



Economic Commission for Africa
Committee on Gender and Social Development
Second session
Addis Ababa, 11 and 12 October 2017
Item 7 of the agenda*
Consideration and adoption of the report of the second session

Report of the second session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development

Introduction

1. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), through its Social Development Policy Division, convened the second session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development in Addis Ababa on 11 and 12 October 2017, under the theme: “Achieving the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063: from planning to implementation of the gender and social development goals for inclusive and sustainable development”.

2. The Committee was formed through a merger of the Committee on Women in Development and the Committee on Human and Social Development. It is a statutory body of experts and policymakers, entrusted with providing guidance and advice to the Social Development Policy Division through the review of activities implemented during the biennium 2016–2017, and strategic vision and direction for the biennium 2018–2019.

3. The aim of the second session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development was to review progress on gender and social development in Africa, and identify achievements, challenges, and implementation gaps to ensure the desired impacts. In particular, the Committee provided guidance and expert opinion on the Division’s priorities and activities, and made recommendations for strengthening ECA programmes to ensure that the needs of member States and regional economic communities were better served, taking into account the regional context and country specificities. Conclusions and recommendations were adopted at the end of the two-day session.

4. The meeting was attended by representatives from the following member States: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Egypt, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were also represented: the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

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(UN-Women) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The list of participants will be circulated in an information document.

I. Opening of the session

5. The representative of Malawi, who had served as chair of the outgoing Bureau, opened the session and welcomed participants. Joseph Kazima, in his opening remarks, conveyed greetings from the Minister of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare of Malawi, and on behalf of his Government, expressed his appreciation to African member States for electing Malawi as Chair of the Bureau for the first session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development.

6. He reminded the distinguished representatives that the theme of the first session was “Sustainable Development Goals in Africa: Enhancing gender-responsive and social development policies”. The outcome of that session was action-oriented conclusions and recommendations, which illustrated a collective commitment from member States to translate the 2030 Agenda into measurable actions and results. He reported that several actions had been taken by a number of countries and in response to that, ECA was requested to implement the recommendations of the first session of the Committee, which were shared during the second session.

7. He stressed the importance of implementing the commitments that had been undertaken and emphasized the need for a timely response by Governments to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into national planning processes and national priorities. He added that the synergies would enable member States to implement gender and social development goals, including poverty, inequality and unemployment, in particular of women and young people, rapid urbanization and the pressing need to harness the demographic dividend.

8. Welcoming remarks followed from Giovannie Biha, the Deputy Executive Secretary, Knowledge Delivery, ECA, who expressed gratification that 44 member States were represented at the session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development. She said it demonstrated a commitment on the part of countries to integrate the social perspectives of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

9. The Deputy Executive Secretary, Knowledge Delivery said that the 2030 Agenda was the most ambitious anti-poverty and pro-planet agenda ever adopted by the United Nations, and that Africa contributed substantially to the agenda. She mentioned the aspiration of the Secretary-General, that the 2030 Agenda be founded on leadership, cohesion, accountability and results.

10. The Deputy Executive Secretary, Knowledge Delivery reported that ECA had taken the lead in ensuring the synergies of both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, which provided the framework to guide both planning and implementation while facilitating monitoring of progress by member States.

11. Noting the substantial increase in demand from member States of ECA’s knowledge products, policy advice, technical assistance, and support for capacity strengthening, and alerting member States to the notable progress on gender and social outcomes that had been achieved, she said that two challenges remained: implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Africa 2063 and to “leave no one behind”. She welcomed the guidance and suggestions on mapping the future direction of ECA on gender and social development for the coming biennia, which would enable the Commission to deepen its analytical work in various aspects of gender and social development and to continue to support member States in their efforts to achieve the Goals and targets enshrined in the

2030 Agenda. She concluded by thanking the representatives for supporting the work of ECA and wished them fruitful deliberations.

12. Her Excellency Alemitu Omdu, State Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia welcomed over 70 representatives of member States, regional economic communities and agencies within the United Nations system to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and to the second session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development on the theme, “Achieving the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063: from planning to implementation of the gender and social development goals for inclusive and sustainable development”.

13. She recounted that Ethiopia had fully integrated the Millennium Development Goals in its national development plans and achieved remarkable outcomes through effective government leadership and the coordination of all stakeholders. She added that Ethiopia pursued pro-poor policies, implementing development plans and programmes that were in line with global development agendas, including the Brussels Programme of Action and the Istanbul Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries, which led to remarkable and positive outcomes in economic growth and sustainable development.

14. In addition, the State Minister observed that a national review had confirmed that the policies and environment in place enabled the effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and political commitment, which was demonstrated by the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals and Ethiopia’s second phase of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II) in the national planning mechanisms and was recently approved by the Council of Ministers and ratified by the House of the People’s Representatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FORE).

15. She reiterated that integrating gender and social development goals in national plans was important, and commented that Ethiopia had, among its interventions, introduced pro-poor policies and strategies, and a decentralized administrative system, which facilitated the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and was a way of operationalizing both the global and regional agendas, while leveraging financial and human resources in the country.

16. She urged other member States to embrace monitoring and reporting tools such as the Voluntary National Reporting, which could enhance sharing of progress, lessons and experiences that were worth replicating in other development contexts.

17. Her Excellency Alemitu Omdu thanked member States for participating in the meeting, invited them to experience the rich culture of the country and commended ECA for convening the second session of the Committee.

