

December 2008

**ENGLISH ORIGINAL****UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA****UNITED NATIONS OFFICE  
ON DRUGS AND CRIME**

Joint UNODC-UNECA Workshop on Crime Statistics  
Addis-Ababa, 9-12 December 2008  
UNECA Conference Room 6

**REPORT**

Note prepared by the Secretariat

1. The Joint UNECA-UNODC Workshop on Crime Statistics was held on 9-12 December 2008 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It was attended by participants from Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, USA, Zimbabwe, UNODC and UNECA. The African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) were also represented.
2. Mr. George Shebi (South Africa) was elected as the Chairperson for Day 1; Mr. Xavier Bayala (Burkina Faso) as Chairperson for Day 2; Ms. Erika Keogh (Zimbabwe) as Chairperson for Day 3; Ms. Grace Bediako (Ghana) as Chairperson for Day 4; Ms. Djeukwi Vicky Laure (Cameroon) and Mr. Robert Buluma (Kenya) as Rapporteurs of the meeting.
3. The following topics were discussed at the meeting:
  - Session 1: Introduction, Crime and criminal justice statistics and socio-economic development / Purpose of developing national criminal justice information
  - Session 2: Why victim surveys are important; Administrative statistics on crime and criminal justice
  - Session 3: National examples: A household survey for measuring victimization experiences and public attitudes: The US Crime Victim Survey; Statistics at the Ministry of Justice of France
  - Session 4: What are the basic needs in view of improving national system of criminal justice data collection, processing, analysis, and dissemination? Difficulties of crime data generation in Africa
  - Session 5: Crime and criminal justice statistics: annual and more frequent collection and publication; Statistics on violence against women, juvenile justice; other surveys on crime and corruption (Crime and Corruption Business Surveys; police surveys)
  - Session 6: Towards an integrated system of crime and criminal justice statistics

Sessions 7 and 8: Planning of future needs and follow up to the workshop

4. The following participants acted as presenters of the different sessions: Session 1: Angela Me, Anna Alvazzi del Frate (UNODC); Session 2: Michael Rand (USA), Alain Marais (France); Session 3: Michael Rand (USA), Alain Marais (France), Robert Buluma (Kenya), Laurent Rosette (Seychelles); Session 4: Michael Rand (USA); Session 5: Alain Marais (France); Session 4: Angela Me (UNODC), Maicibi Alhas (UNAFRI); Session 5: Angela Me (UNODC), Anna Alvazzi del Frate (UNODC); Sessions 6 and 7: Michael Rand (USA), Alain Marais (France).
5. The following participants acted as discussants: Erica Keogh (Zimbabwe), Alphonse Mulefu (Rwanda), Mathias Ssamula (Uganda), Xavier Bayala (Burkina Faso), Mourad Sid Ahmed (Algeria), Naigee Guillaume (Mauritius), Anna Mtani (Tanzania), Assi Yapo (Côte d'Ivoire), George Shebi (South Africa), Marfo Yentumi Nkansah, Ghana.
6. The participants adopted a set of recommendations as well as the report of the meeting at its closing session.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Development of an African framework of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics to put existing international standards/guidelines into the African context and support countries in their efforts to strengthen their capacity to produce and disseminate crime and criminal justice statistics*
  - a) African countries should consider, with the support of UNODC and UNECA, developing a framework for the production of crime and criminal justice statistics to be submitted to the Statistical Commission of African countries for discussion and consideration by its members. Such framework may include the implementation of national victimization surveys and other surveys, as well as developing a core list of offences which could be used to compare data across countries in Africa.
  - b) Regional and subregional workshops should be carried out to disseminate international recommendations in the field of crime and criminal justice statistics (particularly the UN Manual on Development of a System of Criminal Justice Statistics, the UNODC-UNICEF Manual on the Measurement of Juvenile Justice Indicators and the forthcoming UNODC-UNECE Manual on Victimization Surveys and related instruments) and to discuss their applicability into the African context and eventually develop specific African recommendations. Such events should be carried out in partnership with UNODC, UNECA, AUC, UNAFRI and other African stakeholders.
  - c) UNECA, ADB, AUC and other African stakeholders should consider the translation of the UN Manual on Development of a System of Criminal Justice Statistics, the UNODC-UNICEF Manual on the Measurement of Juvenile Justice Indicators and the forthcoming UNODC-UNECE Manual on Victimization Surveys into the main African official languages.
  - d) A network of experts on crime and criminal justice statistics in Africa should be established. UNECA and UNODC should put in place a “working group on crime statistics” under the UNECA knowledge management platform to ensure a continuous exchange of information among African experts in this area. National and international stakeholders in the field of crime and criminal justice statistics should be invited to participate in this working group. Task teams may be set up within the working group to deal with specific tasks and issues.

