Labour statistics are an important element in the measurement of economic growth and development and yet the data required to provide evidence-based decision making are scanty or non-existent. Within the implementation framework of its Statistical Capacity Building Program II, the African Development Bank (AfDB) in consultation with its regional member countries identified the lack of expertise in data analysis of labour force surveys as a major drawback in the production of labour force statistics in many countries. As a result, the data collected are not properly or fully analysed, even sometimes not analysed at all. This is due to a variety of reasons related to decisions and activities both before actual data collection and subsequent to it. Amongst these are questions relating to questionnaire design, field work, preparation of the collected data for analysis and the analysis itself. In an effort to address these issues, the AfDB decided to commission this guidebook so that statisticians in Africa will have a practical guide when analysing statistics on the labour force and users of these statistics will benefit from an introduction to methods for their analysis. The guidebook is in three parts, introducing the relevant concepts and definitions for labour force statistics, analysis of labour force data and quality assessment of labour force surveys.

**PART I** deals with the concepts and definitions of the economically active population (EAP); the current EAP (i.e. the labour force); employment and unemployment statistics; working time statistics; time-related underemployment and inadequate employment; labour under-utilisation; employment in the informal sector and informal employment; and the usual EAP. It also introduces the various uses and sources of these statistics. In addition, it reflects developments that have taken place since the publication of the manual of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on the EAP in 1990.1

**PART II** presents methods for analysing data from labour force surveys, from descriptive analysis used in the production of a survey report to analysis of labour force structures and trends that are particularly useful in analytical studies. The former describes approaches to understanding and using tables, diagrams and related statistics to write survey reports. The latter sections introduce key indicators of the labour market and their uses. Areas covered include the supply and demand of labour; the size and composition of the population; labour force participation of men and women; the employment–population ratio; unemployment and its duration; youth and school-to-work transition; hours of work; underemployment and labour slack; branches of economic activity and productivity; occupational structure and segregation; status in employment (SE) and informal employment; income from employment and earning differentials; and low pay and the working poor.

**PART III** discusses methods for assessing the quality of a labour force survey in terms of (a) the coherence and comparability of the statistics produced from it both internally and externally in comparison with other sources; and (b) the identification and estimation of both sampling and non-sampling errors associated with the survey.

This guidebook is directed at labour statistics practitioners in national statistics offices and policy analysts in development, economic and labour ministries, as well as those in central banks.

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