II. Election of the Bureau

18. The following countries were unanimously elected:

Chair:	Madagascar (Southern Africa)
First Vice-Chair:	Burkina Faso (West Africa)
Second Vice-Chair:	Mozambique (Eastern Africa)
Rapporteurs:	Chad (Central Africa) Tunisia (North Africa)

19. In handing over the reins and the chairpersonship to the incoming Bureau, the outgoing Chair thanked the outgoing Bureau represented by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania and South Sudan for effective teamwork and a job well done. He recalled that the first Bureau elected at the first session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development had an important job ahead of them to steer the Social Development Policy Division and guide their programmatic work in order to meet the demands of the new 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. He noted that, during their tenure, they proposed benchmarks guided by the theme of the first session: “Sustainable Development Goals in Africa: Enhancing gender-responsive and social development policy”, through which the work of ECA on gender and social development should be delivered. The Chair reported that the Bureau was able to work efficiently with the Social Development Policy Division to ensure that recommendations made during the Committee’s first session were taken by the Conference of Ministers to the Economic and Social Council and ultimately to the General Assembly.

20. He congratulated the incoming Chair and Bureau members for their election and expressed his confidence in the Bureau to ably steer the Committee and to meet the objectives of the session. To conclude, he officially handed over to the incoming Chair.

21. The incoming Chair expressed her gratitude on behalf of her country for the selection of Madagascar as the Chair of the second session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development. She thanked the outgoing Chair and Bureau for delivery on their mandate in an effective and efficient manner. She reiterated her commitment on behalf of her country, together with all the Bureau members, to deliver on such important matters of responsibility.

III. Consideration and adoption of the agenda and programme of work

22. Following the election of the new Bureau, the agenda and programme of work of the Committee’s second session were adopted unanimously by the Committee. The agenda was as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of the Bureau.
3. Consideration and adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
4. Reports to the Committee on Gender and Social Development — reporting and discussion:
 - (a) Subprogramme 9 — Social development policy;
 - (b) Subprogramme 6 — Gender and women in development.
5. Parallel sessions:
 - (a) Informality and inequality in Africa;
 - (b) The demographic dividend in Africa: an entry point to implementing and monitoring the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development;
 - (c) An urban lens on national development planning;
 - (d) Women’s economic empowerment: boosting female entrepreneurship in Africa.

6. General discussion on the theme of the second session, “Achieving the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063: from planning to implementation of the gender and social development goals for inclusive and sustainable development”:
 - (a) Presentation of the Issues Paper;
 - (b) Four breakout sessions;
 - (c) Reporting back on the breakout sessions and discussion on the way forward.
7. Consideration and adoption of the report of the second session.
8. Closing of the session.

IV. Reports to the Committee on Gender and Social Development — reporting and discussion

A. Subprogramme 9 — Social development policy

1. Presentation

23. Presenting the report of subprogramme 9 on social development policy, Saurabh Sinha, Chief, Employment and Social Protection, Social Development Policy Division, outlined the mandates of the subprogramme and the different modalities used to deliver its work programme, including through analytical work, policy and advisory support, development of capacity-building tools, promotion of policy dialogues and knowledge sharing, and training and capacity strengthening. He further provided details on the work undertaken during the period 2016–2017 by each section under the subprogramme, namely, the Population and Youth Section, the Urbanization Section, and the Employment and Social Protection Section.

24. He highlighted the contribution made by the Social Development Policy Division in the preparation of the 2017 ECA flagship report, *Urbanization and Industrialization for Africa’s Transformation*. He brought to the attention of the experts the support provided to member States by ECA under its policy and advisory services in the areas of urbanization, migration, social protection and youth. He also provided insights in relation to the knowledge tools developed by the three sections, including the Guidebook on integrating urbanization in national development plans, African Social Development Index (ASDI), the Youth Policy Toolbox, and the Operational Guide on the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development Beyond 2014.

25. Continuing to outline the work undertaken to provide training and build capacities in collaboration with the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), the presenter noted that strong partnerships were built during the period with other United Nations agencies, member States, the African Union Commission, regional economic communities, and research institutes on inclusive and sustainable development in implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

26. He concluded his presentation by highlighting some of the planned activities for the period 2018–2019 in support of member States, including policy research on youth; strengthening of national capacities in production of quality urban data; capacitating planners to integrate urbanization in national plans; and a review of interlinkages between urbanization and agricultural transformation. Activities would also aim to enhance the capacities of member States to contribute to the achievement of a Global Compact on Migration; design and implement suitable policies to address the challenges of informal employment and skills mismatch, especially for youth and women; monitor

investments in social protection policies and programmes, and contribute to achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals on social protection; and develop suitable policies to implement the African Regional Nutrition Strategy while contributing to reduce human exclusion and achieve the targets on child stunting.

2. Discussion

27. In the ensuing discussion, representatives expressed their appreciation for the quality of the presentations and the work undertaken by ECA since the first session.

28. Further details were requested regarding the guideline on urbanization and national development planning, and whether gender was mainstreamed in that tool. In that regard, the Secretariat further elaborated that integrating urbanization, gender and social development for inclusive growth constituted important considerations in the guidebook.

29. Some participants expressed the view that linking urbanization to national development planning was important, given the new challenges faced by member States, such as climate change, which called for integrated responses.

30. Participants expressed their interest to apply ECA's tools for gender and social development to guide national policy formulation, planning and implementation, while there was a need to address some of the barriers such as the limited financial resources available at national level. In that respect, the secretariat clarified its emphasis on implementing its tools with national partners, through national implementation teams for data collection, capacity-building and implementation. It was noted that the process and implementation was fully owned by member States.