- e) UNODC, UNECA, AUC, EC, UNAFRI, other African stakeholders and other donors should support African countries in their efforts to improve their national crime and criminal justice statistics systems according to their national needs. In particular, they should support the sustainable implementation of national victimization surveys and other crime and justice related surveys, including analysis and dissemination. They should also provide technical assistance where needed.
- f) More African countries should regularly report to the UN Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems by responding to relevant questionnaires.

*2. Improve the coordination of the production and dissemination of crime and criminal justice statistics at national level*

- a) Countries should advocate and take necessary steps to ensure that the NSO plays a key role in the coordination of the production of crime statistics. It therefore should be provided with the necessary resources and internal capacity to fully play this role in NSS.
- b) Where mechanisms to coordinate crime statistics are not in place, NSO should initiate the development of partnerships with the other data producing agencies considering that sustainable partnerships can be built only if the other agencies see the benefits of coordination. It is therefore important that NSO has a constant consultation with the stakeholders on crime and criminal justice in the NSS.
- c) Countries should consider involving all producers of crime and criminal justice statistics during the design for implementation of strategic plans (NSDS). In this regard, NSO and other producing agencies should prepare sectoral plans on crime and criminal justice statistics that would be part of the national plan.
- d) NSO should support the statistical capacity of the other criminal justice institutions by:
  - Providing statistical training on an on-going basis (to overcome the high turn-over of staff)
  - Setting-up statistical standards on crime and criminal justice statistics together with the other agencies
  - Working with other agencies to revise and streamline their data collection tools and methods
  - Working with other agencies to revise and update the methodology used to transform administrative data into statistical information and ensure that methodology is internalized by producers of administrative data.
  - Nurturing relationships with other crime and criminal justice agencies
- e) The national statistics act and/or statistical strategic plan shall have provision for a coordinating role to be played by the NSO as far as crime and criminal justice statistics are concerned. Provision should also be made to facilitate the provision of data from the criminal justice institutions to the NSO.
- f) Countries should explore the possibility of establishing a Crime and criminal justice statistics national committee to provide a forum where relevant agencies can have a constant interaction to ensure full coordination in the production and dissemination of statistics. This committee could be chaired by the NSO.
- g) Countries should explore the possibility of developing MoU between NSO and other agencies to coordinate the production and dissemination of crime and criminal justice statistics.
- h) Countries should consider a specific role for the various agencies in the dissemination of data. This may take into account the need for relevance, accuracy and timeliness in the analysis, along with the need for a broader approach to integration of different sources.

3. *Support the regular implementation of crime-related surveys in African countries*

- a) Countries should explore the possibility of embedding victimization surveys into their regular statistical production process (either as a module in existing surveys or as a stand-alone victimization survey). Such surveys should be conducted at least every two years.
- b) Victimization surveys should be done by or in collaboration with the National Statistical Office, in line with good standard statistical practices.
- c) When undertaking victimization surveys it is important to consider the following issues:
  - Written translation of key concepts and definitions into main local languages
  - Allocating adequate time to training of interviewers, including - as much as possible - translation of questionnaires into local languages and dialects in which the survey will be conducted
  - Additional modules may be developed for specific population groups such as women, youth and vulnerable people. In such case, additional specific training of interviewers will be required.
  - Feedback to respondent through various dissemination means including media and local community leaders
- d) Countries should be encouraged to conduct other types of surveys to address specific issues such as integrity of judicial system, civil servants, police, prisons as well as the experience of corruption in the private and public sectors.

