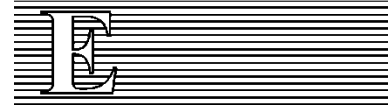




UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

*Thirtieth meeting of the Committee of Experts*



Distr.: GENERAL

E/ECA/COE/30/20  
25 February 2011

Original: ENGLISH

---

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

**Meeting of the Committee of Experts of the 4<sup>th</sup> Joint Annual Meetings  
of the AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and ECA  
Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic  
Development**

*Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
24 – 27 March 2011*

**Report of the African Institute for Economic  
Development and Planning to the 2011  
session of the Conference of Ministers**



## **I. AN OVERVIEW OF IDEP IN 2010**

1. The report of the United Nations African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) to the 2011 session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is tabled in accordance with the wishes expressed at previous ministerial conferences for regular updates on the substantive work of the Institute to be provided by its Governing Council and management.

2. In the report that was presented to the 2010 Conference of Ministers, held in Lilongwe, Malawi, ministers were informed of the completion during 2009 of the process of repositioning the Institute following the revamping of its management; the renewal of its portfolio of programmes and activities; the adoption by its Governing Council of a new institutional strategic plan; the full reintegration of the Institute into the overall programmatic strategy of the ECA; the reinforcement of the programmatic relationship between the Institute and the African Union Commission (AUC); the expansion of the Institute's partnerships in the five subregions of the continent; the renewal of old partnerships and the forging of new ones outside the continent; and the completion of the renovation of the institutional headquarters building in Dakar, Senegal, including the capacity development and training facilities.

3. Against the background of the internal organizational reforms carried out during 2009 under the oversight of the Institute's Governing Council, and as an extension of the changes implemented in earlier years, 2010 can in many ways be qualified as the year of full revival for the Institute. In terms of the range of substantive programme activities carried out, the Institute has never had a fuller and more diversified year, especially as regards its training activities but also with reference to its policy research work and policy dialogue initiatives. Where presence and visibility are concerned IDEP's image as an institute that is well on the mend has never been more positive, just as recognition of its strategic role has been significantly restored. In terms of reach, the Institute was able, through the programmes and activities it carried out, to cover all the subregions of the continent during the year even as it consolidated its standing in its host country, Senegal, as a foremost centre of advanced training for government officials. By way of financial resources, the coffers of the Institute have never been fuller in relative and comparative terms although, as is always the case, there is still plenty of room for further growing its resource base in order to further scaleup its activities and meet the growing demands from member States for support in various domains of economic policy design, analyses and management, including national development planning and visioning.

4. With regard to human resources, the Institute took steps for the first time in many years to recruit new, younger and highly qualified personnel in order to strengthen its programme implementation capacity and the overall quality of its delivery. The morale of staff members, which, by the end of 2008, was at an all-time low, picked up perceptibly in 2010 along with a renewed display of commitment by the different categories of personnel that translated into enhanced productivity. Furthermore, the Institute's portfolio of partnerships, both programmatic and financial, experienced a significant level of growth. Integration into ECA as the arm of the Commission responsible for the implementation of its subprogramme 8 pertaining to economic management and development planning was reaffirmed and served as the primary pillar for expanding substantive collaboration with the programme divisions of the Commission. The

Institute also enhanced its position as a tailor-made environment conducive for working, learning, studying and researching. In this connection, the library resources of IDEP received a major boost with significant investment made in new acquisitions and the implementation of measures to protect its core archives pertaining to the history of and experience in development planning in Africa.

5. In all, the Governing Council and management of the Institute are pleased to inform the 2011 Conference that while there is still a lot to be done before they can feel fully able to proclaim that IDEP has attained the status of Africa's apex development training and policy institution, there is, on the evidence of the record that was registered in 2010, every reason to believe that the Institute is certainly on the path to resuming its place as a foremost resource for training and development thinking on the continent. Looking ahead into 2011, the leadership of the Institute intends to place the accent on consolidating the momentum that was built in 2010 while pursuing new opportunities for extending reach, depth, scale and presence towards the goal of securing the place of the Institute over the long term as a foremost resource in the overall project of African development, a resource which not only works on its own to deliver a range of capacity development and allied policy research and advisory services but also carries out its mandate in close partnership with other like-minded institutions across the continent.