31. The point was emphasized during the discussion that there was a need to consider the adaptation of ECA's tools and guidelines to better respond to post-conflict countries in the continent, and their specific contextual needs and priorities.

32. ECA was called upon to provide further support in implementing and assessing the policy implications of its tools, to support member States in integrating urbanization in national development planning processes, and to strengthen its collaboration efforts within the United Nations system and with the African Union Commission in supporting member States to implement, monitor and evaluate the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

B. Subprogramme 6 — Gender and women in development

1. Presentation

33. Presenting the work of Subprogramme 6 on gender and women in development, Ngone Diop, Senior Gender Advisor, underscored that the mandate of the subprogramme was to support member States to achieve gender quality and women's empowerment. The presentation focused on the main achievements for the biennium 2016–2017, highlighting policy influence, results achieved, lessons learned and the main challenges faced by the subprogramme. It also discussed the planned activities for the biennium 2018–2019.

34. Among knowledge products, the African Centre for Gender has undertaken a number of policy research projects that have resulted in reports on the following themes: "Women's economic empowerment in Africa: boosting female entrepreneurship"; "Securing women's rights to social protection in Africa"; "Women in small-scale and artisanal mining"; and "Gender and climate change". In addition, the African Centre for Gender continued to expand the implementation of the African

Gender and Development Index. The speaker also reported on the strategic partnership developed and maintained with the African Union Commission, and within the United Nations system, civil society organizations, research institutions and academia in order to create synergy to better serve member States.

35. In addition, tailored technical support and advisory services were provided to member States and to the African Union Commission, at their request, with the view to supporting their efforts to accelerate achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment across the continent. ECA also aimed to lead by example. The recent results from the gender marker exercise showed that ECA needed to make more of an effort to ensure that its outputs and budget catered to gender issues more effectively.

2. Discussion

36. **Measurement of gender equality and social exclusion.** The Committee commended ECA for developing tools to assist its member States to promote and monitor progress in gender equality and social development. In particular, the African Gender and Development Index and the African Social Development Index were highlighted as valuable tools to assist African countries in measuring their performance in the promotion of gender equality and monitoring progress in meeting commitments made in relation to human rights instruments on women's rights and in reducing social exclusion, respectively. Although ECA supported countries technically and financially to implement those tools at the national level, it was envisaged that over time, countries would be able to use such tools using domestic resources in order to improve the sustainability of those interventions.

37. **Women's economic empowerment.** The Committee highlighted that despite the fact that a number of programmes had been implemented in a number of African countries, economic empowerment of women was far from being reached. The Committee called upon ECA to strengthen its programme on women's economic empowerment with a view to supporting member States to design effective programmes and policies. In that regard, Senegal requested the support of ECA to set up a national forum for women entrepreneurs in that country.

38. **Access to and control over finance.** The Committee noted with concern that women in African countries continued to face barriers in accessing finance. One of the main barriers was the lack of access to economic resources, including land, that could be used as collateral. Although popular, microcredit schemes had not proved to be a sustainable solution and usually catered to an urban population. It was emphasized that women needed financial literacy to manage loans of any size to avoid indebtedness.

39. **ECA-AfDB Joint Gender Index.** A representative of the African Development Bank commented on the joint index being developed by ECA and the African Development Bank, at the request of member States. The Index, which would be based on the ECA's African Gender and Development Index and the African Development Bank's Africa Gender Index, was expected to be launched in 2018.

40. **Social protection.** The Committee raised concerns about the significant proportion of women who did not have access to social protection, especially those working in the informal sector and domestic workers. The possibility was raised of introducing innovative mechanisms of social protection, including voluntary insurance schemes for women and men working in the informal sector.

41. **Integrating a gender perspective in national budgets.** The Committee noted the activities of subprogramme 6 in ensuring that a gender perspective was integrated into the work of ECA. In particular, the Committee highlighted ECA's gender parity marker, which provided an indicative measure of the resources being allocated to the promotion of gender equality. Several member States requested support to adapt the gender parity marker developed by ECA as part of their gender budgeting initiatives.

42. **ECA's support to the African Union Commission.** The Committee noted the support that ECA was providing to the African Union Commission to compile the annual Gender Scorecard, which was based on the African Gender and Development Index. Such support should be strengthened and expanded with a view to assist countries to promote gender equality and inclusive growth.

V. Parallel sessions

A. Informality and inequality in Africa

1. Presentation

43. In presenting a report on informality and inequality in Africa, Adrian Gauci, Economic Affairs Officer, Employment and Social Protection Section, Social Development Policy Division, stated that the initial inequality and the pace and nature of economic growth in Africa had stymied the positive effects of changes in poverty levels. The slow pace of change had exacerbated existing inequalities and poverty reduction had not been commensurate with growth. Furthermore, economic growth had not created enough employment opportunities, and as a result, the large informal sector remained stagnant despite the positive economic upturn during the period 2000-2015. Informal workers, mostly young people and women, ranged from poorly educated individuals for whom informal jobs was the only alternative to unemployment (the "involuntarily" informal), to the highly educated young urban adults who had opted to be "voluntarily" employed in the informal sector, or run informal enterprises, to, for example, avoid cumbersome regulations or taxes.

