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Report of the Executive Secretary on the work of the Economic Commission for Africa covering the period April 2018 to March 2019

Foreword

The present annual report, which is being submitted to the fifty-second session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) covers the period from April 2018 to March 2019. It highlights some of the key results achieved during the past year in the implementation of the Commission's revised programme of work for 2018–2019 in thematic areas that are consistent with the major development challenges confronting African countries.

In 2018, ECA achieved significant milestones in deepening its value proposition in support of the development priorities of member States as articulated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want of the African Union. The fifty-first session of the Conference of Ministers acknowledged and endorsed the ECA reforms, which were designed to make the Organization more responsive to the continent's evolving needs. The ECA mission to deliver ideas and actions for an empowered and transformed Africa, informed by the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, is to be guided by five strategic directions, which are:

- (a) Advancing the position of ECA as a premier knowledge institution that builds on its unique position and privilege to provide global solutions to the continent's problems and take local solutions to the continent;
- (b) Developing macroeconomic and structural policy options to accelerate economic diversification and job creation;
- (c) Designing and implementing innovative financing models for infrastructure, human, physical and social assets for a transforming Africa;
- (d) Contributing solutions to regional and transboundary challenges, with a focus on peace, security and social inclusion as an important development nexus;
- (e) Advocating Africa's position at the global level and developing regional responses as a contribution to global governance issues.

*E/ECA/COE/38/1/Rev.1.

The ECA restructuring and programmatic reorientation was subsequently endorsed by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly later in the year. The new directions of ECA build on the growing and central importance of the private sector in Africa's development together with the impact of innovation, especially technology, in delivering a prosperous Africa. Other areas of renewed focus include innovative financing, poverty and inequality; collaboration with academic institutions and the United Nations development system at all levels; and the specialization of its subregional offices in thematic areas to be more responsive to unique subregional challenges. These areas of focus have all been overwhelmingly welcomed by member States and regional institutions. This set ECA firmly on the path of leveraging its three core functions (think tank, convening function and operational function) in order to build on its unique and privileged position to bring global solutions to the continent's challenges, shape global priorities with due consideration for Africa's voice and adopt regional and subregional solutions in support of member State sustainable development trajectories.

In January 2018, the United Nations and the African Union signed the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Development Framework, which is anchored on nine thematic areas, has been prioritized by both the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission as an important programmatic vehicle for integrating all existing mandates requiring stronger and more effective coordination and collaboration between the two organizations. The relationship of ECA with the African Union Commission has grown from strength to strength and, with the implementation of this initiative, the relationship will only get stronger. We will continue to build on this.

The signing of the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area by 44 African countries during the African Union Summit, held in Kigali in March 2018, represented a momentous milestone for economic integration in Africa. The Commission's efforts over the years in furtherance of the continent's regional integration agenda were acknowledged in the Kigali Declaration for the Launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area. As of the end of February 2019, a total of 52 countries had signed the Agreement, with 19 countries having ratified the protocols on the Free Trade Area. The Agreement will enter into force following the deposit of 22 instruments of ratification with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. As of the end of February 2019, 15 countries had deposited their instruments of ratification with the African Union Commission.

In the same year, ECA convened – in collaboration with the African Union Commission, African Development Bank and entities of the United Nations – the fourth session of the Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development under the theme “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”, held in Dakar from 2 to 4 May 2018. Using this platform, ECA successfully advocated for and gained consensus among member States and regional organizations on policy recommendations on accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

In October 2018, we launched, with our strategic partners, the ECA Centre of Excellence on the digital economy, which is a clear example of ECA leveraging its think-tank, convening and operational functions in support of member States and the African Union Commission. In December 2018, the Commission's diamond jubilee – six decades of transformative presence on the continent – was celebrated under the broad theme of innovation. For more details, I invite you to read the report marking the sixteenth sixtieth anniversary of the Commission as it highlights the key contributions made by the Commission since its establishment in 1958 in support of Africa's development.

Finally, I want to say that I am confident that member States will continue to support us in our efforts as we work, in collaboration with our partners, to transform ideas into action for a prosperous Africa.

Vera Songwe

United Nations Under-Secretary-General
and Executive Secretary of the
Economic Commission for Africa

I. Introduction

1. Following the endorsement of its reforms by the fifty-first session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in May 2018, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) continued to pursue organizational renewal by building a stronger collective spirit, introducing new integrated approaches to planning, deepening relationships with partners, further strengthening accountability and transparency, and instituting a more gender-balanced team. As a result of the reforms, the programmes of the Commission were re-oriented to implement more effectively its mandate of promoting the economic and social development of its member States; fostering their integration into a common economic, social and political space; and promoting international cooperation to create a more prosperous and inclusive continent where most citizens are free from want and deprivation. In pursuing its mandate, the work of ECA was guided by the five directions of its new strategic orientation:

- (a) Building a knowledge institution;
- (b) Formulating macroeconomic and structural policy options;
- (c) Designing innovative finance models;
- (d) Supporting regional and transboundary issues;
- (e) Advancing Africa's position at global level.

2. During the reporting period, the contribution of ECA to supporting member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want was centred on its three core functions: its convening function, its function as a think tank and its operational function.

3. The present report is organized in five parts as follows:

(a) Key results achieved in supporting member States and regional economic communities in work towards the adoption of policies in the context of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, with results that are clustered around five broad thematic areas;

(b) Progress made in advancing the Commission's partnership agenda and efforts;

(c) Accountability and learning from the 2018 evaluation and audit recommendations;

(d) Support by the Commission to the repositioning of the United Nations development system;

(e) Forward-looking perspective on the year ahead and key results the Commission intends to work toward in 2019 as it intensifies its efforts in supporting member States in accelerating their implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

II. Key results achieved in 2018

4. During the reporting period, ECA continued to influence policy decisions of member States and regional economic communities in areas such as development planning, implementation of the 2030 Agenda, economic integration, inclusive industrialization, economic diversification, migration and statistical systems.