## **II. COMPLETION OF THE PHYSICAL RENOVATION OF THE INSTITUTE BUILDING**

6. At the time of the 2010 Conference of Ministers, the physical renovation of the IDEP building had just commenced. The renovation exercise was completed at the end of June 2010. An inspection of the work accomplished was subsequently undertaken by engineers and technicians from the ECA Facilities Management Unit, who certified it as satisfactory even as they requested, on the basis of established procedure, that a further holding period should be set aside for additional observations before the contractors who carried out the renovation were formally released. The renovation exercise itself was extensive and has significantly improved the work environment for the staff, the learning conditions for the trainees who come to IDEP and the overall attractiveness of the Institute as a place for study, research and conferences of various kinds. The Institute management also invested some resources in redeveloping the institution's large gardens and upgrading some of the plumbing facilities in the building.

7. The investment carried out to renovate the IDEP headquarters building in 2010 was in the region of US\$ 250,000. This investment was complemented with by installation of new air conditioning in the offices, the library, the conference room and lecture theatres to the tune of US\$ 40,000. A core part of the funds for the renovation came from extra-budgetary resources allocated to the Institute by ECA for the explicit purpose of renewing the building. The remaining funds were sourced from IDEP's own internal revenues generated in 2009. In 2011, the process of renewing and upgrading institutional facilities will be extended to the electrical works in the headquarters building, the IDEP restaurant (which is closed at present on security grounds but which is indispensable to the capacity development strategy of the Institute) and the remaining outstanding for plumbing repairs. To this end, resources have been earmarked in the Institute's 2011 budget as approved by the Governing Council at its forty-eighth meeting, held in Cairo, Egypt, in November 2010.

### **III. RENEWING THE IDEP MULTIMEDIA POOL FOR EFFECTIVE PEDAGOGY**

8. Integral to the effort that was deployed in 2010 to renew the physical infrastructure of the Institute was a commitment, backed with resources that had already been received from funding partners, to revamp the multimedia facilities that are vital to effective teaching and learning at IDEP. To this end, the IDEP conference room and lecture theatres were fully re-equipped with new multimedia equipment. The IDEP library benefited from a similar upgrade. Furthermore, all staff members and visiting resource persons were given new state-of-the-art computers to replace the older and less functional ones which were no longer able to meet institutional needs for enhanced productivity in a period of expanded programming. An additional server was also installed to reinforce the capacity of the IDEP website and prepare the ground for new online services from the Institute. The process of the redesign and launching of the website as an information and learning platform was also completed. Trainees admitted to courses in 2011 will be able to enjoy the benefits of the enhanced institutional multimedia capacity in course delivery that has resulted from the significant investments carried out in 2010.

### **IV. A YEAR OF VIGOROUS OUTREACH**

9. At the beginning of 2010, it was clear that effectiveness in reaching out to the member States and institutional partners of IDEP would have to be a central element of the overall outreach strategy underpinning institutional renewal. Outreach visits were therefore carried out to most African embassies in Dakar, and meetings were held with ambassadors and *chargés d'affaires* to brief them about ongoing efforts to reposition the Institute to better serve their countries and governments. Outreach visits were also paid to Botswana, Cameroon, the Congo, the Gambia, Ghana, Ethiopia (principally the African Union Commission), Lesotho, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, the Sudan, Swaziland and Tunisia. The visits mostly involved meetings with senior officials in national planning institutions in order to gain a better understanding of their needs and sensitize them to the work of IDEP and the role it might play as a partnering in the delivery of their core objectives and strategies. These outreach visits also had the side benefit of opening up promising possibilities for support to the regular budget and programmes of the Institute; some of these promises of support were redeemed through payments received by IDEP during the year, while others are still being processed.

10. Outside Africa, outreach visits were paid to Belgium (mainly for contacts with the European Commission), France, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, in order to pursue promising opportunities for collaboration and partnership or explore the prospects for such relations. The outcomes were mostly positive, as can be seen from the range and magnitude of extrabudgetary resources which the Institute successfully mobilized in 2010 in support of its programmes and activities.