44. The common features of informality used in the report focused on low productivity and low skills, particularly for subsistence informality. The predominance of young people and women in informal employment as a reflection of their lack of opportunity to participate in the formal labour market. Furthermore, it should be noted that acquiring the basic skills of literacy and numeracy were not homogenous across all groups. Primary school completion rates remained low and the basic skills were insufficient for skill profiles demanded by the labour market. That tended to crystallize informality and its link to inequalities with low productivity and insufficient social protection. The results of the research were of critical importance in implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and providing synergies. The need to mainstream employment as a top priority in Africa must be complemented by sectoral policies anchored in equity within the context of "leaving no one behind". Furthermore, the point was made that leveraging the informal sector for recalibrating training and productivity enhancing was vital. Finally, he observed that gender-sensitive policies must be cross-cutting across national and sectoral plans.

45. The comment was made that it was therefore important to establish clear linkages between informality and inequality for targeted policy interventions. A good understanding of the bidirectional linkage between informality and inequality in Africa would provide empirically-grounded information for the design of more inclusive policies and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

2. Discussion

46. In the ensuing discussion, participants underscored the importance of a clear working definition of the term "informality" to allow for measurement and data collection. They noted the pervasive nature of informality in Africa in general and in member States in particular. The participants observed that informality was not a homogeneous phenomenon and as a result, it should be broken down into parts, to ensure that interventions were well targeted. They

further observed that informality was driven by a number of factors, including lack of inclusive growth, exogenous shocks and recessions. The participants noted that women were disproportionately and overly represented in the informal sector. As examples, 63 per cent and 78 per cent of the women in Cabo Verde and in South Sudan, respectively, were working in the informal sector. In that regard, a participant noted that there was a clear distinction between voluntary and involuntary informality. The point was raised during the discussion because involuntary informality was seen as a more serious challenge and because of the composition of vulnerable groups, such as women and young people.

47. The distinction between extreme and moderate poverty, using World Bank figures, was focused on and the comment was made that national poverty lines should be used as they reflected the country situation. The point was made that there was a need for robust, reliable data disaggregated by gender and age. Another point that emerged was that the lack of quality education was one of the drivers for entering in the informal sector.

48. Participants also shared the country experiences and specific policies related to employment and vulnerable groups. Among the countries covered were Cameroon, Chad, Ghana, Senegal, South Sudan and Zambia. The general thrust of the social protection programmes was to assist in productivity enhancement and training of women and young people working in the informal sector.

B. The demographic dividend in Africa: an entry point to implementing and monitoring the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development

1. Presentation

49. In his presentation of the report on the demographic dividend in Africa, William Muhwava, Chief, Population and Youth Section, Social Development Policy Division at ECA, said that the demographic dividend was a boost to socioeconomic development expected when countries enter a phase of low age-dependency during their fertility transition. He commented that the demographic dividend would be used as an entry point to capture the interconnections of population to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In that respect, he added that the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development monitoring framework had been developed and would be available to member States to guide implementation of the commitments of the Addis Ababa Declaration in a way that was comprehensive, compact and integrative. The presentation highlighted that young people aged 15 to 24 years constituted a substantial proportion of the population in Africa, which was expected to increase rapidly in the future. According to United Nations projections, the number of young people aged between 15 and 24 years in Africa was expected to increase from 226 million in 2015 to 321 million in 2030.

50. It was noted that education was a critical pillar for attaining the demographic dividend and that young people in Africa were increasingly acquiring higher education and skills acquisition for employment. The speaker added that secondary education enrolment had expanded from 25 per cent in 1999 to 53 per cent in 2013. Moreover, enrolment in tertiary education in Africa had grown at almost twice the global average and faster than any other region in the world. The point was made that an estimated 59 per cent of young people between 20 and 24 years were expected to have secondary education by 2030. Their potential contribution to economic growth and development, according to the speaker, therefore remained largely untapped since not all of them could be absorbed into the formal labour market.

51. The comment was made that, currently, young people in Africa constituted 35 per cent of the working age population but comprised 60 per cent of the total unemployed population. In the past 10 years, over 37 million wage-paying jobs had been created against the approximately 110 million young people who joined the workforce in that period. The speaker pointed out that even more problematic was that the level of unemployment was at times higher among the most educated, and that young African women were even worse off in the labour market as they faced numerous other barriers. It was noted that the cost of excluding women was high; it was estimated that between 2010 and 2014, the region lost \$95 billion and that in 2014 alone, the losses peaked at \$105 billion owing to gender gaps in the labour markets.

52. The speaker remarked that most of the activities focused on addressing current youth issues and concerns, while alternative policy options and scenarios on the future of youth and development were almost non-existent. He pointed out that there was a need for practical, future-oriented policies and related programmes to engage young people effectively in all aspects of the development of their countries and of the continent as a whole. He added that a new emergent and integrated Africa could be fully realized only if its demographic advantage — the large population of young people — was mobilized and equipped to help drive Africa's integration, peace and development agenda. In concluding, he noted that, as part of its contribution to Africa's socioeconomic transformation agenda, research would result in alternative policy options and scenarios for young people and development futures in the continent.

2. Discussion

53. In the ensuing discussion, participants commended the Population and Youth Section for developing an Operational Guide on the Addis Ababa Declaration, an instrument that would offer countries clear and specific guidance for implementing the post-2014 International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and also serve as the means for monitoring the implementation of the Declaration.

54. It was pointed out that planning and programming in most African Union member States had moved beyond the sectoral approach, to adopt a multisectoral one. It was emphasized that, as a consequence, in designing population policies and programmes, there was a need to involve a range of individuals, including researchers and others in the academic sector, politicians, religious and civic leaders, development practitioners, and representatives from various communities.

