



**Economic Commission for Africa
Committee of Experts of the Conference
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and Economic Development**

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Statutory issues**Report of the Executive Secretary on the work of the
Economic Commission for Africa covering the
period April 2019–March 2020****Foreword**

The present report, which covers the period from April 2019 to March 2020, is being submitted to the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at its fifty-third session. It highlights some of the key results that the Commission achieved over the past year in thematic areas consistent with the major development challenges confronting African countries today.

In 2019, ECA achieved a number of significant milestones in support of member States' development priorities and in line with the Commission's new strategic directions to deliver ideas and actions for an empowered, inclusive and transformed Africa in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

Acknowledging the importance of promoting peace and security and upholding human rights as a foundation for sustainable development, ECA has been working closely with the African Union to pool the two bodies' collective expertise in these areas to promote sustainable development. This comes in the context of ECA activities around the peace, security and development nexus, which is one of the themes of the African Union-United Nations development framework for the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals. ECA has been a member of the African Union-United Nations senior officials task force on the implementation of the

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joint frameworks on peace and security, and development and human rights, since its inauguration in August 2019. The task force is working on the development of mechanisms for coordination of the implementation of the frameworks, and has agreed that related activities will be planned and implemented by the two bodies in accordance with a biannual timetable.

ECA also continues to cooperate with the regional teams of the United Nations Development Group and, at the national level, with the United Nations resident coordinator system and the United Nations country teams. In addition, it is collaborating with other regional commissions to develop joint initiatives, such as that on road safety, and coordinated perspectives with a view to strengthening the regional dimension in both global development and South-South cooperation. A special focus is being placed on building and maintaining knowledge and information networks for harnessing best practices and lessons learned elsewhere and within the region and disseminating them to member States and their organizations.

Integrating a gender perspective into the Commission's operational activities, deliverables and results is vital to its work. To that end, ECA is committed to accelerating the pace of member States to implement, and report on, their global and regional gender-related joint commitments; and to enhance their implementation of policies and programmes for the empowerment of women and girls, in order to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa. ECA is also working to strengthen the capacity of member States, through tailored technical support, advisory services and hands-on training, in gender and economic policy management, women's entrepreneurship, gender-responsive public finance and the integration of gender and demographic dividend dimensions into national policies and programmes.

Innovative partnerships with a wide range of national, regional and global stakeholders continue to be of vital importance for the implementation of the ECA programme of work. These include the successful delivery of the African Business Health Forum in collaboration with private sector partners GBC Health and the Aliko Dangote Foundation. Using the platform of the Forum, attention was drawn to the scale and impact of the disease burden borne by Africa and the opportunities for the innovative financing of health care.

Despite the challenges faced by Africa, I believe that immense opportunities exist for the continent to embark on a bold new development path that leverages emerging technologies, deeper regional integration among countries and strengthened innovative partnerships to achieve inclusive economic transformation and resilient economies in Africa. I am committed to ensuring that ECA works closely with member States to deliver on actions that will lead to accelerated achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

As we move into 2020 and embark on the United Nations decade of action and delivery for sustainable development, a more targeted implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is essential. For African countries, there is an acute need for accelerated action to deliver on the promises of prosperity. To enable this, as of March 2019, ECA has started to implement a strategy for integrated and coherent programme delivery in 22 countries of focus. In the framework of this new approach, the divisions and subregional offices will consolidate their deliverables, and jointly plan and deliver to create a critical mass of investment in niche areas in these countries of focus. This strategy is already contributing to improved programmatic interlinkages and integrated multidimensional policy support

to countries and making optimal use of limited resources for more effective delivery on national priorities.

ECA will continue to leverage value-adding partnerships premised on the principle of enhancing complementarity and development impact. This will also enable the Commission to respond better to the evolving needs of member States within the context of new and emerging opportunities.

Lastly, 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

Executive Secretary of the Economic
Commission for Africa

I. Introduction

1. Following the endorsement of its reforms by the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at its fifty-second session in March 2019, the Commission developed its medium-term programme framework 2020–2024, which articulates an ambitious strategy to support the African member States in transforming their economies and effectively integrating into a common economic, social and political space, while promoting international cooperation to create a more prosperous and inclusive continent whose citizens are free from want and deprivation. The strategy reflects seven key interlinked thematic areas in which ECA invested its resources: integrated multidimensional modelling policy analysis and institutional reforms; trade and regional integration; private sector development, innovative finance and infrastructure development; poverty, gender and social policy; data statistics and digital transformation; integrated delivery of services through ECA subregional offices; and tailored training programmes for resident coordinators.

2. During the reporting period, the contribution of ECA to supporting member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 remained targeted on its three core functions: its convening function, its function as a think tank and its operational function, and 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 the position of Africa at the global level.

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 six broad thematic areas;

- (i) Integrated multidimensional modelling, policy analysis and institutional reforms;
- (ii) Trade and regional integration;
- (iii) Private sector development, innovative finance and infrastructure development;
- (iv) Poverty, gender and social policy;
- (v) Integrated delivery of services through ECA subregional offices;
- (vi) Data, statistics and digital transformation;

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

(c) Accountability and learning from the 2019 evaluation and audit recommendations;

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

(e) Highlights of results planned for 2020.

II. Key results achieved in 2019

4. The following section outline some of the notable achievements from 2019 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 levels; 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.

A. Integrated multidimensional modelling, policy analysis and institutional reforms

1. Strengthened policy formulation and implementation through use of macroeconomic models

5. In response to the growing number of African countries seeking technical assistance with regard to tools and the associated capacity development activities, in 2015, ECA initiated a project to develop a prototype macroeconomic model that is generic in nature and scalable and can be customized into specific country characteristics reflecting specific country's economic developments. The development process, which involved the assessment of model requirements pertaining to African countries and the review of existing literature, model design, development and testing, continued for much of 2015 and 2016 before embarking on the actual model customization and its implementation in countries.