11. In the course of the outreach visits carried out to various countries within and outside Africa, contacts were established with national and subregional institutions with which promising opportunities for building partnerships were explored. While the institutions

concerned are too numerous to be listed here, some of the most interesting that are worth highlighting include the University of Botswana, the Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis, the University of Johannesburg, the Human Science Research Council of South Africa, the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, the Centre for Management Development of Nigeria, the University of Brazzaville, the University of Ghana at Legon, the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, the Université Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar, the *Conseil économique et social* of Senegal, the University of the Gambia, the University of Oran in Algeria, the University of Cairo, the Institute of National Planning of Egypt, OAM United Kingdom, the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex in the United Kingdom, the International Centre for Migration Policy Development in Brussels, the European Centre for Development Policy Management in Brussels, the University of Lisbon, the United Nations Staff College in Turin, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development in Geneva, the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, the Institut de recherché pour le développement in Paris, the International Social Science Council in Paris, the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala and the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty at the University of Bergen in Norway.

12. The outreach strategy that was pursued in 2010 will be carried forward into 2011 with the goal of sensitizing various constituencies to the changing direction of the work of IDEP, the new programmes which it offers, the benefits that accrue to member States from its work and the mutually beneficial opportunities for collaboration that exist for delivering decentralized programming. Particular emphasis will be placed on the island States of Africa, beginning with Mauritius, with which a conversation is already under way; all the countries of North Africa; the Sudan and Uganda; Central African Republic, Chad and Gabon; and Angola and Mozambique. The regional economic communities recognized by the African Union will also be targeted for outreach missions during the course of 2011 for the increasingly strategic role they play and the numerous benefits that could be derived – on both sides - from working with and through them to achieve the Institute’s strategic programme objectives.

## **V. IDEP AS A PROGRAMME PARTNER OF THE AFRICAN UNION**

13. It is a mark of the increasing recognition of the ongoing renewal effort at IDEP that gained ground in the course of 2010 that the African Union Commission’s Department for Social Affairs invited the Institute to be its formal institutional support partner in the continuing discussions between the European Union and Africa on migration, mobility and employment (MME). The MME discussions form part of the broader European Union – Africa dialogue that encompasses eight themes. As an institutional partner to the AUC, IDEP not only follows the range of questions arising under the MME theme, but also offers the Commission strategic support and advice in articulating the African position. It should be noted that the role assigned to IDEP with regard to MME comes on top of a renewal of the collaboration between the Institute and the Economic Affairs Department of the Commission to facilitate a short course offered in English and French on regional integration in Africa for the benefit of staff of the Commission, the regional economic communities, and national governments. The Institute is also a collaborating partner of the Economic Affairs Department of the Commission for the editorial production of the *African Integration Review*. Furthermore, the Institute is leading a study for the Human Resources, Science and Technology Department of the Commission on the

feasibility of the establishment of an African Research Council. In addition to these existing collaborative relations, it is planned during 2011 to rebuild a programmatic partnership with the Gender Directorate of the Commission around a short course and a series of policy dialogues.

## **VI. IDEP IN THE UN SYSTEM**

14. The strengthening of IDEP's working relations with the AUC during 2010 has gone hand in hand with an expansion of the Institute's programmatic links with agencies of the United Nations system. At one level, collaboration with the substantive divisions of gathered pace in earnest with a joint activity organized and hosted by IDEP and the Governance and Public Administration Division in Banjul, the Gambia, on the reform of public finance management in Africa. IDEP and the Division also developed a joint proposal on governance and development with a view to the launching of a short course during 2011. Another joint proposal between the Institute and the Division was completed and should lead to initiative to be launched in 2011 for training on the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) for new and repeat countries. Discussions on collaboration were carried further with ECA's African Centre for Gender and Social Development; they are expected to result in programmatic initiatives in training, research and policy dialogue. The Commission's African Trade Policy Centre and the Institute also jointly hosted a short course in Dakar on trade negotiations; 25 senior trade officials from across the continent participated.