## **SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS**

### *Introductory Remarks*

7. In his introductory remarks, Mr. Dimitri Sanga from UNECA mentioned the importance of the collaboration with UNODC. Statistical work in the region is important to advance development and to meet the MDGs. He mentioned the challenges in collecting crime statistics, which are not often collected by statistical offices. Long-term, strategic and sustainable planning of statistics is needed in order to provide a comprehensive coverage of a wide range of issues and meet the needs of African countries. Further work is needed to develop regional plans in coordination with regional economic commissions (REC).
8. Ms. Angela Me welcomed the participants on behalf of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and thanked the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Union Commission (AUC) for partnering in the organization of the meeting. She explained that this workshop comes halfway through the project “Collection and analysis of data and trends in drugs, crime and victimization”, funded by the Development Account of the United Nations. She said she would hope that further partnership with the Regional Economic Commissions could be obtained to advance work in the area of crime statistics in the African region. She introduced Mr. Francesco Bastagli, Consultant to UNODC in the advancement of joint work with the AUC towards operationalisation of the Revised AU Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention 2007-12.

9. Mr. Johnny Strijdom conveyed the wishes and greetings of the AUC to the meeting and mentioned that Priority area 2.6 of the Plan of Action covers statistical matters.<sup>1</sup> He explain that his main task involved the identification of specific sub-areas in the Plan of Action and to transform them in concrete actions. He was pleased to note that this workshop could contribute to the advancement of knowledge on crime trends in the Region.
10. The objectives of the meeting were a) to discuss recent victim surveys carried out in African countries with the aim of sharing experience with other countries willing to start their own surveys; b) to deal with administrative statistics, aiming at sharing good practices and building capacity; c) to discuss issues of coordination, needs and priorities of countries and the possibility of establishing national focal points for crime statistics; d) to strengthen international cooperation and reporting to the UN on crime statistics through the UN Survey of Crime Trends and the Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (CTS).

***The role of crime statistics in policy making***

11. Participants agreed that there was a relationship between crime and development and that improving knowledge of crime trends would assist in promoting more efficient crime prevention and social development in Africa. It was stressed that the desired level of quality of statistics is determined by a balance between several dimensions mainly related to: relevance, accuracy, timeliness and cost. Taking into account that a perfect system would probably be excessively expensive or slow, it is necessary to set desirable goals within a range of feasible activities. It was emphasized that good statistics should provide the adequate information to address the relevant policy questions which may be of different nature in relation to the criminal justice context. It is important to keep the users engaged in the development and improvement of crime statistics so that they can recognize the value of statistics and be ready to advocate for the allocation of adequate resources.

Dimensions of Quality in statistics

Timely  
 Reliable  
 Comparable  
 Accurate / precise  
 Measurable  
 Relevant  
 Focused  
 Realistic  
 Valid  
 Coherent  
 Methodologically sound  
 Cost-efficient

<sup>1</sup> African Union, Revised AU Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention 2007-12, Document CMDCCP/EXP/3(III), December 2007. Priority Area 2.6 (Enhance understanding of the dynamics of drugs and crime for policy making purposes) has the objective of “improving the collection, management, analysis and dissemination of data to inform evidence based policy formulation”. Proposed strategy i) reads “Improve research and data collection on drugs and crime on the Continent”. Among the recommended actions, i) and ii) read “Member States to develop, in collaboration with NGOs, national criminal justice statistical databases, and build capacity to collect, manage, analyse the statistical data and disseminate information to all relevant stakeholders” and “RECs and Member States to initiate and promote research on drug and crime patterns, trends and linkages, as well as promotion of the capacity to collect, manage, analyse and disseminate the information”.

