



Economic and Social Council

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Economic Commission for Africa
Committee on Gender and Social Development
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Terms of reference

Background

1. In 2012, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) embarked on a reform process that led to changes in its mandate, structure, programmes and intergovernmental mechanisms. Those changes were endorsed in resolution 908 (XLVI), and adopted at the forty-sixth session of ECA held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 25 and 26 March 2013, as part of the sixth joint annual meetings of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance. The same mandate is derived from the Decision of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union at its twentieth ordinary summit (Assembly/AU/Dec.450 (XX)) in January 2013, which endorsed the refocusing of ECA to support the transformation agenda of Africa.
2. The overall objective of ECA is to assist African countries in formulating and implementing policies and programmes that will lead to sustainable economic growth and inclusive development, with particular emphasis on accelerating structural transformation, in line with the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as well as the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2), and in the outcomes of other major United Nations conferences and international agreements since 1992.
3. As a direct outcome of the reform, the subprogramme on gender and social development policy has been enhanced. The subprogramme on social development (subprogramme 9) will mainstream human development and concerns, such as employment, population and young people, social protection, and urbanization issues, into regional and national policies and strategies. Activities in these vital areas will be complemented by promoting a better understanding of the delivery of social services in the context of urban planning and management. The subprogramme will undertake work on accelerating the process of achieving the goals set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. In addition, it will undertake work in population movements,

including internal and international migration, population displacements and redistribution, and their linkages to economic and social development, as well as the opportunities and challenges of urbanization.

4. In the same vein, the research and analytical work of the subprogramme on gender and women (subprogramme 6) in development will focus on gender inequality and persisting gender gaps and their challenges to development in Africa. It will also examine the systemic sociocultural barriers and their impact in limiting the capacity of member States to put in place legislative, policy, and institutional changes that promote gender equality and women's empowerment. The subprogramme will enhance its work on the African Gender and Development Index and support the efforts of member States to mainstream gender and development in national programmes. Partnership with the subprogramme on statistics will be strengthened to collect and collate gender statistics to determine the impact of programmes on gender equality and women's empowerment. The work of the subprogramme will also explore the gender dimensions of trade, extractives and climate change.

5. Other key features of the restructuring include the realignment of activities, both within and across subprogrammes, to ensure coherence and complementarities. The new programme structure is designed to promote convergence by clustering together closely related thematic issues or priorities for better synergies and effective programme delivery. Similarly, the intergovernmental machinery has been revised to ensure that the subsidiary bodies are congruent with the new programme priorities and structure. In this regard, the following intergovernmental machinery of the Commission will be maintained:

- (a) Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and its Committee of Experts;
- (b) Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of ECA subregional offices;
- (c) Committee on Gender and Social Development;
- (d) Committee on Sustainable Development;
- (e) Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration;
- (f) Committee on Statistics.

Conference of Ministers, 2013

Ministerial Statement: Sixth Joint Annual Meetings of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance, Abidjan, 25 and 26 March 2013 (E/ECA/CM/46/4/Rev.1 and AU/CAMEF/MIN/Res(VIII)/Rev.1)

ECA strategic reorientation

16. We warmly welcome and fully endorse the new ECA strategic orientation and the refocusing of its programme priorities and methods of delivery, designed to enable the Commission to better serve the African transformation agenda in a changing world. We also note the support expressed by African leaders for the ECA reorientation and their call to the United Nations Secretary-General "*to provide required support to ECA to enhance its work in accordance with Africa's priorities*". We request the Secretary-General to take necessary steps to translate this call by African leaders into concrete support measures for the ECA.

Role of the Committee

6. The role of the Committee on Gender and Social Development is contained in para. 18A. 45 of the General Assembly (2013), Proposed

programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015, part V Regional cooperation for development, section 18, Economic and social development in Africa, A/68/6 (sect. 18), which reads as follows:

Functional and sectoral subsidiary organs of the Commission:
Committee on Gender and Social Development

18A. 45 The role of the Committee on Social Development, as an advisory forum of experts and policymakers, is to provide guidance to the Commission in its work of promoting equitable and inclusive human and social development in Africa, with particular focus on gender, employment, population and youth development, social protection and urbanization. The Committee reviews follow-up activities pertaining to global conferences and regional action programmes in the areas of social development, including the global and regional platforms for action on the advancement of women. It also reviews major trends and issues of regional interest regarding human and social development. The Committee meets biennially.

7. More specifically, the Committee:

- (a) Provides guidance and expert opinion on the Division's priorities and activities;
- (b) Reviews past activities and future programmes;
- (c) Provides recommendations for strengthening ECA programmes to better serve member States and regional economic communities;
- (d) Provides policy guidance to ensure relevance of activities for meeting Africa's development needs and addressing development challenges on the continent;
- (e) Supports implementation and review of the regional and international policy agenda in relation to the areas of work of the Division;
- (f) Supports ECA partnership with the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, and with the development partners.

Composition of the Committee

- (a) Experts from ECA member States drawn from relevant ministries and departments;
- (b) African Union Commission and the regional economic communities, as observers;
- (c) Representatives of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and civil society, as observers;
- (d) ECA as convener and Secretariat of the Committee on Gender and Social Development.

The Bureau of the Committee and its role

- (a) The Chair of the Bureau should be present at the Conference of Ministers;
- (b) Each member of the Bureau should attend statutory meetings in their relevant subregions to ensure gender and social development issues are addressed effectively at this level.

Election of the Bureau

(a) The criteria for the election of the officers are based on geographical representation of each ECA subregion (annex 1), and will take into account language and gender;

(b) The election of the first Bureau of the Committee on Gender and Social Development will take place during the inaugural session, to be held in December 2015. Subsequently, the Bureau will be elected every two years. Members of the Committee and the Secretariat of the Committee (ECA) shall consult on the election of the Bureau. Nominations shall be made by members of the Committee.

Annex 1

List of African countries per subregion

Central Africa:

Cameroon
Central African Republic
Chad
Congo
Equatorial Guinea
Gabon
Sao Tome and Principe

East Africa:

Burundi
Comoros
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Djibouti
Ethiopia
Eritrea
Kenya
Madagascar
Rwanda
Seychelles
Somalia
South Sudan
United Republic of Tanzania
Uganda

North Africa:

Algeria
Egypt
Libya
Mauritania
Morocco
Sudan
Tunisia

Southern Africa:

Angola
Botswana
Lesotho
Malawi
Mauritius
Mozambique
Namibia
South Africa
Swaziland
Zambia
Zimbabwe

West Africa:

Benin
Burkina Faso
Cabo Verde
Côte d'Ivoire
Gambia
Ghana
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Liberia
Mali
Niger
Nigeria
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Togo