6. ECA has since supported African countries in the development and implementation of the macroeconomic models, to assist them in their policy formulation and implementation process. In specific countries, the process included surveying the countries' requirements, including those of Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Djibouti, Egypt, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritania, Senegal and Sierra Leone; the availability to them of economic analysis tools, knowledge and skills in economic analysis, in particular in econometrics and modelling in general; collaboration between different country institutions; and other variables. This survey informed the model development process and the associated skills development training sessions in modelling, forecasting, policy simulation and economic analysis in general.

7. The model is currently at different phases of development and implementation in various countries. Thus, it has been put into use in its final form (stage 3) in Algeria, Burundi, Djibouti, the Gambia and Ghana; scoping missions and initial training (stage 2) have taken place in Egypt, Ethiopia and Mauritania; and scoping missions involving requirements analysis (stage 1) have taken place in Cameroon, Kenya, Senegal and Sierra Leone. This work has contributed to strengthening macroeconomic policy analysis in member States, as evidenced by model output forecasts and simulations used during the country's deliberations with donors in Djibouti and the Gambia and in budget discussions in Ghana.

2. Implementation of the Gambian national development plan (2018–2021)

8. In 2018, the Government of the Gambia launched its medium-term development plan – the national development plan for 2018–2021, anchored on the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and with the stated goal to “deliver good governance and accountability, social cohesion, and national

reconciliation and a revitalized and transformed economy for the well-being of all Gambians”. The successful implementation of the national development plan hinges upon the coordination and strong commitment of all the ministries, departments and agencies, accompanied by a robust monitoring and evaluation framework.

9. Acknowledging the role of ECA in supporting African countries in their development efforts through capacity development, the Government, represented by a high-level delegation from the Ministry of Finance led by a planning minister in the Office of the President, approached the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) to seek support in strengthening the capacity of its officials in planning and budgeting, with a view to significantly upgrading implementation of the national development plan. In response, a two-week training-of-trainers session on results-based management was conducted in December 2018 in Banjul in collaboration with the Gambian office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

10. Applying lessons learned by the Gambian Government at an international conference organized in May 2018 in Brussels to mobilize resources for the flagship projects outlined in its national development plan, the availability of human and institutional capacity in project management and the development of bankable project proposals were identified as key requirements before the organization of another resource mobilization conference. Subsequently, and based on the success of the initial training course on results-based management, a second visit was made to IDEP by a high-level delegation from the Ministry of Finance in December 2018, which requested the organization of a training course on the development of bankable project proposals and project management.

11. In response, a week-long intensive and practical training course was conducted in June 2019. The course was part of the Government’s commitment to enhancing capacities to address the perceived capacity gaps and to support reforms aimed at strengthening the development of bankable project proposals for the effective implementation of the 2018–2021 national development plan. It was aimed at familiarizing the participants with the use of selected tools on project proposal formulation, project proposal writing and project management strongly linked to the various priorities of the national development plan. It focused on issues such as project scope management, cost management, quality management, risk management, finance, appraisal, and key success factors for proposal development. This work was in line with targets 1.b, 5.1, 5.5, 5.a, 5.c, 8.1–8.9, 10.1, 10.4, 10.7, 17.1, 17.6, 17.8–17.15, and 17.17–17.19 of the Sustainable Development Goals, and also with the corresponding priorities of Agenda 2063.

12. These efforts were aimed at strengthening the capacity of African countries – in the present case, the Gambia – to formulate and manage effective public sector policies, as demonstrated by the high level of participation (37 Gambian public officials, including 10 women, and satisfaction rate (95 per cent). It has further resulted in the development of a project proposal on increasing milk production in the Gambia, which the Government of the Gambia intends to submit to its development partners. This proposal is one of many that are in the development pipeline by the Gambia. The skills acquired in this process will help the Gambian Government to relaunch its economic and social development process in line with the objectives of the national development plan.

3. National planning strengthened for balanced regional development

13. ECA supported the formulation of a new development framework for Ethiopia and the different regions of the country, which outlined policy priorities and interventions designed to remedy regional imbalances through the country's national 10-year prospective plan for the period 2020/21–2030/31. National development planning in Ethiopia has largely focused on economic planning with insufficient regard for spatial and physical planning and its implications for economic outcomes. This has resulted in unbalanced development and spatial inequalities and inefficiencies, and has also led to the wastage of limited resources which could have been strategically targeted to locations with high returns on investment. In addition, intersectoral linkages across key economic sectors have been weak. Ethiopia as a whole and the different regions of the country have also faced challenges in becoming more competitive, attracting investments, developing their resource potential and growing into dynamic hubs of economic transformation.

14. To tackle these shortcomings, ECA supported efforts by the National Planning Commission of Ethiopia to formulate a development framework to guide regional development priorities aligned with national growth and transformation targets. In this process, representatives of all regions and sectors were consulted in order to strengthen the alignment of spatial and economic planning processes and priorities at various scales. ECA also helped to enhance the policy expertise and capacities of representatives of regions and sectors in Ethiopia through the use of its guidebook for policymakers on integrating urbanization in national development planning.

15. These efforts contributed to strengthening policies for inclusive and equitable spatial development policies in Ethiopia, as demonstrated by the formulation for the first time of a regional development framework for the country. Throughout its history of national development planning, over the decades since 1957, the country has lacked a clear vision, objectives and strategies to guide its regional development efforts in a manner that integrates spatial and economic planning at the national scale. By defining priorities for leveraging the potential of its regions to achieve its 10-year prospective plan, the framework will promote balanced regional development and improved economic and social outcomes for all.

16. In 2015, the second phase of the growth and transformation plan, for the period 2015/16–2019/20, was launched, followed by a process of regional development through interregional grant allocation, decentralization and the laying of industrial parks and strategic development corridors over the period from 2016 to 2018. In 2019, the national regional development framework was adopted.