5. Presented below are some of the notable achievements from 2018 that demonstrate the Commission's three core functions in action, including interventions in support of regional and subregional priorities; policy advisory

services at the national, subregional and regional level; and assistance provided upon the request of member States for technical and capacity development. Information is also included on the instrumental role of ECA platforms for policy dialogue and consensus-building in advancing the capacities of African public officials in policy formulation and implementation.

1. Progress in advancing the trade and regional economic integration agenda

The road to the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area

6. The continent has embarked on important regional integration processes that are complex, broad and ambitious, requiring greater support to regional institutions with the capacities to spearhead the advancement of the African regional integration agenda. The establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area is one of the critical phases of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (Abuja Treaty).

7. The Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area was launched at the Tenth Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Kigali from 17 to 21 March 2018, represented a significant milestone in Africa's journey on the path to economic integration. ECA provided technical support and training to member States and the African Union Commission in the negotiations for the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area. ECA also provided the draft text that was used as the basis for the negotiations, which led to a successful conclusion by member States. The result was four main legal instruments underpinning the African Continental Free Trade Area: (a) Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area; (b) Protocol on Trade in Goods; (c) Protocol on Trade in Services; and (d) Protocol on Rules and Procedures on the Settlement of Disputes. As of the end of February 2019, a total of 52 countries had signed the Agreement with 19 countries having ratified the protocols on the Agreement through their respective national constitutional processes. The Agreement will enter into force following the deposit of 22 instruments of ratification with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. Efforts are under way by ECA and the African Union Commission to provide support to facilitate the timely signing of the Protocols by the remaining countries.

Knowledge products on regional integration, trade and investment issues

8. Through the knowledge generated on regional integration, trade and investment issues, ECA shared evidence-based recommendations in global forums on bilateral investment treaties and double taxation treaties. That evidence was provided to member States to enable them to position themselves to review, negotiate, renegotiate or terminate investment agreements with careful consideration of the legal, policy, economic and social implications, striking a balance between protecting investment and preserving sufficient policy space to achieve their development objectives. The sharing of those recommendations will also enable member States to explore opportunities that exist for expanding intra-African investment, especially in the context of the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area.

9. During the reporting period, ECA collaborated with the Confederation of Indian Industry and produced a joint report on deepening the Africa-India trade and investment partnership, which was launched at the thirteenth Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership, organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry and the Export-Import Bank of India. ECA also prepared a report on the African Growth and Opportunities Act for the Senior Trade Officials Meeting of the African Union Commission.

¹ Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eswatini, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo and Uganda.

2. **Advancing integrated development planning and implementation of the 2030 Agenda**

Common position and peer learning to drive the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals: Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development

10. In 2018, ECA, in collaboration with regional organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, convened the Fourth Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development. ECA and the partner organizations prepared background papers and working documents to review for the purposes of reaching consensus on the status and progress on implementation of activities aimed at the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 11, 15 and 17 of the 2030 Agenda and the goals set out in Agenda 2063, the results of which would serve as input to the 2018 high-level political forum.

11. The Forum reached consensus on policy recommendations in the form of key messages to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in Africa (see www.uneca.org/arfsd2018). Among the key messages were the following:

(a) Resilient structural transformation in Africa, in line with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, requires integrated national frameworks, including sectoral strategies and approaches that mainstream and prioritize inclusion, activities aimed at protection against climate change disaster risk reduction and the value of natural capital;

(b) Momentum to ensure climate change adaptation and mitigation should be increased alongside the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(c) Countries in Africa need to invest more in providing potable water access points in urban and rural communities, improved sanitation facilities to reduce open defecation and ensure appropriate waste management;

(d) Safeguarding and implementation of responsible management of Africa's natural resources, on which most growth is predicated, should remain a priority;

(e) Funding, capacity development and technology support linked to achieving real outcomes need to be scaled up to implement national biodiversity strategies and action plans, land degradation neutrality targets, and national plans and programmes for sustainable forest management;

(f) A multi-stakeholder Africa forum on science and technology innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals should be held in the margins of the Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development to identify and address the science and technology innovation needs of Africa and to prepare for the annual global multi-stakeholder forum on the same topic.

12. Consensus was built around common messages that constituted Africa's regional input to the 2018 high-level political forum. The messages were intended to be used for policy dialogue, policymaking and implementation at the national, regional and global levels towards the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals in the 2030 Agenda and the aspirations in Agenda 2063, with emphasis on the five Goals listed above.

Integrating the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 into national development plans

13. In 2018, African countries continued to work to align the aims of the two complementary and yet different development frameworks – the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 – with their national development frameworks and to report on them. The Ninth Joint Annual Meetings of the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration underscored the need for African countries

to take ownership of their continental development agendas, and requested ECA and the African Union Commission to support member States in designing a road map for the implementation of both agendas at the national level, as well as to develop tools, including a harmonized monitoring and evaluation framework for the two agendas. In 2017 and 2018, ECA initiated the design of the integrated planning and reporting toolkit to support member States in the integration of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, and aligns the agendas into their national development plans for ease of adaptation and reporting.

14. The Integrated Planning and Reporting Toolkit is a web-based software program that helps to simultaneously integrate both agendas into national development plans for ease of progress reporting in a harmonized way. With the goals, targets and indicators of the two agendas already built into the software, users can assess the level and strength of alignment between the two agendas at the click of a button. The in-built dashboards allow for the visualization of summary information on the alignment of the two agendas as well as country performance regarding alignment and progress in implementation of the national goals and targets. The Toolkit has three modules:

(a) An alignment module brings together the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, on the one hand, and the national plan, on the other;

(b) The monitoring module captures the indicators, baselines, targets and current values of the national plan;

(c) The reporting module allows for progress reporting on the two agendas.

