

What Does Integration Imply in Choosing an Enumeration Unit: Enterprise, Holding or Individual? Does it Matter? Perspectives from Africa

Willis Oluoch-Kosura

African Economic Research Consortium

Nairobi, Kenya

Email: willis.kosura@aercafrica.org

Abstract: This paper examines the issues of statistical integration from the African perspectives and discusses the challenges, opportunities and the desirability of pursuing and achieving such integrated systems. Statistical integration is advanced as a means of making new data meet particular needs and add value to the whole statistical data collection and management system.

At the data collection level integration can produce significant benefits by reducing the cost of statistical collection and the burden placed on respondents, whilst also increasing the value of outputs in terms of achieving consistency and accuracy. At the data processing level, integration enables the benefits of common technology, analytical methods, tools and processes to be fully exploited. Data from different sources and different times can be consolidated to allow for richer databases to be developed and meaningful comparative analyses and interpretation of results to be achieved.

The paper attempts to demonstrate how integration implies that common statistical frames, definitions and classification can be promoted and used in all statistical surveys to achieve harmony between enumeration units such as enterprise, holdings or individuals. The paper points out how flexibility which may be necessary at times is lost. Examples given are that agricultural data may require area based sample frame based on agricultural zones rather than administrative units, and the periods for data collection may be agricultural seasons rather than calendar months. Thus the author argues integrating general household survey data with agricultural data can be a complex process.