental Free Trade Area is part of the efforts to realize African unity. At its launch, at the 10th extraordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Kigali on 21st March 2018, the Agreement Establishing AfCFTA, was signed by 44 countries, Kenya being among them. Hence, for the purposes of fulfilling and realizing the objectives of this Agreement, State Parties committed to:

1. Progressively eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers to trade in goods;
2. Progressively liberalize trade in services;
3. Cooperate on investment, intellectual property rights and competition policy;
4. Cooperate on all trade-related areas;
5. Cooperate on customs matters and the implementation of trade facilitation measures;
6. Establish a mechanism for the settlement of disputes concerning their rights and obligations;
7. Establish and maintain an institutional framework for the implementation and administration of the Agreement.

The government through the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) plays a pivotal role in implementing the AfCFTA by providing official statistics on International Trade in goods, services and capital. As Kenya’s exports are primarily agricultural, some of the initiatives the government has invested in the Agricultural Sector to support and motivate farmers are; negotiations on the Guaranteed Minimum Returns to farmers; addressing barriers to market access of Kenyan products; reduction of post-harvest losses; subsidies on some farm inputs such as fertilizers and alternative farming technologies to combat the effects of climate change.

The Government is continuously engaging businesses and investors to take up investment opportunities in the country, by investing in capital infrastructure and incorporating ICT technologies to modernize and improve provision of government services. Some of the services that facilitate trade include the Single Window Platforms and implementation of the integrated Customs Management System, which facilitate cross border trade and investment.

I appreciate the KNBS for taking advantage of the emerging sources of data such as Citizen Generated Data (CGD), Big Data and Data Analytics to address some of the data gaps. In addition, I appreciate all the players in the data ecosystem for supporting statistics work in the country.

I wish Africa a happy African Statistics Day!

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC PLANNING, MR. JAMES MUHATI, DURING THE 2023 AFRICAN STATISTICS DAY



As we celebrate African Statistics Day this year, we recognize the role of official statistics in economic transformation and sustainable development in our continent.

Official statistics play a fundamental role in informing evidence-based policies, facilitating effective decision-making, and monitoring progress towards Sustainable Development Goals. In the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), accurate and comprehensive data on international trade in goods, services and investment helps to identify trade patterns, areas for investment, assess the impact of policies, and monitor the process of economic

integration of member countries.

Advancement in technology has enabled harnessing of Big Data gaining insights into consumer behaviour, market trends, emerging sectors, address supply chain inefficiencies. In response to the opportunities afforded by Big Data, the government is modernizing the data ecosystem to take advantage of the gains by building capacity along the data value chain. Some of the achievements are conducting a fully digital Population and Housing Census, use of satellite imagery in developing data collection infrastructure, web scraping to compute Real Estate index. We have partnered with USAID DHS Program to develop a mobile application to easily avail statistics on Demographic and Health Survey.

This year's theme resonates with the Government's development agenda, the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), which outlines the development pillars for focus, among them is Micro Small and Medium Enterprises Economy. Under this pillar Kenya will promote MSMEs to produce goods to meet the export demand. Towards this, the government is committed to strengthening the data collection systems on MSME sector, to provide benchmark statistics.

On this African Statistics Day, I applaud all stakeholders and encourage them to play their role in providing data when called upon, so as to compliment the Government's efforts for evidence-based planning for the country.

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MESSAGE BY MR. STEPHEN WAINAINA, MBS, CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, KENYA NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS, DURING THE 2023 AFRICAN STATISTICS DAY



On behalf of the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics Board of Directors, I am pleased to join the rest of Africa in celebrating the 2023 African Statistics Day. This celebration underscores the collaborative approach the African Continent has taken in prioritizing statistics production and enhancing their usage as a key input in the actualization of international, continental and regional developmental aspirations.

I am delighted to note that this year’s theme focuses on **Accelerating the implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area, (AfCTFA)**. This is in sync with one of Kenya’s economic development priority areas under the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), which is the Pillar that focuses on Micro, Medium, and Small Enterprises (MSMEs) Economy. Indeed the emphasis on trade and the realization of AfCFTA reflects the concerted efforts to integrate continental economic strategies with national development frameworks.