15. ECA supported the application of the toolkit in five countries: Cameroon, Congo, Ghana, Seychelles and Uganda. The roll-out involves a series of workshops to demonstrate the toolkit, build capacity for its application and improve awareness of the two agendas and the links between them, in line with the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that was signed in January 2018.

16. The results are evidenced by positive feedback of the users. For example, during the demonstration in Uganda, it was noted that while the country uses a number of models for planning and projections – including the social accounting matrix, the integrated macroeconomic model, and the computable generalized equilibrium model – none captures the three dimensions of sustainable development. Therefore, a tool that brings the two agendas together into one, accompanied with analysis of the impacts of different policies and public investment profiles to inform the strategic prioritization are important in the context of designing the next five-year and 10-year development plans. Based on responses to the post-workshop survey, over 80 per cent of participants in Uganda, and over 60 per cent of those in Ghana and Seychelles rated the workshop as having contributed effectively to their capacity in integrating the two frameworks into national development plans. In addition, over 90 per cent of participants indicated that they would recommend the Toolkit to other colleagues. Furthermore, the Gambia requested support, after hearing about the Toolkit in different forums that ECA organized.

Renewal of development planning to increase efficiency and transparency of public policies in Senegal

17. Following a request by the Government of Senegal for technical support to comply with one of the key conditionalities of its economic programme (structural benchmark) supported by the Policy Support Instrument of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for 2015–2017, the ECA Subregional Office for West Africa provided technical and advisory support aimed at establishing a platform: the Integrated Projects Bank. The platform contains a

description of the life cycle of projects supported by IMF. The role of ECA included supporting the development and customization of a Threshold 21 model to help further the country's efforts in comprehensive and integrated planning. In addition, several workshops – involving the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Planning, other ministerial departments, private sector and research institutions, and capacity-building of government counterparts – were organized by ECA for better ownership and application of the platform.

18. These interventions enabled the Government to find solutions for the increased demand for education and health services, and to achieve inclusive growth. In addition, a recent analysis by ECA as well as several IMF reviews of the Policy Support Instrument for 2015–2017 demonstrated that increased efficiency and transparency in public policies was noted as a result of strengthened capacity of government officials to design, implement and monitor the country strategies, plans, programmes and projects. Implementation in Senegal of the electronic project platform also allowed better communication between line ministries and the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Planning. By including investment projects readily available for implementation and selected on the basis of feasibility studies, the electronic project platform contributed to improving the overall public project cycle and capital spending.

Mozambique infrastructure development plan based on geographic information systems

19. The Government of Mozambique has defined infrastructure development as an important investment pillar to boost its economic development. Being a transit country, Mozambique intends not only to improve provincial interconnectivity but also to reaffirm its position as a regional hub for the surrounding landlocked countries. A number of development partners are supporting the programme. The Ministry of Transport and Communications, as coordinator for the programme, identified the need for a visual tool that could be used to improve investment planning and objective identification of infrastructure investment priorities with the aim of boosting economic development. Geographic information systems (GIS) were recognized as the best for geo-visualization and spatial statistical modelling towards the identification of potential areas for development, including infrastructure planning, monitoring and evaluation. GIS also assist in the optimization of resource allocations for development, which is vital, since they reduce the arbitrary allocation of resources often influenced by politics.

20. Having identified that meaningful development policies cannot be implemented without adequate spatial information and knowledge, and lacking the requisite domestic capacity, the Ministry called upon African Institute for Economic Development and Planning to develop its expertise on the use of GIS for spatial planning.

21. In 2018, as part of its tailor-made training based on its catalogue of courses, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning responded to the request from the Ministry to organize a training of trainers course on the use of GIS for spatial planning. The training benefited eight officials, including five women from five government departments. It contributed to the creation of a first multidisciplinary team of experts who have subsequently shared the knowledge and skills acquired with their colleagues on spatial planning using GIS. All the participants found the training course relevant and appreciated the strategic importance of GIS in their planning work, which was shown by the results of post-training evaluations as well as the contributions made by the respective departments into the integrated infrastructure business plan developed using spatially referenced data. Through the initiative, Mozambique expects an increase in revenue, improved road

safety, better infrastructure management and job creation, among other significant benefits.

22. Based on the success of the training course, African Institute for Economic Development and Planning decided to proceed with the scaling up of the use of GIS across the continent in 2019 through awareness raising efforts focusing on other African countries as to its benefits. The African Institute for Economic Development and Planning will simultaneously offer tailored skills training, digital learning, and a joint master's degree programme to build capacity for its GIS usage in infrastructure spatial development planning, among others. In doing so, the Institute will also build communities of practice for experts to promote information-sharing, peer learning and research.

3. Accelerating economic diversification and job creation on the continent

Breaking the vicious cycle of overdependence on the export of commodities

23. Since 2014, the subregion of Central Africa has been suffering from severe macroeconomic instability due to the sharp drop in oil prices, which has led to worrying fiscal and current account deficits necessitating fiscal consolidation measures in some countries such as Chad. The crisis stemmed from structural economic vulnerability due to high dependency on oil exports. In response to that crisis, the ECA Subregional Office for Central Africa convened a wide range of stakeholders in the margins of the thirty-second session of its Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Central Africa, held in Douala, Cameroon from 26 to 29 September 2017 with a view to reviewing the state of the economies in the subregion and articulating structural and durable responses to the crisis.

24. The meeting adopted the Douala Consensus, a groundbreaking agreement, which stressed the imperative of economic diversification through resource-driven and trade-induced industrialization, as one of the most credible and durable pathways to building resilient and competitive economies in Central Africa and to breaking the vicious cycle of overdependence on the export of commodities.

25. It was further to the adoption of the Douala Consensus that countries in the subregion sought the support of ECA for the implementation of the Douala Consensus. Between 2017 and 2018, of the seven Central African countries covered by the Subregional Office, four requested technical assistance from ECA to formulate economic diversification strategies to address the structural vulnerabilities of their economies, which remain highly dependent on oil exports.