B. Trade and regional integration

1. Ratification and the African Continental Free Trade Area – strategies to harness its advantages

17. Working in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the European Union, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Trade Centre, Resident Coordinator offices and development partners, ECA contributed to the strengthening of regional cooperation and integration among member States for increased trade flows, improved industrialization and increased investments with better equipment, by promoting understanding of the benefits and challenges of implementing the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Among the enablers, ECA conducted awareness-raising events in 34 member States, targeting national authorities, civil society organizations, journalists and the private sector through national forums, high-level promotional events and regional and subregional workshops on the Agreement and the importance of its ratification.

18. Harnessing the benefits of the African Continental Free Trade Area must start with a process of its incorporation in domestic legislation and frameworks. To that end, ECA has been assisting member States in the development of national strategies on the Free Trade Area. Countries needed to identify both existing gaps and their comparative and competitive advantages for diversification and ability to develop or integrate value chains under the Agreement. This requires the design and implementation of new policy interventions or the retuning of existing policy frameworks, with a view to deriving maximum benefit from the Free Trade Area. The national strategies facilitated the identification of key value addition and trade and investment opportunities in potential markets, supply-side constraints, the measures to boost trade and production capacities required for a country to take full advantage of national, regional and global markets within the context of the Free Trade Area. These strategies are contributing primarily to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals 17 (targets 17.11 and 17.12) and 9 (target 9.2.1).

19. These efforts helped member States to gain a better understanding of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area. A minimum of 22 member States must ratify the Agreement for it to enter into force and advocacy and awareness-raising efforts had to be sustained to fulfil this requirement and to garner a maximum number of signatories. In April 2019, the 22-country threshold was reached. As a result, the Agreement came into force in May 2019. In July 2019, at the African Union summit in the Niger, the operational phase of the Agreement was launched. Of the 55 members of the African Union, only one has yet to sign the Agreement. By the end of 2019, 27 countries had ratified the Agreement and nine national strategies on the Free Trade Area had been developed.

2. Supporting implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area in Southern Africa

20. In addition, ECA provided technical support to member States in awareness-raising among stakeholders on the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area and also supported the development of national strategies on the Free Trade Area through which the countries could best position the private sector and, in particular, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in benefiting from the expanded regional market created through the Free Trade Area. National multi-stakeholder awareness-raising and consultation workshops were held in Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe in 2019, while national strategies were produced and validated for Zambia and Zimbabwe. In this way, awareness of and knowledge about the African Continental Free Trade Area were strengthened and subsequently disseminated and the apprehensions and scepticism of stakeholders were allayed, in particular those of the private sector, regarding what they had initially perceived as the negative impacts of the Agreement, and countries were thereby placed on the path towards its ratification.

21. These efforts contributed to strengthening subregional and national programmes and capacities to achieve inclusive industrialization for reducing poverty and inequality in Southern Africa, as demonstrated by, first, the adoption by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Heads of State and Government in August 2019 of the template for development of the capacities of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in Southern Africa and also the SADC Protocol on Industry, whose

development had been technical support by the relevant component of this ECA subprogramme. Second, the endeavour to promote intraregional trade as a means of developing the productive capacities of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises was evidenced by the ratification of the Agreement in five member countries of the subregion, namely Eswatini, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Third, national strategies on the Free Trade Area were developed for Zambia and Zimbabwe.

22. Those achievements, namely, the development of national implementation strategies for the Free Trade Area by two countries; ratification of the Agreement by five countries; and the adoption of key instruments by one regional economic community mean that six outcomes were actually achieved, as against the planned target of three outcomes.

C. Private sector development, innovative finance and infrastructure development

23. ECA implemented a programme aimed at assisting member States to develop innovative financing mechanisms to fund infrastructure development. The majority of African member States are unable to close their massive infrastructure gaps, amounting to more than \$93 billion per year for both capital investment and maintenance, rendering the identification and use of innovative sources of financing of the utmost importance.

24. To support member States in mobilizing both public and private capital for financing infrastructure, ECA convened a series of training measures, conferences and retreats for institutional investors, to raise their awareness of the opportunities to invest in infrastructure projects in Africa. Thus, in April 2019, ECA convened the second in this series of events in Kenya, in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the National Association of Securities Professionals, the World Bank Group and the Kenyan Pension Fund Investment Consortium (KEPFIC), bringing together Kenyan and United States-based pension funds and asset managers with the aim of facilitating investment and the co-financing of sustainable infrastructure in Kenya.

25. This conference was informed by the great success achieved at a similar crowding-in investment conference organized in Senegal in March 2017, which resulted in the impactful investment of more than \$50 million by the Chicago Teacher's Pension Fund and the Alameda County Employee's Retirement Association, a pension fund based in Oakland (United States), in infrastructure projects in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Senegal and South Africa. The conference was based on the findings of the subprogramme report on the regulation and supervision of pension fund systems in Africa.

26. The objective of the April 2019 conference was to raise awareness about policy, regulatory and fiduciary barriers in mobilizing domestic pension savings to finance infrastructure on the continent. The conference was attended by more than 40 United States-based pension funds, asset managers and industry experts, who together represented some \$1 trillion in assets under management, and 12 pension funds which were members of KEPFIC (currently managing \$2 billion in assets), with a view to exploring investment opportunities in infrastructure, real estate, private equity and other sectors in Kenya.

27. These efforts contributed to the leveraging of innovative financing instruments in Africa, as demonstrated by the manner in which the outcomes of the conference stimulated the appetite for innovative investment in

infrastructure and housing projects in Kenya. The conference proved to be a very productive step towards the commitment to invest at least \$200 million in the region. Through its continued engagement with the Government of Kenya, ECA has made significant strides in building and enhancing partnerships between United States-based investors and Kenyan pension funds under the coordination of KEPFIC, allowing them to form ventures with local partners in pursuing these investments in Kenya.