55. One participant informed the Committee that his country had successfully involved faith-based agencies and religious leaders to clarify the role of Islam on matters related to population and the demographic dividend. He further offered the comment that his country had adopted a holistic approach in dealing with population issues. A number of participants remarked that an early age at marriage was delaying the onset of the demographic transition. In addition, a number of representatives commented that laws banning early marriage had been enacted by their legislative bodies.

56. The relevance of demographic data and research was recognized in informing policy formulation, implementation and monitoring. In addition, the existence of African traditions, values and practices, which continued to support a large family norm, was taken into consideration, as was the fact that young people, especially girls, continued to drop out of school. Moreover, it was noted that the African population was youthful, experienced poor access to appropriate health, was less skilled, poor and deprived, with limited opportunities for employment, access to regular incomes and livelihood, and had unequal access to resources. In concluding, the Committee recommended

that ECA support member States in implementing and monitoring the demographic dividend through the Addis Ababa Operational Guide.

57. While recognizing the importance of the demographic dividend, participants noted that there were population subgroups needing attention, including infants, the elderly and women. In that regard, the point was made that using the age structural transition approach on population dynamics should be central to the work of ECA.

58. The Committee also suggested that the following mechanisms be put in place for monitoring progress on the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development:

- (a) ECA to work with Member States to develop an advocacy strategy on the review of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development +5 (International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action +25), which would be used to get buy-in from member States to fully support and participate in the review;
- (b) Member States to consider and initiate domestic resource mobilization for the Addis Abba Declaration reviews. A resource mobilization strategy would be developed;
- (c) Member States to produce regular reports on the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and the Addis Abba Declaration;
- (d) ECA to assist member States to set up multisectoral national committees to provide oversight for the review of the Addis Abba Declaration;
- (e) Member States to appoint focal persons to coordinate and liaise with ECA and the African Union Commission and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on all matters relating to review processes and relevant to the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and the Addis Abba Declaration;
- (f) ECA to urgently develop methodology and indicators to facilitate standardized reporting across Member States;
- (g) ECA, UNFPA and partners to assist in building the capacity of member States to monitor progress on the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and the Addis Abba Declaration.

C. An urban lens on national development planning

1. Presentation

59. Presenting the report, “An urban lens in national development planning”, Edlam Yemeru, Chief, Urbanization Section, gave an overview of the importance of urbanization for structural transformation and inclusive growth in Africa. She explained the need to integrate the latter in national development plans of African countries, and began the presentation by explaining the dynamics of urbanization in Africa. She placed special emphasis on how swiftly urbanization was expanding and the magnitude of it, as well as the multifaceted impacts it would have on all African States.

60. Furthermore, it was observed that although urbanization offered significant opportunities, it was a necessary but not sufficient condition for growth. The quality of urbanization mattered immensely. Therefore, in order to

promote high-quality urbanization, enormous efforts based on a strategic and multi-sectoral vision were required.

61. With regard to national development planning, the point was made that urbanization was not already strategically integrated in national development plans in the continent. That gap must be addressed if African countries were to harness the potential of urbanization for structural transformation and inclusive growth. That was especially important considering that the opportunities associated with urbanization were transitory.

62. The speaker concluded by pointing out that a commitment to harness urbanization for structural transformation had been made at the global and regional levels in the form of the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2063 and the New Urban Agenda. However, as urban issues were multisectoral, the harnessing of urbanization could only be done by integrating it into national development planning — for which ECA was in the process of preparing a guidebook to assist member States.

2. Discussion

63. In the ensuing discussion, participants welcomed and expressed their appreciation for the innovative approach of ECA to support member States in leveraging urbanization for structural transformation as timely and highly relevant. It was emphasized that, given the scale and scope of the challenges of urbanization, as well as the associated opportunities, there was an urgent need for effective policy responses linked to national development planning, which could minimize externalities and optimize advantages.

64. Participants also highlighted specific examples of how support from ECA to member States in integrating urbanization in national development planning was already having an impact. They further outlined current and forthcoming opportunities for ECA to provide additional assistance to strengthen urbanization in national development planning, and voiced their intention to request such assistance.

65. Participants noted that for most African countries, the priority and focus in terms of development planning remained on the primary sectors, rural areas and agriculture; and, as a result, a paradigm shift was needed in the continent to give urbanization adequate consideration. In that regard, the work of ECA was seen as being of paramount importance.

66. Participants noted that although in general urbanization was included in their development plans or national urban policies, there was still scope to more fully integrate it in development planning from a strategic and cross-sectoral perspective linked to long-term national and sector priorities. In that regard, the work of ECA, especially the present report, were crucial. In particular, coordination across concerned entities remained a significant challenge.

67. Participants requested ECA to apply its guidebook on integrating urbanization in national development planning more widely to support member States in harnessing urban growth for inclusive growth, and, in particular, in strengthening coordination across sectors and entities. A number of key ongoing programmes and strategies for sustainable urbanization in some African countries and the relevance of the work of ECA to further strengthen them were highlighted. Moreover, it was noted that the work of ECA could focus on the following: opportunities linked to rising and changing patterns of urban consumption; the need to link housing and urban design to employment; silos between urban and economic planning authorities; strengthening urban data and statistics and the implications of climate change. In that regard, ECA could play an important role in supporting the regional implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

D. Women’s economic empowerment: boosting female entrepreneurship in Africa

68. The session was chaired by Lucile Bonkougou, the representative of Burkina Faso; the Rapporteur of the session was Martha Mbombo, the Permanent Secretary of Namibia. Following the election of the Chair and the Rapporteur, the results from recent research conducted by the African Centre were presented. Using more than 30 surveys from five selected countries, the Center analysed where women entrepreneurs and firm owners were located; what productivity differentials were observed between male and female entrepreneurs; and what constraints women in business faced. The final part of the presentation included a set of policy messages and recommendations centred on entrepreneurship promotion programmes, financial inclusion strategies and legal barriers on women in accessing economic opportunities.