26. With the technical assistance of ECA, the Government of Chad developed and approved an Industrialization and Economic Diversification Master Plan that was launched on 17 September 2018 in N'Djamena. The success of the Master Plan required skill sets and capacities for the conception and formulation of projects. Other key conditions were improvements in the business environment, notably access to finance, productivity growth and sufficient fiscal space to pursue long-term investments to catalyse industrialization and economic diversification, while restoring macroeconomic stability through short-term measures. In order to operationalize the plan, the necessary growth diagnostic studies, value-chain analysis and other studies were undertaken, which helped to identify the key economic pillars and enablers for economic diversification in the country. These included agribusiness, livestock development with a focus on meat and leather exports, harnessing of renewable energy, establishment of clusters and the emergence of the knowledge economy. Green industrialization was chosen as the preferred route to expanding the share of manufactured products in total exports and to reducing greenhouse emissions.

27. That resulted in realistic sources of financing for the Master Plan and enhancing the role of the digital economy. The Master Plan generated a lot of interest and was included in the programme of work of the United Nations Country Team in Chad. In addition, extensive consultations were undertaken with development partners operating in the country, including the World Bank, IMF, the African Development Bank, the European Union, and Agence française de développement, to ensure the alignment of their interventions with the Plan as part of an integrated financing framework for development. Furthermore, the work to formulate the plan has also enabled the Subregional Office for Central Africa to develop a body of knowledge and practice on economic diversification applicable to Central Africa and beyond. From the lessons learned and best practices on economic diversification derived from the formulation process of the Master Plan, relevant toolkits and guidelines will be developed to apply in other countries in Central Africa.

Charting the course to industrialization in Southern Africa

28. The thirty-fourth Ordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, in August 2014, reviewed progress towards regional integration and economic development in Southern Africa and noted that industrialization was a major gap in the development of the region. It was decided that there was an urgent need for the region to leverage its abundant and diverse resources, especially in agriculture and mining, to accelerate industrialization through beneficiation and value addition. In order to operationalize the regional integration agenda, the Summit resolved to develop a long-term strategy and road map for industrialization in the SADC region. To implement that decision, the secretariat of SADC approached ECA for support in developing the long-term strategy and road map.

29. In the period 2014–2017, ECA provided support to the secretariat of SADC through interventions focused on the formulation of the long-term industrialization strategy and road map. Those interventions took the form of developing the project concept, preparing the background papers, providing technical backstopping, convening and servicing national and regional consultations, and resource mobilization. As a result of that support, the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Road map (2015–2063) was developed and subsequently adopted by the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State in April 2015. With ECA support, an action plan for the implementation of phases I and II of the Strategy, covering the period 2015–2030, was also developed and subsequently adopted by the Summit of the SADC Heads of State and Government, held in Mbabane on 18 March 2017.

30. In 2018, at the request of the secretariat of SADC, ECA provided technical support on the elaboration and implementation of the Industrialization Strategy and Road map and the action plan in the following critical areas: (a) a mining sector skills audit; (b) a minerals beneficiation profiling exercise for the identification of potential mineral value chains for development; (c) development of a regional mining vision; (d) a template for facilitating an increased role of small and medium-sized enterprises in the industrialization process; (e) a regional intellectual property rights framework that could support innovation, technology and industrialization; and (f) a regional stakeholder forum on the role of the private sector in support of the industrialization process. Those areas of intervention were examined through the development of concept notes, preparation of background papers, organization of workshops and expert meetings, and preparation of policy documents.

31. ECA interventions resulted in the formulation of the following:
- (a) Template for the development of the capacities of small and medium-sized enterprises for an enhanced role in the industrialization process;
 - (b) Mining sector skills database;
 - (c) SADC regional mining vision for identifying and developing value chain minerals in Southern Africa;
 - (d) Institutionalization of the Southern Africa private sector stakeholder forum;
 - (e) SADC intellectual property rights framework on industrialization.
32. As a result, in 2018, SADC adopted a template for the development of the capacities of small and medium-sized enterprises; a regional mining vision; and an intellectual property rights framework on industrialization; and the institutionalization of the regional stakeholders forum on private sector development in Southern Africa.

The blue economy: paradigm shift towards transformational growth in Eastern Africa

33. The subregion of Eastern Africa is registering rapid economic growth and transformation as a result of the pro-growth policies and public investments of Governments. In order to sustain such progress, member States are interested in new sources of growth, including from the blue economy, which promotes the use of aquatic and marine ecosystems and associated resources for sustainable development. Interest in the blue economy was demonstrated at the nineteenth Intergovernmental Committee of Experts meeting, held in Antananarivo from 2 to 5 March 2015, which focused on the topic of harnessing the blue economy for Eastern Africa's development. The nineteenth meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee acknowledged the untapped potential of the blue economy and the existing policy gap among productive sectors, both traditional and emerging, such as fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, transport, deep sea mining and energy. With a view to addressing that challenge, the meeting recommended the development of a policy handbook for the blue economy, aimed at providing a step-by-step methodology towards the formulation of multisectoral policy frameworks for the blue economy. The framework was officially launched at the thirty-fifth meeting of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, held in Addis Ababa from 31 March to 2 April 2016. The framework was later complemented by a detailed study focusing on the subregion of East Africa.

34. Member States, together with regional economic communities and intergovernmental organizations, reiterated the need to develop and better mainstream blue economy policies into their national development plans at the twenty-first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts, held in Moroni from 7 to 9 November 2017. The meeting explored the topic of catalysts and constraints to transformational growth in Eastern Africa. Furthermore, the blue economy has emerged as an important facilitating factor in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area through optimum use of multimodal transport and connectivity between inland waterways and seaports.

