



Technical Seminar: Strengthening Labour Market Information to Monitor Progress on Decent Work in Africa

GUIDANCE ON MAJOR SOURCES OF LABOUR STATISTICS: Labour Force Surveys

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Labour Force Sample Survey



- Labour Force Survey (LFS) is the main instrument of data collection on employment, underemployment and unemployment in countries with market economies; it permits the collection of consistent and comprehensive information both for employees and the self-employed population.
- Moreover, with the exception of population censuses, an LFS is the only reliable method yet devised for covering the whole population, in which each person can be assigned a definite status of being employed, unemployed or not in the labour force. A household survey counts each person as an individual only once and thus avoids overlap, irrespective of the number of jobs he/she may be holding and enterprises he/she may be working for.
- Furthermore, the concepts and definitions of the LFS are based on the ILO international recommendations, which can be used as a yardstick for international comparisons on this topic.

Economically active population (EAP)

- ☐ EAP - conceptual framework
- ☐ Currently active population (labour force)
- ☐ Employment
- ☐ Unemployment
- ☐ Underemployment
- ☐ Usually active population

THE ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION

PURPOSES

- ☐ Monitor the economic situation
- ☐ Human resources development
- ☐ Employment policies
- ☐ Income support, social programmes

EAP PROGRAMME OF STATISTICS

CURRENT STATISTICS

- ☐ Labour force
- ☐ Employment, unemployment, underemployment
- ☐ Short-term trends
- ☐ Seasonal variations

EAP PROGRAMME OF STATISTICS

NON-CURRENT STATISTICS

- ☐ Labour force - detailed structure
- ☐ Activity patterns over the year
- ☐ Employment and income relationships
- ☐ Topics - children, women, households

EAP Definition

 All persons

 who during a specified time reference period,
 supply labour

 for production of goods and services,

 as defined by the United Nations systems of national accounts.

CURRENTLY ACTIVE POPULATION

LABOUR FORCE DEFINITION

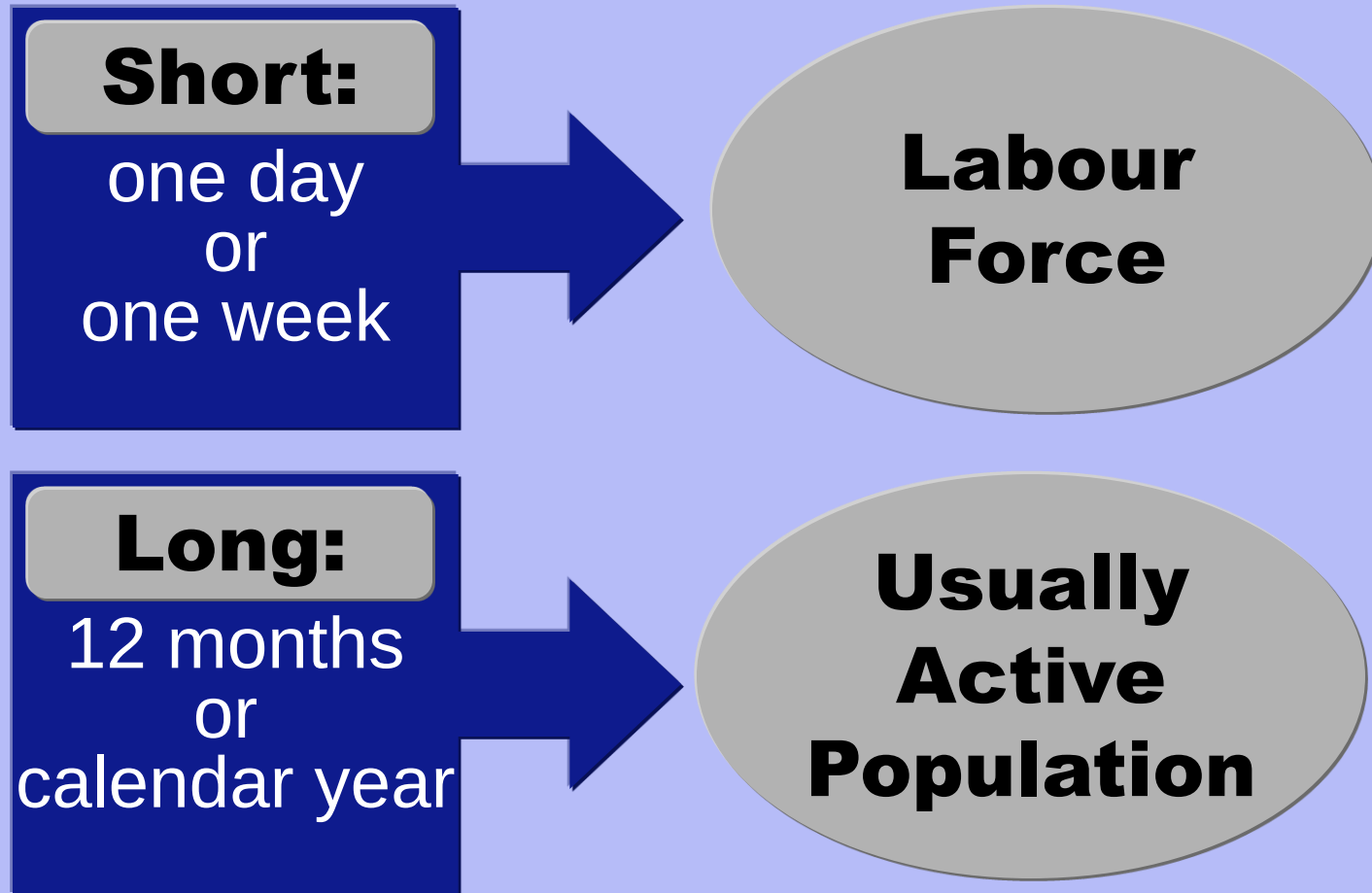
-  all persons
-  employed or unemployed
-  during short reference period

