

IASSIST AFRICA REGIONAL REPORT

2015-2017

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African Data Initiatives related to Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, United Nations member governments agreed on an international development agenda, the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). This agenda builds on the 2013 [report](#) on the Millennium Development Goals, which introduced the need for a “data revolution” to ensure governments have adequate data for development planning. Several African data initiatives have been funded for this purpose, for example, the launch of the [Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data](#) at the UN World Data Forum in January 2017. In May 2017 The African Centre for Statistics at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the United Nations Development Programme released the [Africa Data Revolution Report 2016](#), which covers developments in African national data ecosystems. The DataFirst data service at the University of Cape Town, managed by IASSIST member Lynn Woolfrey, is mentioned in this report as a key African data resource.

African University Data Sharing Networks

Several African data initiatives expanded in 2016. In June 2015 Lynn Woolfrey co-organised a [regional workshop](#), with the World Bank’s Accelerated Data Program, in Accra, Ghana, to explore data-sharing networks for African universities. The workshop was attended by the Statisticians-General of Ghana and Nigeria, as well as academics from the University of Cape Coast, Ghana, and the University of Ghana, and Kaduna State University, and the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. IASSIST member Samuel Annim represented the University of Cape Coast, and member Adetoun Oyelude participated from the University of Ibadan.

African membership of [the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research](#), includes the University of Cape Coast, Ghana, whose representative is IASSIST member Professor Samuel Annim. IASSIST member Lynn Woolfrey, is the official representative of Southern African members. Rhodes University joined the consortium in January 2016, which brings South African membership of the ICPSR to four universities.

African Open Data Initiatives

In 2015, the City of Cape Town municipality became the first local municipality in Africa to launch an [Open Government Data Policy](#) and began sharing citizen data through an [Open Government data portal](#). The City has set up an Open Data Steering Committee to manage the portal. IASSIST's Lynn Woolfrey is one of two external representatives on this Committee.

Training for African Data Managers

The OECD organised a [data management workshop](#) for staff of the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency in Harare, Zimbabwe. This was undertaken as part of a DataFirst-OECD training partnership to build data handling skills on the continent.

African Data Conferences and Meetings

The first United Nations [World Data Forum](#) was held in South Africa in January 2017. The forum launched the Cape Town [Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data](#), Prepared by the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG-PCCB). Lynn Woolfrey presented in a session on (TA5.03) Emerging standards and best practices for data sharing, interoperability, use, and stewardship at the forum.

A two-day meeting on [Data Initiatives in Africa – Opportunities and Challenges for Research and Sustainable Development](#) was organised by the [World Data System](#), the [Institut de Recherche pour le Développement](#), and the [Observatoire des Sciences de l'Univers de Grenoble](#) (OSUG) :) and with support from the Group on Earth Observations (GEO: www.earthobservations.org) from 12–13 April 2017 at the OSUG in Grenoble. Mr Olayide from the University of Ibadan gave a presentation at this meeting on Building a Sustainable Open Metadata Repository in an African University.

African Participation in International Conferences

Four IASSIST members from the Africa Region gave presentations at the 2015 IASSIST conference at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, US. Winny Akullo, from Uganda Bureau of Statistics, presented on [dissemination of statistical information in Uganda](#). Adetoun Oyelude, from the University of Ibadan, spoke on [data professionals' training challenges](#) in dynamic work environments. Lynn Woolfrey, from the University of Cape Town [presented](#) how her organisation became the only data service in Africa to be certified with the Data Seal of Approval. Lynn Woolfrey and Samuel

Annim also gave presentations on [Building data capacity internationally through repository management training and collaboration](#).

[SciDataCon 2016](#) was held in September 2016, during International Data Week (IDW). Two delegates from South Africa, presented at the conference on their [data projects](#) sponsored by the IDRC. Two delegates from South Africa, Maishri Singh and Lynn Woolfrey also presented at the [first Workshop on the Rescue of Data at Risk](#), organised during that week by [CODATA](#) and the [Research Data Alliance](#).