35. In 2018, upon receipt of requests from the Comoros and Madagascar, the ECA Subregional Office for Eastern Africa provided technical support towards the development and consolidation of strategic frameworks focusing on prioritization of sectors and related trade-offs alongside policy orientations and actions. In the case of the Comoros, energy was identified as a priority sector for intervention. Low energy-generation capacity, high inefficiency in energy transmission and distribution, and limited long-term energy planning capacity

were identified as recurrent challenges, impacting on other sectors of the blue economy such as tourism.

36. The interventions of ECA resulted in the formulation of a strategic policy framework on the blue economy for the Comoros, accompanied by three thematic national studies focusing on institutional and regulatory features on how to institutionalize the blue economy; stocktaking of sectors of the blue economy; and regional dimensions, as well as a study on energy balance statistics and an energy systems model. In the case of Madagascar, the support of the Subregional Office resulted in the development of a strategic document highlighting challenges and opportunities in the blue economy and providing policy orientations.

37. As a result, in 2018, the Comoros and Madagascar adopted respective policy frameworks, which will be put to further use to leverage their potential for the blue economy. In the Comoros, the strategic policy framework was mainstreamed in the national strategy for accelerated growth and sustainable development. Madagascar will pursue similar mainstreaming efforts following completion of the presidential election.

Mainstreaming land issues in national agriculture investment plans of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme

38. In 2003, Africa made a commitment to implement the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, endorsing the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security, which called on member States to allocate 10 per cent of their national budget to the agricultural sector. Most member States were unable to achieve the 10 per cent target, and others did not sustain a level of growth of 6 per cent as stipulated in the Maputo Declaration.

39. In response, member States of the African Union considered the 2014 Malabo Declaration, which reaffirmed the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, and the importance of accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods. The Malabo Declaration was backed up by guidelines for implementation that underscored the importance of well-designed national agricultural investment plans that are aligned and consistent with the values and principles of the Programme and that facilitate private sector investments to complement public sector funding.

40. In order to ensure an evidence-based process that allows for quality national agricultural investment plans to meet the intended purpose, ECA conducted an assessment of the Programme plans in 30 countries. One of the main findings of that assessment was that most countries had not integrated land tenure issues in a manner that would ensure tenure security and promote land-based agricultural investments. In order to address land tenure issues for the purposes of stimulating private sector investment in agriculture, ECA has been providing support since 2016 to Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda and the United Republic of Tanzania, with the aim of mainstreaming land governance in the Programme plans.

41. In 2018, a capacity gap assessment conducted in those six countries informed a training programme on large-scale agricultural investments that benefited 25 policymakers and stakeholders in Malawi, 15 of whom were women. That training programme contributed to incorporating, at the national level, the guiding principles on large-scale land-based investment in Africa in the context of Malawi. The result is evidenced by enhanced capacity of policymakers and stakeholders to negotiate for contracts that are financially viable, equitable and environmentally sustainable.

42. Furthermore, during the reporting period, ECA continued promoting the 2017 decision of the African Union, in which it urged member States to review policies and programmes to facilitate the achievement of the 30 per cent target for women's documented land rights by 2025, through awareness-raising on women's land tenure security issues, and advocated for the gender-responsive implementation of the African Union Agenda on Land.

4. Narrowing the gender gap, harnessing the demographic dividend and leveraging rapid urban growth for shared prosperity

How the African Gender and Development Index informed effective policymaking in South Africa

43. The African Gender and Development Index was introduced by ECA in 2004 in response to requests by member States for a tool to assist them in reporting on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Because all African countries adopted these international treaties, they have an obligation to report periodically on progress. Moreover, member States needed to measure progress made over gender equality over social, economic and political dimensions and develop national policies, programmes and strategies to narrow gender gaps for inclusive and sustainable development.

44. In June 2018, at a national workshop organized by ECA in Pretoria, the Department of Social Development of South Africa presented its most recent report, which was reviewed by the Cabinet. The report was aimed at developing a national strategy for South Africa in order to ensure that necessary investments in education and health are made to tackle high youth unemployment and harness the demographic dividend. However, the report was returned by the Cabinet for revision because of its gender blindness. In response, the Commission on Gender Equality, a strong partner of ECA in the implementation of the African Gender and Development Index, presented their latest research with the support of ECA.

45. That contributed to a strong partnership between two national institutions, which led to the mainstreaming of gender dimensions into prospective national strategies, with a view to harnessing the demographic dividend. Specifically, the Department of Social Development of South Africa was influenced by the Commission on Gender Equality, with insights drawn from the African Gender and Development Index that provide a comprehensive gender dimension beyond simply disaggregating data by sex.

46. The result is evidenced by the inclusion of gender dimensions drawn from the national report of the African Gender and Development Index into the final report on the topic, "South African Population Dynamics: Trends, Structure, Causes and Consequences", which is to be submitted to the Cabinet. It is expected that the latter will inform the national policy framework on harnessing demographic dividend.

ECA corporate policy on gender mainstreaming

47. Gender mainstreaming continues to be part and parcel of ECA corporate policy and remains at the core of the Commission's programme planning and implementation processes.

48. The Commission continued to participate in a working group set up by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), tasked with looking at the results framework and theory of change, in order to consolidate the contribution of the United Nations development system to support member States in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls across the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, ECA continued to mainstream gender through its gender-responsive planning, budgeting and reporting tools. An ECA gender-parity

strategy has been developed that defines incremental actions to be taken by the Commission to reach gender parity by 2023. In that regard, the Commission has made progress in addressing the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women 2.0 performance indicators.

49. In 2018, gender concerns were systematically mainstreamed in the following: analytical knowledge products of the Commission; major reports such as the 2018 Africa Sustainable Development Report; the fifth edition of the Africa Governance Report; and the country and the structural transformation with a focus on employment, production and society (STEPS) profiles produced by the ECA subregional offices. In addition to using gender-disaggregated data as much as possible, the country and STEPS profiles included a gender scorecard. For example, the STEPS profile of Cameroon produced in 2018 clearly indicates that gender disparities are detrimental to social stability, higher productivity and the efforts of structural transformation.

