

Editorial

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The Statistical Journal of the IAOS (SJAOS) has published over the last 36 years articles about a great variety of aspects in official statistics. SJAOS is nowadays prepared by the section of IAOS of ISI, before 2007 it was prepared under the auspices of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).¹ This explains the traditional focus of the Journal, in choice of topics as well as by authors and readership, on the ECE member states, which extended around 2000 rather smoothly to also cover the OECD members states.

However, with statistical systems in less developed countries growing more mature, statisticians from these countries also have a larger interest in articles on official statistics and in exchanging views and experiences with colleagues all over the world. With ISI settling stronger in its global role, also IAOS as one of its sections has spread out wider, not the least through the growing importance of authoritative ‘official’ statistics as part of evidence based policy making in societies building their policies on high quality statistical information. Governance, management, conceptual, methodological and mathematical aspects of official statistics and especially their quality have thus become an important issue in modern democratic societies as well as in decision making in businesses, public and private organizations, all over the world.

Consequently SJAOS has become a Journal with global interest and a global readership and audience, though the submissions via manuscripts is still dominated by authors from OECD and other developed countries. There are beyond the historical origin of the Journal, several reasons for this, for example the lagging

experience of individual authors in drafting manuscripts or the unsupportive environment for this type of work. The strategy 2019–2021 for the Journal foresees, as agreed by the IAOS general assembly and supported by the publisher (IOS Press), ‘to gradually expand the number and origin of contributors from the currently non-core regions (non English speaking and developing countries) with a first focus on the African continent’.²

This issue, Vol36/Supplement, with 15 articles, prepared by authors from the African region and mainly stemming from papers originally planned for the joint IAOS/regional ISI conference in Zambia,³ is a successful reflection of this strategy, similar to the publication in Vol36/4 of 13 manuscripts resulting from the Asia-Pacific Statistics week.⁴ To further the success of this strategy (potential) authors from the African Region, academic and governmental statisticians working or related to official statistics are strongly stimulated to submit their research work in official statistics to the Journal.

In the Guest Editorial, Oliver Chinganya⁵ elaborates on the context of Official Statistics in Africa, showing both the current situation, the results and successes but also the challenges of implementing new developments in governance, methodologies and data sources for statistical systems in the African region. The issue also

¹From 1982 to 2007 IOS Press published the Statistical journal of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. In 2007 the responsibility of the Journal was handed over to IAOS and the journal was renamed Statistical Journal of the IAOS.

²Strategy for the SJAOS 2019–2021, February 2019, as accepted by General Assembly of the IAOS in March 2019.

³17th International Association for Official Statistics Conference and 3rd International Statistical Institute Regional Statistics Conference (IAOS-ISI-conference) which were scheduled to be held during the period 19th–21st May 2020 in Livingstone, Zambia. The joint event had as theme “Better Lives 2030: mobilising the power of data for Africa and the world”. See also <http://2020-iaos-isi.zamstats.gov.zm/>.

⁴See Statistical Journal of the IAOS, 2020, Vol 36/4.

⁵United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, African Centre for Statistics, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

contains a tribute to (leyeka) Charles Lufumpa who will, after a three decades career as Director of Statistics at the African Development Bank (AfDB), soon retire. In this position Charles Lufumpa has been playing a crucial role in the development of official statistics in Africa. The tribute has been prepared by Misha Belkindas⁶ and contains an interview with Charles Lufumpa but also a set of statements from his former colleagues and friends in African statistics.

I would like to thank the 2020 IAOS conference Scientific Programme Committee for their cooperation in making the abstracts and papers available for selecting the authors. The preparation of this extra issue was in the hands of a guest editorial team that selected,

reviewed and where necessary, coached the revision of the manuscripts. Thanks to the members of this team, Ben Kiregyera (Uganda), Hugues Kouadio (Ivory Coast), Badia Ettaki (Maroco), Gary Dunnet (New Zealand) and James Whitworth (UK/Greece) for their excellent cooperation. Of course a word of thanks goes also to the authors for their excellent work and to IOS Press for facilitating and publishing this extra issue as supplement to Volume 36 of the Journal.

I conclude with expressing the expectation that following the example of their colleagues, the African official statistics community will, through this extra issue, be invited and extra motivated to submit their manuscripts to the SJIAOS.

⁶IAOS President Elect, Managing Director of ODW Consulting and former manager of DECDG of World Bank.