D. Poverty, gender and social policy

1. Strengthening the capacity of member States to monitor progress in gender equality and women's empowerment

28. Over the reporting period, ECA extensively applied the African Gender and Development Index, used by member States to perform self-assessments of their progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment, and also in the production of national reports for the 25-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action. These reports were endorsed at a meeting of the African Union Commission Specialized Technical Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. The index has also been used to produce the synthesis report Regional 25-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, endorsed by member States at the abovementioned joint meeting. In addition, the index and national and regional reports for that Review were used by experts and ministers in drafting the document on the African political declaration and key messages on the 25-year Review, which will be submitted at the global meeting on the 25-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action – the sixty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women – to be held in New York from 9 to 20 March 2020, presenting a common position and consolidated voice for the African region.

29. The African Gender and Development Index also underpinned the production of several knowledge products and tools that were used to provide tailored technical support to member States, and to deliver hands-on training to their officers, with specific attention to the ECA countries of focus. They also informed high-level policy dialogues which have resulted in policy advocacy and uptake. Thus, in Namibia, the subprogramme supported production of the national women's economic empowerment strategy, which will guide government measures to accelerate the achievement of women's economic empowerment. The strategy has subsequently been validated by the stakeholders for endorsement by the cabinet. Technical support was also provided to Mauritania, including an assessment of the national strategy for institutionalization of gender mainstreaming and the development of a road map to address shortcomings. This resulted in the integration of gender dimensions into the review of the country's national development plan and statistical framework.

30. These efforts helped to enhance the capacity of member States to monitor their progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment. This was demonstrated by the submission on time by 50 countries of their national reports under the 25-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 29 of which made direct and indirect references to the African Gender and Development Index and used related analysis in their self-assessed national reports, as part of the review process.

31. In addition, the African Gender and Development Index was also used to support the production of the African Union gender scorecard. This scorecard is an African Union assessment and ranking tool, designed to measure country performance in respect of gender equality, the reaping of

the demographic dividend and the control of corruption. It has already been developed for 2016, 2017 and 2019. Results of the gender scorecard assessment were presented at the 2019 Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, at which awards were presented to the Heads of State of the five best performing member States, in recognition of their greater accountability for gender equality. The roll-out of the African Gender and Development Index has been cumulative over the years, with implementation in 40 countries in 2019.

32. In 2015, over the course of its first, second and third phases, the African Gender and Development Index was implemented in 35 member States, while that figure rose to 40 in its fourth phase. In 2017, an analysis of 13 countries was carried out, and in 2019 an analysis of a further 15, as part of the regional synthesis report on the index.

2. Improved biomedical engineering expertise and innovative capacity of young people

33. ECA launched a pilot project in 2011 to assist member States in harnessing new technologies for improved healthcare outcomes in Africa. The project, which was entitled “Engineering expertise to improve health outcomes in Africa”, was designed to build biomedical engineering and innovation capacity to overcome the inadequacy of medical devices needed by health-care professionals to offer life-saving services. Most countries on the continent rely on imported medical devices and foreign expertise to install, upgrade and service such equipment and lack their own medical devices industries. For this reason, the project’s main aim was to develop the domestic capacity of African countries to install, repair, maintain and upgrade medical devices, attract female students to engineering and instil enhanced entrepreneurial and innovation competencies to bring medical devices to market.

34. The project had three main activities, the first of which was to support interested universities in developing a biomedical engineering undergraduate programme. ECA supported the development of a detailed generic curriculum for biomedical engineering, which helped universities in swiftly establishing their own curriculum in this subject. The second activity was to strengthen the technological and entrepreneurial capabilities of students, through the organization of an innovators summer school, as a platform for imparting skills that were not yet being taught at universities, such as coding mobile devices to serve medical devices and 3D printing, promoting innovation and instilling entrepreneurial competencies. All participating teams were required to include at least one female student. An international design competition was also launched. The third such activity consisted in networking for sustainability among universities, private sector bodies and hospitals. To this end, ECA initiated, drove and anchored the establishment of the African Biomedical Engineering Consortium to coordinate, promote and mobilize resources for its universities members.

35. Since 2011, ECA has been encouraging policymakers, industrial research institutions, the private sector, hospitals and universities to support and invest in the growth of biomedical engineering. With that aim, it organized meetings with ministers and permanent secretaries, heads of hospitals and institutions, private sector operators, representatives of donors and vice-chancellors of universities. As a result, the consortium gathered support from 22 universities covering nine African countries, seven industrial research partners and five businesses from six different countries.

36. These efforts contributed to enhancing the capacity of member States to harness new technologies for the development of Africa, as demonstrated by the critical number of young people that now have the capacity to install,

repair, maintain and upgrade medical devices. The project developed an innovative and entrepreneurial medical devices culture and helped to build the human resources necessary to bring new and improved medical device services and technologies to market. Close to 1,200 students embarked on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in biomedical engineering. Of the students that attended the innovators summer schools between 2012 and 2016, 48 per cent have now launched their own businesses; 65 per cent have developed new prototypes; 92 per cent have continued to engage in their established networks; and 19 per cent have won grants. Some 30 per cent of the students are female and all the innovation prizes at the seven innovators summer schools were won by female students. In total, the number of universities and institutions participating in the biomedical engineering initiative grew from 13 in 2015 to 22 in 2019, covering nine African countries.

37. To ensure sustainability, the African Biomedical Engineering Consortium was launched in 2012 to serve as a custodian and promoter of standards of training and research, capacity-building and resource mobilization, and also as a promoter of teacher and student exchanges. Since then the Consortium has attracted two grants worth some \$3 million – \$1.5 million in funding from the European Union for postgraduate training and staff exchanges (the project website may be visited at www.africanbmemobility.org), and another 1.2 million euros to develop an Africa-Europe electronic platform for the safe design of medical devices (project website at <http://ubora-biomedical.org>). Two partner teams, in Malawi and Uganda, have won global awards and prizes for design innovations – one of which is already on the market, while another completed its first clinical trials in 2018.

E. Integrated delivery of services through the ECA subregional offices

1. Unemployment levels dropping in North Africa

38. ECA organized a regional high-level dialogue on development strategies and policies for employment creation in North Africa. Serving as a platform for the public sector, the private sector and civil society, the dialogue helped to identify policy reforms needed in the short, medium and long term, to overcome existing bottlenecks and labour market difficulties. In addition, the analysis of regional value chains identified sectors presenting complementarities among member countries with better job opportunities. This analysis was also extended to the blue economy sector.