50. Lastly, ECA mainstreamed gender in its programme to implement the African Union Agenda on Land, through the application of the gender strategy developed in 2014. In that regard, the following actions were taken:

(a) Secondment of a gender and land expert to ECA and the African Land Policy Centre;

(b) Minimum gender target of 30 per cent was applied and tracked, in order to ensure women's participation in all activities to promote knowledge, advocacy and capacity development;

(c) African Land Policy Centre documents were reviewed through a gender lens;

(d) Gender programme was developed as part of the African Land Policy Centre medium-term strategy (2019–2023);

(e) Gender mainstreaming modules formed part of all training programmes; and

(f) A Monitoring and Evaluation of Land Governance in Africa (MELA) pilot project covering 12 African countries was launched to track progress in the development and implementation of good land governance in the continent.

Cities as drivers of wealth creation in Uganda

51. Through its National Development Plan II (2015/2016–2019/2020), Uganda has set a target to become a middle-income country by strengthening the country's competitiveness for wealth creation, employment and inclusive growth. With Uganda having a growth rate of 5.7 per cent, the highest urban growth rate in Africa in the period 2015–2020, and its cities contributing 70 per cent of growth domestic product, well-planned and managed urbanization is a necessary ingredient to achieve the country's target of prosperity and well-being, but that is not strategically set as an objective in the national development plan, and capacities to address that have been limited.

52. Based on the analytical work, technical guidelines and national capacity-building workshops of ECA, the National Planning Authority of Uganda, working with 50 policymakers from key ministries, developed a multisectoral national action plan to strengthen the integration of urbanization as a key driver of growth and transformation. The technical guidelines provided a step-by-step process on policies to harness rapid urban growth for job creation and economic diversification, currently an area of weakness in urban policymaking in most African countries. The contribution of ECA has enabled Uganda to develop a new policy plan for job creation, poverty reduction and improved social outcomes through better planning and management of cities. A high-level

policy dialogue resulted in a commitment, at the ministerial level, to prioritize urbanization as a driver of wealth creation in Uganda for its next phase of national development planning (starting in 2020).

53. ECA support contributed to the prioritization of regional and strategic cities as vehicles for achieving middle-income status in Uganda and initiation of guidelines for implementation. The result is evidenced by the National Planning Authority directly applying the action plan developed with ECA to finalize implementation of its current national development plan (ending in 2020) and the design for the follow-up plan. Similar technical assistance was provided to Cameroon, Chad and Zambia, and it is also resulting in the development of national action plans to strengthen the urban component of national development planning as a means of harnessing the potential of urban growth for job creation and economic diversification. The ECA approach to strengthening of the urban component of national development planning in Africa is the first of its kind, providing a unique value addition to the attainment in the region of Sustainable Development Goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities.

54. These interventions were further complemented by the ECA regional framework for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda endorsed by Ministers of Housing and Urban Development under the African Union's Specialized Technical Committee on Public Service, Local Government, Urban Development and Decentralization.

Advocacy and support to the High-level Panel on Migration

55. The analytical work of ECA on trends, causes and impacts of African migration as well as the evidence-based regional report, which was highly appreciated and recognized by the African Group of Negotiators, contributed to the development of the common African position on migration, which formed the basis for the intergovernmental negotiations. ECA also provided technical support to the negotiations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration through a series of subregional and regional consultations. The High-level Panel on Migration, established in response to Economic Commission for Africa Conference of Ministers resolution 940 (XLIX) on international migration in Africa, with ECA support and chaired by the former President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, is working to change the narrative that has tended to distort the real picture of African migration, which presents considerable evidence that most Africans migrate within the continent and contribute immensely to their countries of destination. In support of the work of the High-level Panel on Migration, ECA, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration and the African Union Commission, produced an evidence-based tool, entitled "African migration: facing facts, embracing opportunities and mitigating challenges". That tool will continue to be used for advocacy and awareness-raising activities by member States and Governments, citizens and international development partners.

5. Statistics in support of evidence-based policymaking and strategy implementation

African Poverty Clock: a tool for evidence-based decision-making

56. One of the landmark events that marked the end of 2018 was the launch of the African Poverty Clock, which was developed in partnership with the World Data Lab. The Clock monitors progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 1, target 1. The Clock provides real-time data on poverty forecasts at the regional and national levels. It also contributes to raising awareness on poverty dynamics within a nation and can be a useful tool for evidence-based policymaking and decision-making. While the focus of the current data is on income poverty, the plan is to extend that focus to include other dimensions of poverty such as gender, age, education, and nutrition. More

information on the African Poverty Clock is available at www.uneca.org/africa-poverty-clock-2018.

Strengthening statistical systems

57. ECA had significant influence on policy during the reporting period in the area of statistics. A total of 27 African countries undertook comprehensive assessments of their civil registration and vital statistics systems. Within the framework of the African Programme for Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics, ECA provided technical assistance to member States on conducting comprehensive assessment and developing national improvement action plans for civil registration and vital statistics systems. In addition to the 27 African countries² that assessed their systems and formulated improvement plans, at the time of writing, eight countries³ are undertaking the assessment process. Furthermore, ECA provided technical assistance to Benin, Madagascar, Seychelles and the Sudan in support of the reform and the modernization of their national statistical systems. Benin reported the update of its National Statistical Act and a revamping of the coordination mechanism at the national level, including the expanded involvement of key sectoral producers of data.

Adoption of the system of national accounts

58. African countries face challenges in the production of economic statistics that are timely and of high quality, owing to limited human, financial and technical resources, as well as weak institutional capacity and statistical infrastructure. In order to address those challenges, in January 2014, ECA launched a project on the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts. The overall objective of the project was to improve the quality and availability of national accounts and related economic statistics in support of good economic governance, regional integration and sustainable development in Africa. The project formed part of the continent-wide project for the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts, which was developed by the African Group on National Accounts under the aegis of the Statistical Commission for Africa.