CURRENTLY ACTIVE POPULATION

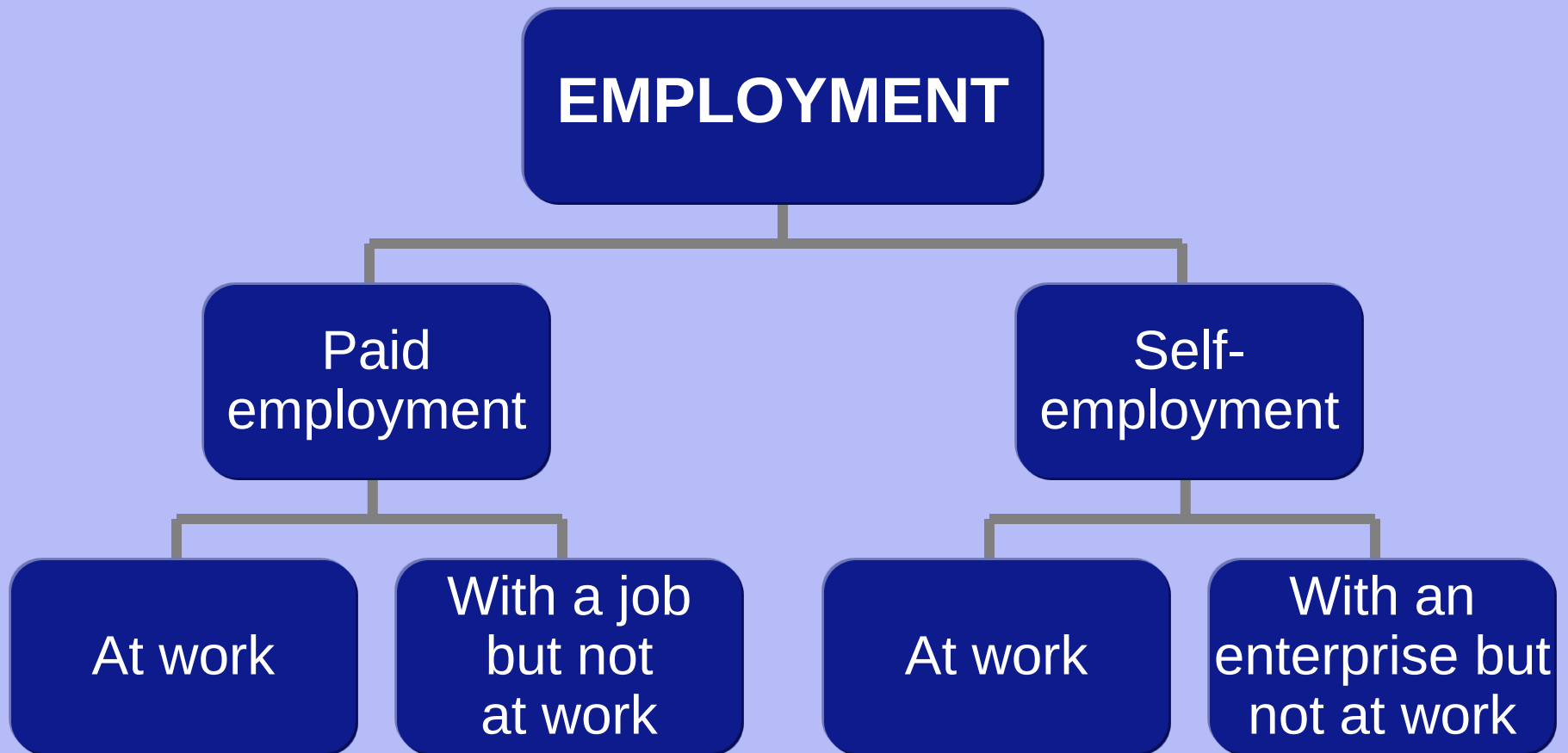
FEATURES

-  exhaustive, mutually exclusive
-  priority rules
-  activity principle

REFERENCE PERIOD



CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK for the MEASUREMENT OF EMPLOYMENT