39. By providing technical assistance to the Central Bank of Egypt, the Ministry of Economy of Algeria and the Central Bank of Mauritania, ECA launched the development of national macroeconomic models to reflect the main characteristics of each economy, with the aim of moving towards evidence-based macroeconomic policies in favour of employment.

40. ECA has stimulated interest in member States in the analysis of distortions in resource allocations and public policies. A memorandum of understanding has been concluded with the Higher Planning Commission (HCP) in Morocco – the national statistical authority – on the development of a model quantifying such distortions, with a view to orienting resource allocations towards sectors that have more potential in terms of job creation.

41. To promote a coordinated approach with the many partners working in the area of employment, ECA initiated collaboration with a number of international institutions, including the World Bank, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the African Development Bank, research

institutes such as the Brookings Institute and a range of national partners, including the Economic, Social and Environmental Council (CESE) of Morocco, through which it has been possible to identify common areas for action. In addition, a revised road map (2019–2020) for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at a session of the subregional coordination mechanism, including one focus area on employment.

42. In the area of regional integration, ECA organized three national forums on the implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area to raise awareness among key stakeholders in the public and private sectors and in civil society in Algeria, Mauritania and Tunisia.

43. With ECA assistance and through the vehicle of South–South cooperation with Morocco, Mauritania was able to adopt formally the 2008 System of National Accounts (2008 SNA). Use of the new system enhanced the methodological approach used for the compilation of national accounts (in terms of coverage of data collection, consideration of the informal sector, method of calculating financial sector variables, and other requirements).

44. Capitalizing on its convening power and close cooperation with relevant government departments in member countries, ECA gained a better understanding of the existing policy gaps and the areas where adjusting labour market policies would add value to employment creation dynamics. As a result of the changes in its national accounts changes and thanks to the various innovations, the GDP of Mauritania was revised to reflect the actual components of income. For example, by rebasing its GDP, the figures jumped to 203,385 million ouguiyas in 2014, an evolution of 25 per cent by comparison with the levels for that same year calculated by the previous system of accounts (162,648 million ouguiyas, according to SNA 93).

2. Single currency for the countries of the Economic Community of West African States

45. ECA implemented 27 projects at country and regional levels in 2019, including in the areas of advocacy, consensus building and technical assistance in advancing the single currency agenda in the 15 Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) countries of West Africa.

46. In 2018, the ECOWAS Commission requested support from ECA in assessing implementation of the road map towards introduction of the single currency by 2020. Limited progress has been made since the adoption by the Authority of Heads of State and Government, the supreme institution of ECOWAS, in 1987 of a monetary cooperation programme, intended to conduct the subregion to a single currency by a deadline that has been repeatedly postponed, initially set at 1994.

47. The current deadline of 2020 was set in 1995, along with a road map which was assessed by the subprogramme component. That assessment alerted the Commission and its member States to the need to step up progress and gave options that led to the updating of the road map. Technical assistance provided under the subprogramme component further helped the Commission to build consensus that led to three important decisions in 2019: first, the adoption of a monetary policy framework for the single currency; second, the adoption of a central bank model for ECOWAS; and, third, agreements on the name of the single currency.

48. In this context, ECA developed a number of knowledge products, including structural transformation, employment, production and society (STEPS) profiles for Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Liberia, which provided a diagnosis on the state of economic diversification and structural

transformation in those countries; a background study on the measuring of demographic dynamics for development in West Africa; and a business plan to support the strategic work carried out in its area of specialization over the next four years, 2019–2022. The studies produced by the subprogramme component may be used to inform specific and tailor-made policy dialogue with countries, regional economic communities and other regional stakeholders and to build consensus. At its twenty-second session, in Monrovia in May 2019, the Intergovernmental Committee of Senior Officials and Experts for West Africa decided that, in its work on the operationalization of the centre, a focus should be placed on budgeting in 2020 designed to harness the demography dividend.

49. These efforts contributed to advancing the regional integration agenda, as demonstrated by the adoption of the regional monetary framework and the adoption of a central bank model for ECOWAS. The adoption of the monetary policy framework was an important step towards the harmonization of the monetary policy after the launch of the currency. The member States agreed to base their future monetary policy on a flexible exchange regime with an inflation-targeted policy.

50. Adoption of the central bank model is a key step in facilitating further discussions related to the other necessary reforms to move to the final launch of the ECOWAS single currency. It was further agreed by member States that adoption of the single currency will be followed by the formal establishment of the ECOWAS Central Bank, which will initially target its work towards the following goals: commercial and financial integration; development of a regional payment system; promotion of the use of national currencies to facilitate cross-border trade, payments and financial transactions; harmonization of banking laws and regulations; and capital market integration.

3. National economic diversification strategies for Central Africa

51. National economic diversification strategies are being pursued in an endeavour to overcome the boom-and-bust fluctuations of commodity prices. Thus, in Central Africa, ECA has been working intensively in its countries of focus, namely Cameroon, Chad and the Congo. The work by the relevant subprogramme component in this area has also been extended to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe.

52. ECA developed a number of knowledge products and conducted related high-level policy dialogues to analyse progress, opportunities and challenges in the areas of economic diversification, structural transformation and related issues, and also to assist in the formulation of national value propositions of selected countries in Central Africa. The national value proposition defines what is unique about each country in that subregion, including its comparative and competitive advantages and other strengths and opportunities. The knowledge products include a subregional profile in the STEPS series, providing a diagnosis on the state of economic diversification and structural transformation in the subregion, a background study on digital transformation in Central Africa, a publication on the role of development planning in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, with particular attention to diversification and industrialization (Goals 8 and 9), and an impact study on the effect of the African Continental Free Trade Area in Central Africa.