59. In response to a request from the Government of Mauritania for technical assistance to support the adoption of the 2008 System of National Accounts, the Subregional Office for North Africa – in partnership with the Government of Morocco, World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Economic and Statistical Observatory of Sub-Saharan Africa (AFRISTAT) – provided technical support and advisory services to the Government. That assistance helped to ensure the alignment of the national accounts and economic statistic concepts of Mauritania with the System of National Accounts, and to enhance methodologies, tools, and practices and standards for the collection and analysis of economic, social and environmental data.

60. As a result, the Government of Mauritania decided to implement the 2008 System of National Accounts. The Government is now employing the system methodology to come up with an accurate estimate of the contribution to gross domestic product of the fisheries, cattle, public administration, finance and informal sectors.

² Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Eswatini, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

³ Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Building human capital for improved agricultural statistics

61. From 2013 to 2018, the ECA statistics programme implemented the training component of the Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics, a programme for revamping the state of agricultural statistics in the continent. Agricultural data and statistics are poorly collected and utilized in many African countries. Many institutions in Africa responsible for the production and dissemination of agricultural statistics have reported that understaffing has had a deleterious effect on their operations. They also lack a human resource development strategy to guide the management, development and harnessing of their human resources, which has negatively affected the quality and availability of agricultural statistics in those member States.

62. In response, ECA designed a programme to curb the lack of critical mass of trained agricultural statisticians by strengthening the demand, supply and capacities in agricultural statistics training activities in 40 African countries. Emphasis was placed on strengthening and sustaining the capacity of statistical training centres to develop and deliver good-quality training in agricultural statistics. The programme was also aimed at improving the training curricula for short-term and on-the-job training courses, improving the infrastructure capacity of regional statistical training centres with modern training technologies, the provision of scholarships for specialization in agricultural statistics, and the training of trainers and lecturers on newly developed methods and technologies.

63. Those interventions contributed to increasing the number of skilled and trained agricultural statisticians in the respective national statistical offices and ministries of agriculture in the targeted 40 countries. Over 950 participants from agricultural statistics agencies have thus far taken part in short courses and 75 students received scholarships to specialize in agricultural statistics.

64. Graduates from the specialization programme were placed in positions for managing and supervising the processes of agricultural statistics production. The programme also trained 120 human resources managers and experts on a revised strategic planning and management of statistical human resources. Technical manuals and guidelines on newly developed methods were produced to support agricultural data collection and analysis.

65. Four regional statistical training centres located in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; Dakar; Yaoundé; and Dar es Salaam, the United Republic of Tanzania are currently able to provide courses on newly developed methods and techniques in agricultural statistics. Regional training centres such as the Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre in Dar es Salaam are also responding to requests from national offices for mass training of staff in a number of the newly launched methodologies.

66. The result is evidenced by the outcome of the second round Country Assessment of Agricultural Statistical Systems in Africa, aimed at measuring the capacity of African countries to produce timely and reliable and sustainable agricultural statistics. The second round of assessments confirmed an improvement in the capacity of the respective agencies responsible for agricultural statistics in the target countries compared with the first round of assessments.

67. Data from the assessment were used to construct agricultural statistics capacity indicators for each country in order to assess each country's capacity to produce timely and reliable agricultural and rural statistics. The assessment provided evidence on the current level of development of national agricultural and rural statistics systems and also illustrated the continued improvement in reporting in agricultural statistics as a result of improved capacities, including experts in newly developed methodologies.

A. Partnerships

1. Collaboration and coordination for the implementation of the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

68. The first year of the implementation of the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was marked in 2018. Entities of the United Nations and the African Union made progress in the joint implementation of the nine priority thematic areas. Some examples of progress towards improved collaboration and coordination include the following: ECA, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the United Nations Development Programme and the African Union organized a side event during the 2018 high-level political forum, with a view to raising awareness of and undertaking advocacy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The event focused on implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, and the sharing of experiences and the way forward after the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and the voluntary national reviews.

69. The event resulted in recommendations to support member States in enhancing national mechanisms for the coordination and integrated implementation of the two agendas.

70. Under the framework of United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, United Nations entities and the African Union continued to provide coordinated support to the Sahel countries. One such example is the second regional conference on impunity, access to justice and human rights in West Africa, which was organized by United Nations entities and the African Union and resulted in the establishment of a ministerial platform to monitor and report progress on the implementation of the recommendations of the conference.

2. Partnerships for the implementation of the ECA programme of work

71. During the reporting period, ECA collaborated with partners on a broad range of issues to implement its programme of work. Its partners included the Kenya Institute of Public Research, the African Economic Research Consortium, London School of Economics, International Monetary Fund, World Bank Group, African Development Bank, International Renewable Energy Agency and a range of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

72. The partnerships that ECA built with its academic and technical partners contributed to advancing its think-tank function and to improving the relevance of the Commission's policy work. ECA will continue to leverage value-adding partnerships premised on the principle of enhancing complementarity and development impact. That will also enable the Commission to respond better to the evolving needs of its member States within the context of new and emerging opportunities.

B. Accountability and learning

1. Risk register and treatment and response plan

73. In promoting a culture of accountability and transparency across all streams of its work, ECA made efforts during the reporting period to further enhance its governance and management practices through the introduction of the first risk register and treatment and response plan. The plan is anchored in the Secretariat-wide Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Control Framework and its development was informed by a rigorous and participatory process that involved all staff across the Commission.

74. The principal objective of the plan was to enhance accountability and performance management within the unfolding United Nations reforms processes and to contribute to the achievement of ECA mandates. The plan is also aimed at supporting the Commission in understanding the impact of its response and mitigation strategies as well as to assess the effectiveness of existing internal controls and measures of risk mitigation.

75. The corporate-level risk registers and treatment and response plans are being monitored and updated on a biannual basis, taking into account emerging opportunities, lessons learned and the reality on the ground.