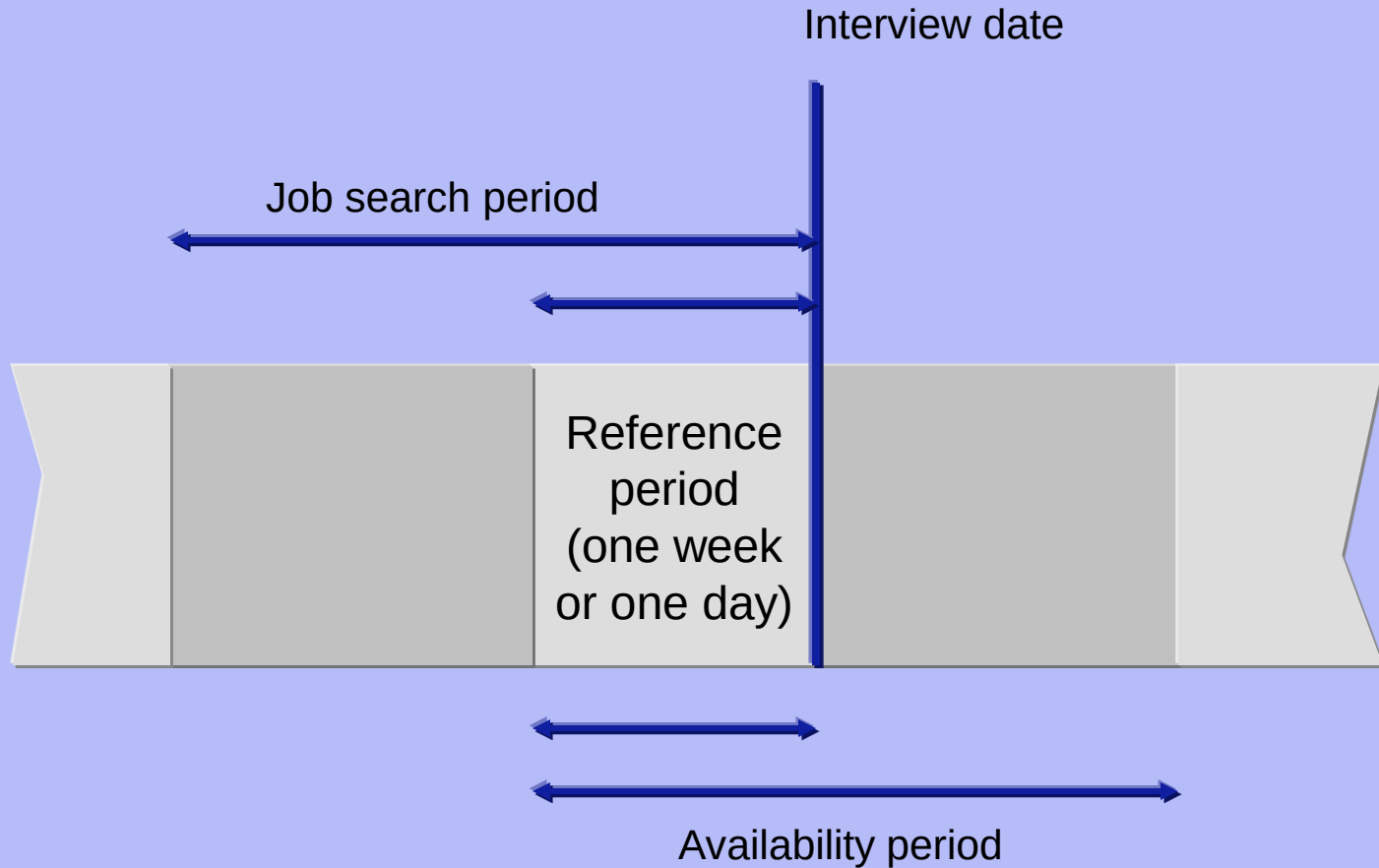


Standard Definition of UNEMPLOYMENT

Three Criteria

- ☐ **WITHOUT WORK:** not in paid employment or self-employment during reference period
- ☐ **CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FOR WORK:** available for paid employment or self-employment during reference period
- ☐ **SEEKING WORK:** specific steps taken in a specified recent period to seek paid employment or self-employment

Reference Periods



Relaxed Definition of UNEMPLOYMENT

- ☐ Conditions for relaxation of the seeking work criterion:
 - ✎ conventional means of seeking work are of limited relevance;
 - ✎ labour market is largely unorganised or of limited scope;
 - ✎ labour absorption is at the time inadequate;
 - ✎ labour force is largely self-employed.

- ☐ Complete vs. partial relaxation of the seeking work criterion

Partial Relaxation of the Seeking Work Criterion

Examples :

-  Persons temporarily laid off without formal job attachment
-  Discouraged workers
-  Seasonal workers awaiting the busy season

UNDEREMPLOYMENT

- ☐ Complements statistics of employment and unemployment
- ☐ Is part of and consistent with the **LABOUR FORCE FRAMEWORK**
 - ☐ Uses “**labour** supply” approach: based on actual capacities and desires of workers, as expressed by workers
 - ☐ Not based on theoretical models about the potential capacities and desires of workers
- ☐ Affects persons in employment
- ☐ Reflects the underutilisation of productive capacity of workers

Usually Active Population

Definition:

- ☐ All persons above a specified age whose MAIN ACTIVITY STATUS, determined in terms of number of weeks or days during a LONG specified REFERENCE PERIOD (such as the preceding 12 months or the preceding calendar year), was employed or unemployed.
- ☐ The usually active population may be subdivided as employed and unemployed in accordance with the main activity.

Basic analytical measures



- ☐ **Total population:** Working age population (**WAP**) + population below working age.
- ☐ **WAP:** Economically active population (EAP) + persons not economically active.
- ☐ **EAP:** Employed persons (E) + Unemployed persons (U)
- ☐ **Labour force participation (economic activity) rate:**
 $(EAP/WAP) \times 100$
- ☐ **Employment-population ratio:** $(E/WAP) \times 100$
- ☐ **Unemployment:** $(U/EAP) \times 100$
- ☐ **Classified by:** age, sex, educational level, industry, occupation, region and area/location.



Thank you for your attention!