53. All these studies and think pieces served as the basis for high-level policy dialogue with State and non-State entities, culminating in the adoption of common positions and views on how to accelerate economic diversification in the subregion. For example, at their meeting in October

2019, Central African ministers of finance and economy decided to focus the next three-year programme with the International Monetary Fund not only on short-term measures to restore macroeconomic stability but, to an equal extent, on medium to long-term structural issues such as economic diversification.

54. Work carried out by ECA on roaming and cybersecurity, including studies, high-level policy dialogues and advocacy, highlighted the need to reduce the costs of roaming in Central Africa and to establish a single network area as one of the mechanisms to boost and facilitate intraregional trade in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

4. Implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area in Eastern Africa

55. In this context, ECA has been working extensively in its countries of focus, namely Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Seychelles. Organized in collaboration with the Government of Eritrea, UNDP and the office of the Resident Coordinator, the twenty-third annual session of the subregional Intergovernmental Committee of Experts and Senior Officials was held in Asmara in November 2019, attracting over 300 participants from the subregion. This meeting led to requests from the Government of Eritrea for further support in 2020 in the areas of blue economy and energy.

56. Overall, work in this domain focused on deepening regional integration and was delivered principally through a number of knowledge products, including a report on macroeconomic and social developments in Eastern Africa in 2019, which benchmarked performance towards national, regional and international goals, an ad hoc expert group meeting paper assessing the state of social cohesion, and a study undertaken with the organization Trade Mark East Africa (TMEA), measuring the impact of trade facilitation measures on manufacturing in the subregion. A study undertaken at the request of the secretariat of the East African Community (EAC) into the underlying causes of the stagnant levels of intraregional trade within EAC was reviewed by the permanent secretaries of trade ministries and resubmitted in April 2019, making an important contribution to the debate on how to remove existing bottlenecks on trade.

57. Where efforts to support implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area are concerned, ECA conducted a series of impact analyses for member States (Burundi, the Comoros, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania), along with a more comprehensive report providing a subregion-wide assessment of the African Continental Free Trade Area, which was published jointly with TMEA in December 2019. This report, which is, to date, the only subregional assessment of the African Continental Free Trade Area, highlights the need to accelerate regional integration in Eastern Africa and sets forward a series of recommendations to that end. These documents served as an entry point for discussion at national forums held subsequently in the aforementioned countries and generated requests from Rwanda and Uganda for more elaborate and detailed analyses.

58. In conjunction with the Regional Integration and Trade Division, the subprogramme component oversaw work by two consultants to elaborate a national African Continental Free Trade Area strategy for Kenya, thereby meeting a requirement in the 2019 work programme of that country's Ministry of Industry, Trade and Cooperatives. A regional event was convened in March 2019 in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, jointly with the East African Business Council, to promote awareness in the private sector of the continuing negotiations on the African Continental Free Trade Area.

59. To promote awareness of the African Continental Free Trade Area among the general public, a video campaign was launched, culminating in the production of two short explanatory videos, on the general benefits of the Free Trade Area and on its specific benefits to young people. The videos were widely disseminated, including on national television channels and at the high-level business summit of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) held in September 2019 in Nairobi, which was attended by four subregional presidents. Over the course of 2019, the ECA Subregional Office for Eastern Africa participated in more than 30 conferences and television appearances across the subregion, advocating accelerated efforts to implement the African Continental Free Trade Area and explaining its potential benefits.

60. ECA delivered advisory services to the Indian Ocean Commission on the elaboration of a blue economy regional action plan. A high-level policy dialogue on the blue economy and climate change was jointly convened by the Commission and ECA, through the relevant subprogramme component. Support for the development of a national action plan on the blue economy was also provided to Seychelles, one of the ECA countries of focus.

61. Similarly, following a request from EAC to assist in drafting the EAC tourism marketing strategy, ECA convened a subregional forum on the tourism marketing strategy for EAC, with the aim of identifying key priorities for that economic community. This subregional forum was followed by six national consultative forums across the EAC member States: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. The national forums informed the preparation of the subregional strategy, which was followed by a subregional validation meeting to finalize the strategy. The relevant subprogramme component also delivered advisory services on the issue of tourism satellite accounts for Kenya. Lastly, a study was produced on the sustainable financing of tourism, which explored different financing models and options. The study resulted in high-level policy dialogue, triggering a request for further advisory services.

5. Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the industrialization process in Southern Africa

62. In this area, ECA implemented several initiatives, including knowledge generation and policy research focused on structural transformation, employment and productivity through the STEPS profiles for three member States, Eswatini, Malawi and Mauritius. The profiles focused on how the member States could achieve structural transformation by facilitating the growth of their micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and the private sector generally, and identified the key challenges and opportunities facing these countries.

63. In addition, a policy report was produced on the integration of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the industrialization process of Southern Africa. The policy report constituted a background study for discussion and policy recommendations at the twenty-fifth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Senior Officials and Experts of Southern Africa, hosted by the Government of Eswatini from 11 to 13 September 2019. Addressing the theme of strategies and policies for the integration of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the industrialization process in Southern Africa, the session furnished an important convening platform for a wide variety of stakeholders. Senior government officials, representatives of national chambers of commerce and industry, associations of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and cross-border traders associations, development financial institutions, research institutions and civil society organizations, SADC and COMESA, a number of United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Industrial Development Organization

(UNIDO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and other key strategic partners met to deliberate on the topic of strengthening the capacities of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in Southern Africa.

64. Key recommendations emerging from the session included the need to develop a collaborative platform to strengthen the capacities of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises; the need for strong interlinkages between such enterprises and multinational corporations in the production process; and the need for member States to create enhanced incentives through fiscal and monetary policies to support such enterprises in Southern Africa.