15. Outside ECA, collaboration with the UNDP Gender Team in New York resulted in the piloting of a new short course on gender and economic policy management in Africa. It involved the convening of a training-of-trainers session and the organization of the first substantive training session. The course was run in English and French and will be repeated in 2011. It has the potential to become IDEP's flagship training activity in the field of gender and economic development. An agreement was also signed with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), now integrated into UN Women, to carry out a joint study of the gender dimensions of the work of African planning commissions. The study was formally launched in the last quarter of 2010 and it is billed as a major effort which will set the stage for more initiatives, with African planning institutions including capacity-building and policy dialogues. The Institute also collaborated with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat in an online discussion on the key development challenges of the next decade, on which the United Nations could focus attention as the countdown to the 2015 target for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals begins. The long-established role which the Institute plays in the Department's United Nations Public Administration Network was reaffirmed with its participation in a meeting held in China during the second half of the year. Discussions are also under way with the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development on collaboration around the interface of social and economic development in Africa; it is hoped to launch an initiative in 2011.

16. Following up on aspects of the resolution on IDEP adopted at the 2010 Conference of Ministers and the related Ministerial Statement, the Chair of the IDEP Governing Council led a team of four senior staff including the IDEP Director to New York during the course of the year to argue the case for a doubling of the United Nations contribution to the IDEP regular budget to US\$ 1 million a year from 2011. Ministers had noted in the resolution that such an increase

would go a long way towards matching the renewed commitment to the Institute which member States were showing, for example by paying their annual assessed contributions.

17. On the back of the ECA working visit to the United Nations Secretariat in New York, an outreach to the Africa Group of Permanent Representatives and Ambassadors was also organized in order to brief them on the process of renewal at the Institute, update them on its needs, and seek their advice on the best mobilizing support for the Institute within the Economic and Social Council and other related forums. The briefing session with the Africa Group went extremely well; the Ambassadors were highly receptive and shared their perspectives of the historic challenges the Institute faced, its current status and role, and the pool of opportunities which they were prepared to tap by working together with the UNECA and IDEP leaderships.

18. The request for an increase in funding from the United Nations to the regular budget of the Institute is still pending, with the Office of the Controller suggesting that, in addition to the 2010 resolution of the Conference of Ministers, an equally favourable resolution of the ECOSOC would need to be passed so that the General Assembly could enable the system to increase the resources earmarked for the work of the Institute. The Chair of the IDEP Governing Council has reiterated his resolve to pursue the matter further in 2011 until a satisfactory outcome is achieved.

## **VII. SIGNIFICANT PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION REVIVAL AT IDEP**

19. The emphasis which was placed on programme renewal and expansion in the IDEP Strategic Plan approved by its Governing Council at its forty-seventh session and noted by the 2010 Conference of Ministers translated into the organization of activities that added up to make 2010 one of the most vibrant years since the founding of the Institute. Twelve short courses, five development seminars, three policy dialogues and four needs assessment missions were the core programme activities that were carried out. The policy dialogues and one needs assessment were carried out on a decentralized basis and involved different models of creative collaboration with governmental institutions in the host country that will be further refined and increasingly deployed in the future.

20. The policy dialogues marked IDEP's return, in a significant way, to research-based activities that constitute the flipside of the Institute's capacity development and training work. The biggest of the dialogues brought together ministers, senior officials, senior academics, representatives of the organized private sector and civil-society leaders from 17 African countries to review the experience of development across Africa after 50 years of independence. The short courses hosted in 2010 featured 25 participants each and saw the Institute hosting the largest number of trainees in any single year since it was established in 1962. Altogether, some 250 trainees benefited directly from IDEP's capacity development and training activities in 2010 (compared to 154 in 2009). Themes covered in the short courses included agricultural, industrial and trade policies; regional integration; gender in economic policy-making; and subregional trade services. Full details of the programme of work that was accomplished in 2010 are included in the Management Report for the year which has been circulated.