2. Evaluations and audits

76. As part of the accountability and learning framework of ECA and with a view to strengthening the utility of evaluations and audits, findings were discussed with and validated by programme managers through a formal management response. Results and lessons have also been shared within and beyond ECA. The lessons have informed strategic decision-making processes, programme design, planning and implementation. The outcomes have also informed ongoing efforts for incremental improvements in areas including results-based management and reporting frameworks, gender mainstreaming and partnership modalities. Overall, the Commission's progress and efforts towards becoming a learning and more accountable institution has been acknowledged by member States (including permanent representatives in Addis Ababa), the Fifth Committee and development partners.

C. Support for the repositioning of the United Nations development system

77. During the period under review, the Commission effectively coordinated its support to the United Nations development system reforms at the regional and country levels. ECA actively participated in the work of the development system to include its results groups, the work of the United Nations reform transition team and in interregional coordination among the five regional commissions.

78. ECA worked closely with other regional economic commissions under the coordination of the Regional Commissions New York Office in developing a joint position paper in July 2018 that served as a basis for consultation with other regional entities of the development system. The position paper contributed to shaping the final regional optimization plan for phase I of the development system reforms at the regional level. The plan, which is being implemented, is aimed at ensuring the optimization of functions and enhancing collaboration among United Nations regional entities, with a view to harnessing United Nations assets for effective collective support of country priorities.

79. Considering the unique institutional and policy landscape in Africa, ECA also prepared a white paper in August 2018 on its positioning in the United Nations regional architecture in Africa. The position paper contributed to the discussion and consultation with other development system entities operating at the regional level, including in context of the joint meeting held on 10 December 2018 by ECA and regional teams of the United Nations Development Group - Africa. The position paper will be further leveraged in the context of the formulation of phase II of the United Nations reforms that focus on longer-term reprofiling and restructuring of United Nations regional assets.

D. Highlights of results planned for 2019

80. The box below presents highlights of some of the key results ECA has planned for 2019.

Box

Highlights of results planned for 2019

1. **Frontier knowledge generation and strengthening knowledge profile of staff**
 - Full operationalization of the work of the five subregional offices in identified thematic areas of specialization: sustainable employment creation (North Africa); demographic dynamics for development (West Africa); economic diversification (Central Africa); deepening regional integration in Eastern Africa in the context of the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (Eastern Africa); and inclusive industrialization (Southern Africa)
 - Staff development: increased number of relevant staff development programmes tailored to the think-tank function of the Commission will be delivered
2. **Sustainable macroeconomic and growth policies**
 - (a) **Debt sustainability, macro and domestic resource mobilization**
 - Five countries supported on debt sustainability analysis (linking it with the Sustainable Development Goals)
 - Six countries use the ECA Integrated Planning and Reporting Toolkit and the macroeconomic model developed and customized with the International Monetary Fund in their national development planning or monitoring and evaluation processes
 - Nine countries supported to undertake voluntary national reviews, including costing related to the Sustainable Development Goals
 - Seven member States use ECA recommended policies, strategies and initiatives on improved economic governance practices, public sector management and service delivery
 - Seven member States use ECA recommended policies and strategies on domestic and international public resource mobilization
 - 20 member States integrate industrialization into their national development policies and planning frameworks

- (b) **Trade and regional integration**
- 10 member States implement and monitor policies to boost intra-African trade and to attract foreign direct investment and African cross-border investment
 - Methodology for the African Continental Free Trade Area Index developed and piloted in two countries
 - Improved business environment for the private sector, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises:
 - 25 per cent increase in the number of countries with access to land for women
 - Five countries improve by 10 points in the Logistics Performance Index
 - At least five countries increase the share of renewables in their energy mix by 50 per cent
 - Consensus built among member States around a continental strategy on fiscal policy, trade and the private sector in the digital era
- (c) **Poverty, gender and social policy**
- A poverty clock launched and adopted by countries for monitoring and analysis
 - Development of a concept on financial guarantees linked to private sector investments in health
 - Five countries develop national programmes based on gaps identified in gender profiles of the African Gender and Development Index
 - Six countries develop national action plans for urban economic diversification and job creation
- (d) **Statistics**
- Six countries establish a new base level for their gross domestic products
 - Baseline data for at least half of the indicators of Sustainable Development Goals 2, 3 and 6 provided for all African countries
 - Centres of Excellence on digital identification established in five countries
- 3. Innovative financing models and tools**
- In connection to Goal 7, on affordable and clean energy, Green Bonds are issued by development banks or agencies for financing renewable energy projects in Africa
 - Increased number of African pension funds, retirement and savings institutions, insurance companies and fund managers that invest in infrastructure projects (power, transport and housing)
 - Operationalization of the African Women Leadership Fund to mobilize global capital to build a cadre of African women fund managers who will, in turn, invest in and develop African women-led businesses and micro-businesses

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| <p>4. Solutions to regional and transboundary challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 22 African States ratify the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area• Eight countries developing national strategies for the implementation of the Agreement• Adoption of a continental framework on digital identification and economy• Five countries produce migration data and statistics using new methodologies and systems• Adoption of the “Sahel 2043: Prospective analysis for the Sahel” by member States in Central and West Africa as a common conceptual and analytical framework to address regional and transboundary challenges <p>5. Global public goods and global advocacy for Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agreed methodology for measuring and monitoring the quantum of illicit financial flows from Africa• Advocacy and awareness-raising activities by the High-Level Panel on Migration |
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III. Conclusion

81. In conclusion, ECA continues to leverage its three core functions by:

(a) Providing subregional and regional platforms for the promotion of regional cooperation and consensus-building in the implementation of international and regional commitments;

(b) Offering cutting-edge intellectual knowledge products and policy recommendations that influence policy decisions at the national, subregional and regional levels;

(c) Providing capacity development and technical and advisory services to member States, regional economic communities and the African Union Commission, with the aim of advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.