F. Data, statistics and digital transformation

1. Use of technology to enhance the quality and timeliness of censuses

65. ECA implemented a country support programme on the implementation of the 2020 round of population and housing censuses. Among the programme's focus areas was the promotion of technological applications in the conduct of censuses, as opposed to traditional paper-based and manual methods. The use of technology in censuses enhances the quality of the data collected, the availability of the census outcome and the timely reporting of results. Collecting data about people and the houses in which they live using a tablet with a structured questionnaire reduces interview error in collecting information – a common problem in paper-based interviews. Added to this, the interviewer's handwriting may be hard to read, rendering it difficult to capture information accurately from a paper questionnaire – thereby reducing the quality of data and creating more work to correct the information. Use of a digital data collection approach reduces the time spent cleaning, validating and tabulating the data before making the results widely available. The earlier availability of results means that the benefits from the data collected in the census are also available earlier.

66. Accordingly, as indicated by an assessment conducted by the subprogramme, technology will play a major role in the 2020 round of African censuses, with more than half of all countries planning to conduct their censuses by digital methods.

67. At the same time, however, the subprogramme underestimated the challenges encountered by member States in the transition from paper-based to digital censuses, stemming largely from the inadequacy of the digital tools and software required. Each enumerator needs a specialized software package, with a detailed map of the area, to support the data-collection work in a specific location. As a result, the task of preparing each tablet and getting it to the right enumerator poses logistical challenges – it must be taken out of the box, charged, loaded with the special software, repacked in its case, and then delivered to the correct area.

68. To surmount these challenges, the subprogramme developed an application that would automatically load the correct software on to each tablet and ensure distribution to the right area. This significantly reduces the risk of error and the amount of work (and hence cost) involved in preparing the tablets for the census, while also speeding up the process.

69. As one of the focus countries for this support programme, Kenya carried out a digital census in August 2019 using 163,000 tablets. The subprogramme provided technical assistance for the Kenyan National Bureau of Statistics, in the use of the census application. Based on the results of this census, the subprogramme has organized an expert group meeting on

electronic data collection and dissemination in censuses for other countries planning to undertake a digital census in the coming years.

70. Work in this area contributed to strengthening the production of credible data, statistics and geospatial information in Africa, as demonstrated by the significant reduction of the time required for the calibration of the tablets, compared to the time that it would have taken if the National Bureau of Statistics had had to calibrate the tablets manually. Overall, the use of the application saved a total of 506 days, significantly improving the timely availability of data. In view of the importance of the timely production and availability of such data, these innovative solutions were strongly appreciated by the Government of Kenya in its communication to ECA. By significantly reducing the time taken by the census, the initiative also had significant cost benefits, including in terms of the budget required for staff salaries.

III. Partnerships

A. 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

71. ECA launched activities in the peace, security and development nexus, which constitutes one of the themes of the African Union–United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These activities, conducted in collaboration with the office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Horn of Africa, included the participation by the Executive Secretary in a meeting on implementation of the regional strategy for the Horn of Africa held in July 2019 and the leading role played by ECA in implementing socioeconomic elements of the strategy for the Horn of Africa. In addition, and in fulfilment of the peace, security and development nexus, the Special Envoy participated in the Trade Forum for the Horn of Africa on the African Continental Free Trade Area.

72. ECA is one of the United Nations entities that worked on the Sahel 2043 prospective study, which forms part of the United Nations initiative to ensure better synergy between development actions and combating terrorism, for the promotion of peace across the Sahel region. Following completion of that study and in the light of its findings, ECA organized policy dialogues in different countries, to discuss synergies between humanitarian work, the promotion of development and peace and security. In addition, in response to a request from ECOWAS for the provision of technical support to its Community Development Programme team to review and align its Sahel strategy with the Sahel 2043 prospective study, ECA organized a technical working session with the Community Development Programme to develop a road map to revise the ECOWAS Sahel strategy. Revision of that strategy will be carried out in 2020.

73. In addition, ECA worked to strengthen its collaboration with other United Nations entities in the following areas:

(a) Joint work on the human security index, in collaboration with the United Nations Office to the African Union, the United Nations trust fund for human security and the African Union Commission;

(b) “Building back better” programme, to support countries in building resilience to climate change and preparing for disasters;

(c) “Building back better” planning workshop for climate resilient investment in reconstruction and development in cyclone-affected regions of Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

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

74. Innovative partnerships with a wide range of national, regional and global stakeholders continue to be of vital importance for the implementation of the ECA programme of work. Over the course of 2019, ECA signed a number of framework agreements with a wide range of partners. These include the following:

(a) With the financial services corporation MasterCard, to promote financial and digital inclusion across Africa;

(b) With the multinational insurance firm AXA, to assess the role of the private health insurance coverage to improve access to health care in efforts to improve coverage and quality of health care in Africa;

(c) With the phosphate mining and fertilizer company OCP SA, to explore innovations in agriculture across the entire agricultural supply-chain; to explore new concepts to encourage capital markets to invest in African agriculture; to strengthen the economic empowerment of women through accelerating the growth of African women fund managers and improving access to women in the finance architecture and ecosystems; and to optimize pan-African agricultural inputs;

(d) With the Global Green Growth Institute, to cooperate in knowledge-sharing and capacity-building on climate-resilient green growth and development, including South-South cooperation, research and thought leadership;

(e) With the Enterprise Incubator Foundation of Armenia and the African Export-Import Bank, to undertake research and evidence-based knowledge for innovation, science and technology policymaking for Africa, together with capacity-building, with particular relevance to Sustainable Development Goal 9, on industry, innovation and infrastructure;

(g) With the University of Turku in Finland, also in relation to Goal 9, to undertake joint research and evidence-based knowledge for innovation, science and technology policymaking for Africa.

75. In addition, ECA also formed partnerships with a number of think tanks, with a view to assessing the impacts of economic integration and diversification policies on African economies (issues related to trade in services, migration and investment). Lastly, working in partnership with the African Union and UNDP, ECA has finalized a common regional indicators framework, capturing 63 indicators drawn from both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063, which will be used in preparing the region’s biannual progress report.