69. Member States expressed appreciation for the comprehensive nature of the report, which entailed compiling a large number of data sources in order to analyse women’s economic empowerment through female entrepreneurship. During the ensuing discussion, member States emphasized that female entrepreneurship was a priority. They, however, indicated that they were in different stages of putting in place plans, frameworks and mechanisms to boost female entrepreneurship. Some were at the design phase while others were implementing programmes that were integrated into their national development plans. It appeared that the member States were using a variety of strategies to implement the programmes. For example, some countries had set financial inclusion strategies, while others were trying to come up with frameworks on women’s economic empowerment, financial inclusion and boosting female entrepreneurship.

70. The participants acknowledged that there was an overarching vision with regard to women’s economic empowerment in all countries. The political will was evident and the aspirations could be seen in the laws and strategies. Some countries were actively using quotas in order to ensure that female-owned enterprises represented 30 per cent of the enterprises that obtained government contracts.

71. The point was made that there were challenges at the planning and implementation phase. The plans were often not finalized. Hence the legal framework was not ready for the implementation phase. Another challenge was sectoral segregation that left women in less lucrative sectors or at the lower levels of the value-chain in a given sector. Productivity differentials were often rooted in such sectoral segregation.

VI. General discussion on the theme of the second session, “Achieving the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063: from planning to implementation of the gender and social development goals for inclusive and sustainable development”

A. Presentation of the Issues Paper

72. In his presentation, Jack Zulu, Social Affairs Officer, Employment and Social Protection Section, Social Development Policy Division, ECA said that the focus of the presentation was on the analysis of the key issues related to an effective implementation of the gender and social development goals in order to achieve inclusive and sustainable development in Africa. The presenter stressed the convergence between the global 2030 Agenda and the regional Agenda 2063, due to the fact that the latter was built on the Common African

Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, which was taken into account in the 2030 Agenda. He stressed the importance of the role of ECA, articulated around organizations of consultations that culminated in the CAP; tailored technical support and capacity-building to member States for the alignment of national development strategies and plans to both Agendas; and fostering interregional integration and facilitates international cooperation for Africa's inclusive and sustainable development.

73. The presenter concluded by recalling that, while Africa made important strides in implementing the Millennium Development Goals, persistent challenges remained and that the Goals remained unfinished business. The observation was also made that, by way of learning from such implementation, member States should take a wide range of actionable measures to accelerate an effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Following the main presentation, the discussants highlighted both future issues that needed to be addressed, and country perspectives.

74. In the ensuing discussion, participants commended ECA on the important work that it was doing on gender and social development, particularly in assisting member States to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals in national development plans. In that regard, participants shared relevant country experiences with specific attention to mainstreaming gender issues. Some countries had taken measures that required budgets of sectoral ministries to be passed only after obtaining a certificate of compliance with the national equity guidelines. To reinforce such good practices, member States requested the technical support of ECA. A representative requested ECA to provide assistance to her country's Equal Opportunity Commission on the gender marker. The comment was made that training and awareness-raising programmes had been implemented in many countries to support the effective implementation of national plans, which were responsive to the Goals enshrined in the 2030 Agenda.

B. and C. Four breakout sessions, reporting back on the breakout sessions and discussion on the way forward

75. In the respective parallel sessions, participants shared their country experiences, including challenges encountered in integrating gender and social development issues into the formulation processes of national plans. Challenges included the fact that issues related to gender and social development, especially gender issues, were not always addressed fully in the formulation process. The comment was made that significant effort had been invested in improving the statistical systems, however, data were missing in a number of sectors, including time use data (to measure unpaid care work); and the informal sector, and access to finance.

VII. Consideration and adoption of the report of the second session

76. The Committee commended ECA on the effective organization of its second session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development, both in terms of substance and logistics. The Committee thanked ECA for the successful organization and emphasized the comprehensiveness of the various reports submitted by the Commission for review.

77. ECA was also commended on the valuable role that it played in coordination and collaboration with member States, and in its continued outreach, to identify and respond to their needs.

78. Given the wide-ranging recommendations arising from each of the agenda items, the secretariat decided that, for the purposes of the present report, the recommendations would be presented in a consolidated manner, headed by the relevant agenda item, as follows.

A. Recommendations

1. Recommendations from agenda item 4: Reports to the Committee on Gender and Social Development – reporting and discussion

79. Recommendations arising from the discussion of agenda item 4(a) Subprogramme 9 – Social development policy, are as follows:

For member States:

- Further link urbanization to the national development planning processes and frameworks to better respond to this new emerging trend in the context of Africa's structural transformation.

For ECA:

- Further support by ECA in implementing and assessing the policy implications of the tools it has developed.
- Strengthen its collaboration with the African Union Commission and other parts of the United Nations system in supporting member States in implementing, monitoring and evaluating Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.