**Examples of information needed for policy making**

Prevalence of crime  
 Who are the victims  
 Perceptions about crime  
 Who are the offenders  
 Performance of law enforcement agencies  
 Cost of crime  
 Location where crime happens  
 Type of crime  
 Impact of government intervention  
 Measuring trends

12. Any system to collect criminal justice statistics is a result of a compromise and all systems have errors, because resources are limited. There are choices that need to be made in order to design the best system given the limited resources. In relation to victimization surveys these choices could be for example to limit the scope of the survey to some geographical areas or to limit the content of the survey.

13. It was agreed that there are advantages in bringing all collections of crime statistics within the national statistical system. This would help to overcome the issue of limited resources and may facilitate approaching relevant sectors to explain them how regular data collection could provide explanation of the causes of crime, and show the

impact through statistics. If countries could design strategic plans including crime statistics as part of their regular work, they would have the minimum required to tie the plan to data collection needs. Donors could be encouraged to provide additional funding to enrich or complete the work.

14. Participants also mentioned a number of obstacles which were frequently found in the African context, such as the scattered information produced by a variety of different sources, the difficulty of having more than one source available to reconcile and verify the data, the irregular frequency of data collection, the lack of feedback given to communities in which surveys are carried out, the poor follow up given to recommendations, and the scarce sharing and dissemination of information. Other challenges include the lack of training, infrastructures, equipment and logistics. However, it was agreed that it is possible to build on international experiences and good practices and that governments of many African countries have started realizing the importance of information. The important work being done by some NGOs was also noted.

***Victim surveys***

15. The meeting discussed the benefits of carrying out victimization surveys to provide valuable information to policy makers on the level and nature of crime as well as on other issues such as characteristics of victims, impact of crime on victims, perception of crime and attitudes towards police and other agencies. In all countries there is always a portion of crimes that are not reported to the police and that consequently are not measured in administrative statistics. Victimization surveys can provide information on unreported crime and therefore can help to make a more comprehensive picture of the level of crime in a country. However, they are also subject to methodological limitations and alone cannot provide a picture of all illegal acts that occur in society. Looking at the benefits and constraints of administrative records and victimization surveys, participants agreed that no single source can provide a definitive measure of crime in a country. Each source can provide valuable information that others may

not be able to measure and that the best knowledge about crime can be produced when data from different sources are integrated.

16. Victimization surveys can be the unique source of information on:

- Unreported crimes (dark figure)
- Victim characteristics
- Nature and circumstances of the crime
- Impact of crime on victims
- Perception of crime
- Attitudes towards police and other agencies

**Inclusion of a victimization module in on-going survey**

<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>
Cost-effective	Limitation on the content
More timely	No specialized training
Sustainability	Limited coverage of topics
	Imposed sample
	Adapt to existing conditions
	Risk of under- or over-estimating

17. Participants agreed that countries should develop regular and sustainable programmes of victimization surveys within the framework of National Statistical Systems. However, they also recognized that such programmes require appropriated level of funding and expertise which is not often ready-available in countries. The possibility of including a victimization module in on-going surveys was discussed as a cost-effective option to collect victimization statistics. Few countries in Africa and other regions have already used this approach. Both advantages and disadvantages related to this option were considered.

18. The meeting also discussed the number of methodological choices that need to be made to conduct a successful victimization survey. A forthcoming UNODC-UNECE Manual on

**Selected Methodological issues related to the design of victimization surveys**

- Selection of what crime to include (that can be successfully be measured through surveys)
- Mode of data collection
- Selection of interviewers
- Training of interviewers
- Defining the reference period for reporting the crimes
- Minimizing memory errors by the respondents related to the reporting of crimes
- Selection of respondents in the households

Victimization Surveys was cited as a valuable tool to guide countries through the different methodologies and to design the survey that best considers national circumstances.