The Bureau is strategically aligned to provide accurate, reliable and timely statistics to inform the formulation of policy and design, implementation and monitoring of programmes to realize development frameworks. In KNBS 2023-2027 Strategic Plan a key focus area is the modernization of statistical infrastructure to enhance the production and quality of official statistics in the country in line with the current country, regional and Continental needs.

We also acknowledge the evolving data ecosystem, which makes it essential for us to adopt innovative approaches that encompass non-traditional data sources such as big data, while also harnessing the capabilities of data science and artificial intelligence. To this end, the Strategic Plan puts emphasizes on building capacity to enhance the use of alternative these data sources to improve the quality of official statistics.

I invite you all to join the KNBS and the Continent in celebrating this year’s African Statistics Day.

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MESSAGE BY MR. MACDONALD G. OBUDHO, MBS, DIRECTOR GENERAL, KENYA NATIONAL BUREAU OF STATISTICS, DURING THE AFRICAN STATISTICS DAY CELEBRATION



I am excited to join you today on this occasion, specifically designated to emphasize the importance of official statistics for evidence-based decision making and research. The theme for this year’s African Statistics Day is *‘Modernizing data ecosystems to accelerate the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA): the role of official statistics and big data in the economic transformation and sustainable development of Africa.’* Official statistics provide indicators for understanding the country’s economic performance and social welfare. Quality data empowers governments, businesses, and citizens to make informed choices, thereby driving economic growth and improving quality of life.

We are in the age of the fifth Industrial Revolution which leverages on advanced technologies such as machine learning and artificial intelligence, to harness Big Data into useful information. To gain from these advanced technologies, African National Statistical Offices must modernize their data ecosystems. Modernizing data ecosystems calls for use of these advanced technologies in collection, analysis and dissemination of statistics. In the context of African Continental Free Trade Agreement, big data offers real-time market intelligence, consumer behavior patterns, and supply chain dynamics, thereby fostering a more agile and responsive business environment.

Cognizant of these developments, the KNBS has invested in modernizing the National Statistical System (NSS) in the following ways:

I. Embracing other sources of data such as Citizen Generated Data (CGD). Data produced by civil society organizations is important as it is used to address data gaps, especially in tracking implementation of the SDGs. To ensure CGD conforms to the principles of official statistics, KNBS has developed a criterion for validating CGD.

II. Incorporating Big Data in production of official statistics, for example geographic demarcation.

III. Building mobile – based systems for data collection, which increases efficiency in data collection. Owing to these systems, KNBS successfully conducted the 2019 Population and Housing Census digitally, undertaking household-based surveys using Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) and Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI).

IV. Establishing a Data Science lab which acts as an incubation centre which uses technologies to enhance the capacity for data analysis and dissemination.

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V. Efforts at modernizing dissemination channels such as revamping the website to make it more interactive, expanding access to data portals such as KENADA and the Kenya Open Data Portal and the Open SDG Platform.

Partnerships and collaboration are essential for modernizing data ecosystems. In this regard we have entered into Memoranda of Understanding with Ministries, Departments, Agencies and counties to harness synergies and avoid duplication of efforts in the production of official statistics. We have established peer-to-peer collaborations with other National Statistical Offices in Africa and beyond for mutual gain in capacity for production and dissemination of statistics. Increasing statistical literacy by partnering with institutions of higher learning through associations of students enrolled in statistical programmes. In addition, the KNBS runs an Internship programme for young statisticians. Enhancing data analysis through collaboration with Universities and research institutions for data analysis and developing technologies to aid in data analysis. We have collaborated with the University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Moi University and Strathmore University, and Kenya Institute for Public Policy and Research Analysis (KIPPRA). We are committed to working with universities and research institutions.

The KNBS mandate requires us to assist counties to develop statistics for county-level planning. This calls for county leadership to tap into the resource at the KNBS to build capacity in statistical production. Engaging the expertise at KNBS will result in establishment of statistical units, development of statistical plans, recruiting statisticians and eventually, production of county – specific statistics.

I wish all of us a Happy African Statistics Day.