80. Recommendations arising from the discussion of agenda item 4(b) Subprogramme 6 – Gender and women in development, are as follows:

For member States:

- Take steps to institutionalize the implementation and use of the African Gender and Development Index at the national level in order to ensure ownership and sustainable integration of the index into evidence-based policymaking.
- Develop new programmes and policies and strengthen existing ones for the social protection of women in the informal sector and domestic workers in light of the African Union Spirework Action Plan, reaffirming the Algiers Declaration on Investment in Employment and Social Security, which sanctioned the work of the second session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment held in Algiers from 24 to 28 April 2017.
 - Strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems.

For ECA:

- Assist member States to adapt the ECA gender parity marker for use in the implementation of their gender budgeting initiatives.
- Strengthen the ECA programme on women's economic empowerment with a view to identifying effective interventions, including those related to promoting access to finance, for adoption by member States.
- Provide technical support to member States for the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes for women's economic empowerment.

For ECA and the African Union Commission:

- Strengthen partnerships to assist countries in promoting gender equality and inclusive growth, in line with agreed targets, the priority actions and strategic directions in Agenda 2063 and its Action Plan (2016-2026) for implementation; and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Increase cooperation between the two organizations with the objective of more effectively assisting countries in their efforts to promote gender equality and inclusive growth.

For ECA and the African Development Bank:

- Accelerate the process of developing a single African gender index, which is scheduled to be launched in 2018, and ensure that member States are actively involved in the process of the development and finalization of the index.

2. Recommendations from agenda item 5: Parallel sessions

81. Recommendations arising from the discussion of agenda item 5(a) Informality and inequality in Africa, are as follows:

For member States:

- Commit to increasing access to quality education.
- Facilitate sectoral policies that deal with employment, education, gender and youth in national plans and visions.
- Anchor equity in national plans to tackle income inequalities and inequalities of opportunities.
- Develop legislative frameworks to support women's economic empowerment.
- Standardize the definition of the term "informality" to allow for data collection and comparison across countries and over time. The definition of informality should take into account the formalization of the informal economy.
- Apply a comprehensive approach in efforts to reduce inequality by helping young people, especially women, avoid the "informality trap" based on the view that secondary education, skills, health and employment are linked.
- Support women to shift from the informal to the formal sector.
- Mainstream sectoral policies that deal with employment, education, gender and youth in national plans and visions to ensure synergies across the informality and inequality linkages.
- Anchor equity in national plans to tackle income inequalities and inequalities of opportunities.
- Conduct a thorough analysis, by States and Governments, of the drivers of informality, before prescribing policy solutions.
- Revise curricula to respond to the demands of the job market – in response to the fact that many young people with degrees in Africa are unemployed.
- Introduce policies, at the national level, for specific components of informality rather than formalizing the informal sector.
- Prioritize gender in all interventions that deal with informality and inequality.

- Standardize the definition of informality to allow for data collection and comparison.
- Promote gender, health and employment as a multisectoral phenomenon that is seamlessly linked and accordingly requires a holistic comprehensive approach.

For ECA:

- Develop policy briefs on monitoring of social investments and knowledge products for analysing various aspects of informality.
- Organize training sessions and provide technical assistance to improve the design and implementation of suitable policies on employment and social protection.
- Provide support in developing new curricula, especially for technical and vocational education, and align the curricula with the demands of the job market.
- Extend support in designing and implementing suitable policies for specific components of informality rather than attempting to formalize the informal sector.
- Provide assistance in prioritizing gender in all interventions that deal with informality and inequality.
- Conduct a thorough analysis of the drivers of informality, which vary from country to country, before prescribing policy solutions.
- Provide technical support and capacity-building, especially in monitoring and the follow-up of programmes.
- Assist in developing and applying the knowledge products and tools to enhance policy formulation and to more effectively conduct integrated research on gender and informality.

82. Recommendations arising from the discussion of agenda item 5(b) The demographic dividend in Africa: an entry point to implementing and monitoring the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development

For ECA:

- Work with member States to conduct research and studies for baseline indicators to inform national development planning as a basis for comparing future reviews of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population Development and to measure progress.
- Design guidelines to assist mainstreaming and integrating demographic variables at different stages of the policy process starting with the design stage.
- Provide capacity-building on the integration of population variables into development planning to all member States. Work with national population agencies to sensitize politicians and policymakers on the Addis Ababa Declaration and its implementation guide.
- Dedicate the necessary resources to briefing and training policymakers in applying the objectives of the Declaration on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend. Policy briefs would be useful tools to use for this outreach.
- Undertake advocacy campaigns on the demographic dividend in member States.

- Build, with partners, the capacity and expertise of member States for demographic dividend interventions. Good practices generated from the continent and the Asian countries should guide policy and programmatic interventions in member States.
- Continue work on migration and involve member States, focusing on addressing the structural drivers and enhancing the inherent potential benefits of migration by supporting the development of migration policies that are development-sensitive and, conversely, development policies that are migration-sensitive;
- Supports, as requested by member States, the provision of technical support and capacity-building, especially in monitoring and the follow-up of policies and programmes. Further, member States indicated that ECA should support them in applying its various knowledge products and tools to improve policy formulation and conduct an integrated research on gender and informality. The context to be taken into account is the harnessing of the demographic dividend, which is an entry point to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development.