19. Recognizing the important contribution given by the ICVS programme in the region, participants discussed the benefit of utilizing standard international/regional methodology and content for victimization surveys but they also emphasized the need to tailor the surveys towards the specific needs of the countries in the region. In view of balancing these two needs, the meeting requested that a

core set of offences be identified for inclusion in victimization surveys in Africa. It was also emphasized that there are specific challenges related to the implementation of victimization surveys in the African region:

- Sensitivity of the subject
  - Illiteracy
  - Limited access to some respondents such as women or population in remote areas
20. Experiences of national victim surveys were provided by the US (the NCVS, which started in 1972 and is based on sample of more than 40,000 households), Tanzania (where several victim surveys have been carried out in cities, including the latest one conducted in collaboration with UNODC and UN-Habitat in 2008), Rwanda (survey conducted in collaboration with UNODC in 2008), Uganda (survey conducted in collaboration with UNODC in 2007-08).
21. Discussion highlighted the need for victim surveys to use simple language and to respect cultural sensitivities. This can be achieved through qualitative research (focus groups, cognitive tests) and adequate training provided to the interviewers before the survey.

#### *Administrative statistics on crime and criminal justice*

22. Administrative statistics were presented as chain linking the various phases of the system, starting with the reporting of crimes to the police. Police statistics are used in many countries to depict the crime situation, but a number of problems limit their usability for this purpose. Police records of crime reflect the efficiency the police and not the amount of crime. Some crimes are not reported to the police, but to other authorities (customs, financial police, etc.), or directly to the judicial system. Participants noted that, given the importance of police statistics, it would have been useful if representatives of the police were attending the workshop.
23. Administrative statistics may be based on a sample of jurisdictions, which can provide reliable results in a cost-effective manner and can be followed over time. The example of a study with cohorts of juveniles was discussed. Sampling of administrative data may be difficult to explain to non-statisticians, and there is a need to promote a “culture of numbers”.
24. There is extensive use of IT and electronic questionnaires, on which a set of quarterly indicators has been developed to allow for regular monitoring of the functioning and management of the judicial work, as well as crime trends.
25. Several national examples were presented. Mr. Marais described criminal justice statistics at the French Ministry of Justice and explained that the French system foresees seconded professional statisticians in each agency. Knowledge of crime is still scattered, although there is a trend towards better connections among agencies, with statistics representing a continuum of key points in the penal process.

## Coordination

26. The meeting discussed the different institutions involved in the production and dissemination of criminal justice statistics particularly in relation to administrative data. It was noted that there are three main institutional authorities: police, justice and detention centers which collect data through their administrative processes. But other sources were also mentioned as possible source of crime-related information such as: causes of death statistics (for homicides), insurances, tax authorities, companies/establishments, customs, *huissiers*, church leaders, local authorities .....
27. Discussion focused on the importance of engaging all parts of the criminal justice system in the collection and maintenance of accurate statistics.
28. Participants strongly emphasized the need for coordinating the different agencies involved in the collection and dissemination of crime statistics and advocated for strengthening the role of the national statistical offices in performing its coordinating role. Some African countries have successfully initiated a process to improve the cooperation across the agencies and the national statistical office for example establishing a national crime and justice Committee or MoUs between NSO and relevant agencies. However, there are still National statistical offices which are struggling to engage the other agencies in a coordinated fashion. Some agencies lack the statistical capacity to improve the collection and dissemination of the statistics and would require proper training and the allocation of dedicated capacity to deal with statistics. In many cases these agencies do not have a specific budget allocation for statistics since their main purpose is the provision of services.
29. NSOs should support the strengthening of statistical capacity of the agencies, but it is sometime itself constrained by the lack of resources. The coordinated functions that NSO could play include:
  - The development of standard definitions/concepts
  - Provision of training to the agencies
  - Coordinated dissemination of crime statistics integrating the data from the other agencies
  - Development of methodology to improve the collection and dissemination of crime-related data
30. Participants also discussed the need to promote standardization of definitions for statistical purposes throughout the system in order to identify procedures to consistently follow cases. Criminal justice statistics may be recognized by users as important and crucial in the decision making process only if they are clear and available on a regular basis.
31. Discussion highlighted the importance of IT in collecting criminal justice statistics. Relevant applications should be working on a regular basis, with the development of appropriate software for long term use. It was noted that many countries lack adequate IT and many

procedures are conducted through paper forms and questionnaires. Participants agreed that questionnaires need to be short and effective in order to encourage response.

