The Africa Information Highway

Presented at the SDMX Global Conference, 11-13 September 2013, OECD, Paris

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Overview

- Introduction to the African Information Highway
- System components
- Hosting arrangements
- Current data transmission method
- New framework approach/advantages
- Way forward
What is the Africa Information Highway?

The Africa Information Highway (AIH) is the AFDB’s ambitious program to install an Integrated Data Dissemination System in all 54 African countries, 9 Regional and Sub-regional organizations and 6 Statistical Training Centers.
Rationale

- Policy and other government decision-making not data-driven.
- Access to data from countries quite difficult
- When accessible, data not often in easy-to-use format.
- Issues of data quality or “fit for purpose”.
  - Lack of metadata
  - Timeliness
  - Accuracy
Components of the Integrated Data Dissemination System:
- Statistical Data Portal
- MDG Data Portal
- Open Data Platform (*with Data Submission Tool*)
- Data Management Tool (to be added)
Users can access a wide range of development data on African countries from multiple international and national official sources.

Users can visualize socio-economic indicators over a period of time, gain access to presentation-ready dashboard and graphics and perform comprehensive analysis on a country and regional level.

The platform is SDMX ready using the Data Submission Tool.
1 - Country Data Portal

- Controlled entirely by National Stats Office
  - Disseminates official Statistics
  - Country decides what data to disseminate, data dictionary, look & feel, dashboards design…
  - NSO staff are trained on admin tools to manage the system and users training

- Hosted by NSO; otherwise, hosted by AfDB.
Similar to Country Data Portal but contains only data on MDG indicators together with metadata
3- Open Data Platform

- Open Data Platform, where data can be uploaded from various sources, official & non-official
- Accessible to all users on the internet.
- After simple sign-in, users can upload/download/share information on a wide range of topics.
- Environment should encourage local/regional communities of practice.
- Seen as a key tool to fight corruption and increase accountability and good governance.
Hosting

- Countries encouraged to host their systems
- Only Mozambique is hosting
- AFDB can sponsor hosting for first 2 years.
Current Data Transmission Method

Country data → Data mapping to Requested formats → Submission to partners and Int. Organizations

Current process
• Organization specific data mapping and formats leading to repetitive work
• Lack of common standards
• Reporting burden heavy on countries
Future data submission process
(Inclusion of SDMX technology)

To-be process
- Countries map data to international standards (SDMX) and load in the AfDB’s Open Data platform.
- Data collecting organizations pick from the Open Data platform.
Overall Framework of the Platform

AfDB/[Country] Open Data Platform

* Provided by AfDB under the Capacity Building Program to all African countries

Central Bank ODP
Natl. Stat. Office ODP
Min. Of Finance ODP

Dashboards and Visualizations
National Summary Data Page (SDMX)

Central Bank
National Statistical Office
Ministry Of Finance

ECOWAS
WB
IMF
others
Data transmission scheme based on SDMX

- Multilateral data repository "SDMX"
  - Data Query
  - Data Notification
  - ECA, IMF, World Bank, etc.

Data Mapping (using Open Data)

Country Classification

DSDs
New Approach

- A multilateral repository for all data; one stop-shop
- Move from “push” to “pull” or query model
- Query the repository; subscribe to get notification when updates are available
- Dissemination and not reporting
- Access to data in SDMX format
- Promote the use of internationally recognized standards, for better harmonization thru DSDs.
Advantages of new system

1. Reduced data-reporting burden for RMCs
2. Promoting the regional integration and harmonization agenda
3. Improving data quality through enhanced adherence to international standards
4. Significantly improving data exchange among RMCs
5. Increasing data access, transparency, accountability
6. Platform for the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of development outcomes
7. Enhanced data support for Bank operations
8. AfDB as a hub/knowledge center for development data on RMCs
Implementation

- Installations of the system in countries started in January 2013
- Open Data Platform completed for all 54 African countries.
Implementation Challenges

- Internet infrastructure still weak in many African countries and/or Stat offices.
- Information Technology (IT) staffing levels still very low in Statistical offices.
- Countries still face data management challenges
Way Forward

- Introduce robust Data Governance program
- Advocate for governments to release timely data
- Advocate the use of data for decision making
- Improve data management in countries
- Promote the use of Open data
Some useful links:

- **Statistics Department Website**
  - [www.afdb.org/statistics](http://www.afdb.org/statistics)

- **The Data Portal**
  - AfDB: [http://dataportal.afdb.org](http://dataportal.afdb.org)
  - Nigeria: [http://nigeria.africadata.org](http://nigeria.africadata.org)
  - Zambia: [http://zambia.africadata.org](http://zambia.africadata.org)
  - Senegal: [http://senegal.africadata.org](http://senegal.africadata.org)

- **Country Open Data**
  - Afdb: [http://opendataforafrica.org](http://opendataforafrica.org)
  - Botswana: [http://botswana.opendataforafrica.org](http://botswana.opendataforafrica.org)
  - Lesotho: [http://lesotho.opendataforafrica.org](http://lesotho.opendataforafrica.org)

- **Ipad Tool**
  - Afdb ECON & Afdb Statistics are Ipad tools to view official statistics reports and data from the AfDB Statistics Department. The application are available in the Apple Store for free download.
Thanks.