## **IX. REVIVAL OF STAFF MORALE AND ENHANCEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY**

21. The full calendar of activities carried out by the Institute in 2010, was calculated as recording a performance level of 81 per cent in terms of the criteria laid down in the United Nations Integrated Management and Document Information System. This is by any standard an outstanding level of institutional performance. Considering where the Institute was coming from, it can be qualified as evidence of tremendous progress. The full calendar of work implemented in 2010 and the relevance and visibility that went with it were clearly critical to the new credibility which the Institute has begun, once again, to enjoy in various circles; they also went a long way to boost staff morale and productivity after a period of despair and slack. The upgrading of staff skills in order to enhance the capacity of the Institute to carry an expanded workload became a matter of priority concern during the year. To this end, new recruitments was undertaken in 2010 that should boost institutional capacity in the areas of policy research, policy dialogues and development communications. During 2011, it is planned to undertake further recruitment to fill vacancies that will arise on account of retirements, while a more vigorous effort will be made to invest in opportunities for training and skills renewal for the personnel. As an incentive to staff, all contracts which were hitherto issued every three months were first extended to six months and then a full year. The sense of stability and predictability which longer contracts will offer staff will be beneficial both to them and to the Institute.

## **X. MAJOR BUDGETARY SUCCESSES**

22. Ministers will recall that the budgetary target which was set for 2010 was US\$ 5 million, a very ambitious objective indeed considering that the real expenditure registered in previous years was a small fraction of this amount. The Institute is pleased to report to the 2011 Conference that this target was not only met but exceeded in a substantial way, as the Institute registered over US\$ 6 million in resource inflows, most of it from member States and institutional partners. A number of countries cleared the arrears of their assessed contributions, but 2010 will also go down as the year in which the highest number of countries ever paid their current assessed contributions to the Institute. Big successes were also registered with the mobilization of extrabudgetary funds, with the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, the European Commission, the Ford Foundation, the Government of the Netherlands, the Swedish International Development Cooperation agency, the United Nations Development Fund for Women/United Nation Women and the United Nations Development Programme leading the way. On account of the spectacular growth in the flow of resources, the management is able once again to begin to contemplate the building of reserves that could serve to cushion the Institute in periods of financial drought. A new United Nations-authorized interest-yielding account was opened in New York to replace the previous non-interest-bearing account that the Institute operated, which was closed at the end of 2010.

23. Going into 2011, the IDEP management will intensify efforts to get member States with big arrears to clear them while encouraging others to meet their current obligations. Further steps will also be taken to diversify the sources of extrabudgetary support. It is clear that in the current international environment of economic crises and austerity, the challenge of getting significant funding commitments from donors will be tougher. Indeed, the Netherlands government has

already notified the Institute that on account of the deep cuts in Dutch official development assistance and the emergence of a new administration that has strong views on aid, Dutch support to the work of IDEP is being kept on hold until further notice. It is a small sign of the difficult and changing times, but the Institute will do its best to rise to the occasion in 2011 and beyond.

## **XI. IDEP AT THE 2010 CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS**

24. Among the statutory reports tabled before the 2010 Conference was one on the Institute and the progress made with its repositioning. Ministers welcomed the report on the progress which the GC had made in steering the Institute to new heights and bringing the repositioning exercise to a satisfactory conclusion with the adoption of a new strategic plan. The Ministerial Statement which was issued at the end of the Conference included references to the importance of a revamped IDEP to the development strategy of African countries and the need for the Institute to be supported to assume a leading role as a capacity development and policy resource for African governments in a period of global change. A call was also issued for an increase in the budgetary allocation to the Institute from the United Nations in order to enable it to respond to the needs of African member States. Ministers pledged to continue to sustain their own support to its work and finances. The resolution on IDEP was forwarded, as is customarily the case, to the United Nations Economic and Social Council in New York for information and follow-up. In 2011, however, it is planned that the ministerial resolution to be passed on IDEP will be used as a basis for follow-up resolution in the Economic and Social Council so that the United Nations Secretariat can be enabled to take steps to respond to whatever requests ministers may have formulated.

## **XII. LOOKING AHEAD TO 2011**

25. Important incremental progress has certainly been registered in the collective efforts that have been deployed over the last few years to rebuild IDEP and the bases for its work. Those efforts culminated in a very vibrant 2010 programmatic year and this vibrancy was refracted into all aspects of institutional life. But 2010's achievements represent only a foretaste of even bigger potentialities for the Institute. It is for this reason that energies must continue to be deployed creatively to build on the gains that have been made while striving to open new frontiers. The work programme that has been proposed for 2011 is designed with this ambition in mind. The Institute has planned for and is looking forward to another successful outing that can only cement its status as a prime resource for its member States.