32. UNODC informed the participants about the UN Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (CTS) and mentioned that only six African countries had responded to the 10<sup>th</sup> CTS as of 1 December. Participants agreed that it is important to share information at the international level, but suggested that a shorter questionnaire might be easier to handle.

### **Statistics on violence against women**

33. According to the global definition, violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that results or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of violence, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. Participants discussed several categories in which such a definition might be broken down (such as deprivation of legal rights, right to planning a family, access to education, genital mutilation, different salary for same work done). Frequently violence is committed by intimate partners (domestic violence), but violence against women is beyond domestic. Sexual, physical and psychological violence, femicide, sexual harassment, stalking, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, trafficking in persons were all forms of violence against women. Population-based sample surveys represent the most reliable method for collecting official statistics on the extent of violence against women. This is because reporting to the police is rare, especially if the victim perceives the risk of facing unprepared and untrained police officials. In this context it was noted that raising awareness of the problem and improving the capacity of the police to receive victims willing to report may lead to more reporting.
34. A number of countries have already carried out national surveys on violence against women, thus generating relevant data on the currently agreed main indicators of violence against women (physical violence, sexual violence and intimate partner violence). Participants discussed the challenges related to the measurement of violence against women in the African context where this topic is very sensitive. It was emphasized that the survey instruments should be as objective as possible so that data collected are strictly related to the violence as defined by the objective of the survey rather than by the opinion of respondents on what they believe is violence. In order to reach this objective, the formulation of the questions should be very direct and based on behaviours. Surveys should also take care in putting women's safety first and properly address any risks of endangering respondents. In this respect, the WHO Ethical guidelines were mentioned as a useful guiding tool.

### **Juvenile justice**

35. The UNODC-UNICEF Manual on the Measurement of Juvenile Justice indicators was presented by highlighting the importance of keeping accurate records on children in conflict

with the law. It was noted that juvenile justice statistics are fundamental for assisting young people and helping them staying out of crime.

**Other surveys on crime and corruption: Crime and Corruption Business Surveys, police surveys**

36. Business surveys are aimed at capturing experiences of victimisation of small-medium companies. They require accurate sampling to target establishments of similar size and characteristics. Questionnaires include experience of crimes against the establishments (such as burglary at the premises, theft of company vehicles, theft by employees or outsiders, etc.), as well as issues of corruption, requests for protection money, extortion, and intimidation.
37. The Business Survey on Crime & Corruption, and Awareness of EFCC, undertaken by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in collaboration with the EFCC and UNODC was presented as an example. It aimed at generating a set of indicators on the impact of crime and corruption on business, and to promote joint measures against them. Discussion focused on the type of incidents covered by the survey, the profile of respondents, differences between rural and urban areas.
38. Many participants highlighted that police forces are frequently indicated by survey respondents as the most corrupt institutions. In this respect, it was noted that surveys of police officers may assist in obtaining information of perceptions, attitudes and experiences of police officers towards crime and corruption, as well as assessing their integrity, job satisfaction and needs/expectations. Questionnaires include questions on relationship with public.
39. A survey of police officers was carried out in Cape Verde in 2006/07 within other surveys (victimization survey of general population, business survey, survey of public employees). A second round of surveys was being finalized at the time of the workshop. The survey involved approximately 300 officers from different police forces in the country. Among the problems encountered, it was noted that police officers were not very cooperative and there was an overall lack of commitment and understanding of the purposes of the survey. Discussion highlighted the need for involvement of the surveyed population (in this case the police) in the survey before going to the field.

\* \* \* \* \*