IV. Accountability and learning

A. Evaluations and audits

76. ECA continued to promote organizational learning and strengthen accountability, through the provision of evidence, analyses, lessons learned and recommendations in line with the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group. The evaluation sections undertook evaluations

and supported audit activities in different areas of the Commission's work, including in trade and regional integration – the African Trade Policy Centre; the African Peer Review Mechanism; mobile technologies; the intergovernmental structure; policy centres, the African Sustainable Development Forum, and others. Lessons and recommendations that were distilled from evaluations and audits are systematically informing management decisions, strategic planning, programme design, implementation and the conduct, servicing and results of the ECA intergovernmental structure and meetings.

77. The evaluation of the African Trade Policy Centre noted that its interventions were valuable in promoting trade across the continent. Its knowledge products in specific thematic areas were found to be highly relevant, resulting in demands from member States for technical assistance in excess of what the Centre is able to deliver within its limited resources.

78. The evaluations also identified weaknesses in ECA programme design, management, monitoring and reporting. In the light of those findings, it was recommended that programmes should move away from developing over-ambitious and unrealistic result frameworks, and should endeavour from the outset to put in place a robust monitoring system that generated credible and reliable data essential for capturing and showcasing the results achieved. Where the African Trade Policy Centre was concerned, the evaluation highlighted the need for a more effective governance structure and partnership modalities. Another major concern raised in the evaluations was the over-reliance of ECA on traditional donors and, in some cases, on a single donor for the funding of projects; this exposes the Commission to funding uncertainty and poses a serious risk to the financial viability of its operations and programmes.

79. In 2019, the ECA Evaluation Section serviced three external audits undertaken by the Office for Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and the United Nations Board of Auditors (BoA).

80. Collectively, these reports resulted in a total of 24 recommendations: 10 recommendations from OIOS and 14 from the Board of Auditors. At the end of the reporting period, ECA had implemented 18 recommendations that were due for end of the period, representing 100 per cent compliance. Implementation of the rest is due for completion in the reporting period 2020–2021.

B. Development of a medium-term programme framework

81. The ECA medium-term programme framework for 2021–2024 is currently under development. It articulates an ambitious strategy to support African member States in transforming their economies and effectively integrating into a common economic, social and political space, while promoting international cooperation to create a more prosperous and inclusive continent in which most citizens are free from want and deprivation. The draft framework is expected to be submitted to the Bureau and the Commission for validation in April 2020 and the final framework submitted to the Commission by mid-2020.

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

82. In supporting the second phase of the regional review, which focuses on the longer-term reprofiling and restructuring of United Nations regional assets, ECA provided substantive inputs to the review process.

83. Six consultations were organized by ECA with the heads of United Nations liaison offices based in Addis Ababa and the regional directors of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group covering East and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa, to consider approaches to implementing the Secretary-General's recommendations, namely: that the work of the regional collaborative platforms should be organized around two pillars: a Sustainable Development Goal policy pillar and an operational pillar; that knowledge management hubs should be established in each region; that transparency and results-based management should be enhanced at the regional level; that a region-by-region change management process should be launched, seeking to consolidate existing capacities with regard to data and statistics, and also to other relevant analytical functions; that administrative services should be identified that could be provided more efficiently to regional offices through common back offices. This process culminated in an inception report for the African region, jointly developed in collaboration with the Regional United Nations Sustainable Development Group Team for Africa and setting out proposals to establish seven opportunity and issue-based coalitions that will serve as the main vehicle for collaborative delivery under the regional collaborative platform. The inception report contributed to shaping the direction of the regional reform process.

VI. Results planned for 2020

84. The following box outlines activities for the year ahead and key results which the Commission intends to pursue in 2020, as it intensifies its efforts to support member States in accelerating their implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

1. **Integrated multidimensional modelling, policy analysis and institutional reforms**
 - Improved macroeconomic policy analysis
 - Incorporation in domestic legislation and frameworks and increased uptake of the integrated planning and reporting toolkit for integrating international agendas into national development planning and reporting on them
 - Improved public sector management and development planning: tailored IDEP training offer to address increasing demand from member States to strengthen their capacity to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063
 - Curbing illicit financial flows to enhance domestic resource mobilization
 - Strengthened national development planning, including integrating climate resilience in national sustainable development plans
2. **Trade and regional integration**
 - Ratification, incorporation in domestic legislation and frameworks and implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area
 - Making the most of the African Continental Free Trade Area:
 - Increased trade flows
 - Accelerated industrialization process
 - Improved environment for private sector operators to leverage transboundary opportunities
 - Deepening the integration of Africa in specific sectors and policies

- 3. Private sector development, innovative finance and infrastructure development**
 - Strengthened business environment for private sector investments in energy and infrastructure development
 - Increased investment from and more active participation of the private sector in the development of Africa
 - Enabling environment for business in agriculture and land
 - Leveraging of innovative financing instruments
 - Increased private sector financing in infrastructure, energy and services
- 4. Poverty, gender and social policy**
 - Harnessing the demographic dividend with gender equality
 - International migration in Africa
 - Monitoring social investment for improved efficiency and its integration in voluntary national reviews
 - Mainstreaming of poverty and inequality reduction policies to achieve the 2030 Agenda
- 5. Integrated delivery of services through ECA subregional offices**
 - Effective strategies and policies for employment creation in North Africa
 - Clean break with demographic trends in West Africa
 - Increased economic diversification in Central Africa
 - Implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area in Eastern Africa: from vision to action
 - Accelerating industrialization in Southern Africa
- 6. Data, statistics and digital transformation**
 - Improved production, dissemination and use of credible, gender-disaggregated data, statistics and geospatial information at national, regional and global levels
 - Increased visibility through civil registration and a holistic approach to legal identity
 - Improved national level data availability for reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals
 - Harnessing new technologies and innovation for transitioning to low-carbon climate-resilient economies
 - Implementation of the African digital transformation strategy
- 7. Tailored training programme for resident coordinators**
 - Customized training programmes through IDEP:
 - Macroeconomic model
 - Multidimensional nature of poverty and its link to socioeconomic inequality
 - Integrated planning and reporting toolkit