83. Recommendations arising from the discussion of agenda item 5(c) An urban lens on national development planning, are as follows:

For ECA:

- Continue to support member States in their efforts to understand the centrality of urbanization and to better deal with urbanization issues, including by better linking urbanization to national development plans, national budgets and sectoral policies.
- Develop methodologies and tools and provide training sessions for national experts from all sectors to support capacity-building in this area, to support a common understanding of urban issues, promote linkages and ensure coordination in planning and implementation.
- Work closely with Governments to develop policy briefs on the central role of cities, with a special focus on employment, especially for the youth, gender equality and social inclusion, under the framework of structural transformation.
- Assist member States in strengthening urban data and statistics to support the integration of urbanization into national development planning.
- Facilitate policy dialogues at national and subregional levels, to convey these messages at the highest level of decision-making.
- Organize training sessions and provide technical assistance, as requested, on integrating urbanization into national development planning.
- Support member States in the implementation, monitoring and review of the New Urban Agenda.
- Conduct studies and compile experiences and practices on the opportunities arising from urbanization for inclusive and sustainable development and growth.

For member States:

- Strategically link national development planning with urbanization for structural transformation.
- Request that an urban lens be turned on national development planning.

84. Recommendations arising from the discussion of agenda item 5(d) Women's economic empowerment: boosting female entrepreneurship in Africa, are as follows:

- (a) **Capacity-building.** Efforts are needed at different levels.

For member States:

- Require help to develop national plans and tackle the challenges lying ahead in designing and implementing the plan.
- Develop legislative frameworks to support women's economic empowerment.
- Require innovative strategies to create financial institutions, such as women's banks or women's entrepreneurship funds, with simplified procedures to increase their access to and control over finance.
- Allocate an appropriate budget for building women's capacity and to support their economic empowerment, in line with the recommendation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

- (b) **Information production and sharing.** Setting up tools, portals and online platforms so as to have the opportunity to share best practices.

For member States:

- Share information around such practices, given that member States have implemented interesting strategies and programmes.

For ECA:

- Commit to remain available, on the part of international institutions in Africa, including ECA, to support member States with technical advisory services, capacity-building programmes and knowledge products and tools with particular attention given to rural women.
- Support member States in gaining access to information on procedures regarding access to finance, markets and business opportunities.

- (c) **Tackling barriers that hamper women's economic empowerment opportunities.** Women's unpaid care work and time poverty, negative norms on women's career progress, violence against women and harmful practices that limit women's human capital development and access to economic opportunities.

- (d) **Setting affirmative action.** Various mechanisms should be created to help women to gain equal access to government contracts i.e. for instance allocate specific quota (percentage) of public contracts to women.

3. Recommendations from agenda item 6: General discussion on the theme of the second session, "Achieving the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063: from planning to implementation of the gender and social development goals for inclusive and sustainable development"

85. Recommendations arising from the discussion of agenda items 6(b) and 6(c) on the breakout sessions, are as follows:

For member States:

- Encourage and strengthen the capacity of sectoral ministries and other government entities to align their policies, strategies, programmes and budget to Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Aspirations of Agenda 2063, using evidence-based planning.
- Strengthen institution mechanisms and coordination at the national level, such as through parliamentary committees on Sustainable Development Goals and gender, national steering committees, social development machineries and national planning committees on issues related to gender, urbanization and social development.

- Apply a cluster approach to encourage interconnectedness among different sectors and improve baseline data and quarterly or periodical reporting for data requirements.
- Apply a decentralized approach for implementing the 2030 Agenda.
- Commit resources at the subnational and local government levels to execute programmes.
- Set gender sensitive budgets in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063.

For ECA:

- Provide capacity support in aligning gender and social development issues.
- Extend technical advisory and capacity-building support for the establishment of national observatories and platforms for monitoring and evaluation of gender, urbanization and social policies.
- Provide support in strengthening statistical systems, indicator development, data collection, analyses and disaggregation of indicators related to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

86. In addition, participants made the following recommendations:

For member States:

- “Own” the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 by aligning them with medium-term plans, national strategies and priorities. Countries would need to strengthen their capacities on how to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in policies, budgets and programmes through evidence-based planning. Sectoral ministries should also align their plans to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.
- Strengthen institutional mechanisms and coordination at the national level such as parliamentary committees on the Sustainable Development Goals and gender, national steering committees, social development machineries, and national planning committees on issues of gender, urbanization and social development. A cluster approach for the interconnectedness of sectors was also deemed necessary. In order to do this, improved baseline data and quarterly or periodical reporting for data requirements were outlined.
- Take a decentralized approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda and the need to commit resources at subnational, local government levels to execute programmes.
- Explore new approaches and partnerships in support of the implementation of the Agendas at national and subnational levels such as strengthening domestic resource mobilization and public private partnerships for gender, social and urbanization programmes. In that regard, campaigns and advocacy programmes for the mobilization of national resources was highlighted. The need to promote widely the 2030 Agenda to all the stakeholders was emphasized.
- Develop gender-responsive budgets in line with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

For ECA:

- Request that ECA technical support be scaled up to integrate the gender and social development-related goals in national planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation processes.

- Request that ECA provide support in technical, advisory and capacity-building areas, on the establishment of national observatories and platforms for monitoring and evaluation of gender, urbanization and social policy.
- Request that ECA support the strengthening of national statistical systems, indicator development, data collection, analyses and disaggregation of indicators of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063.
- Ensure that the Chair of the Bureau of the Committee on Gender and Social Development attended and reported back on the outcomes of the second session of the Committee to the Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, scheduled for March-April 2018.

B. Adoption of the report

87. After due consideration, the Committee on Gender and Social Development adopted the report of the second session.

VIII. Closing of the session

88. Following final remarks from the Director, Social Development Policy Division, ECA, Thokozile Ruzvidzo, and the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.35 p.m. on Thursday, 12 October 2017.
