



Sub-Regional Office for West Africa

Twentieth (20th) Session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts
(ICE) for West Africa

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
18-19 May, 2017

Theme:

*“Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for
Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 in West
Africa: The role of development planning”*

Concept Note



I. Background

The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts is a body set up by the General Assembly of the United Nations. In West Africa, it gets together every year to debate economic and social performances, on the basis of working documents prepared by the Sub-Regional Office for West Africa of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA/SRO-WA). The ECA Sub-Regional Office for West Africa, based in Niamey, Niger, covers the fifteen member countries of the ECOWAS. Thus, the activities of the ECA/SRO-WA extend to the following countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. The experts of these Member States form the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for West Africa.

It should be remembered that the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), created by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), is one of five regional commissions of the United Nations for which the mandate is to promote the economic and social development of Africa. It is composed of five Sub-Regional Offices (SROs) that enable it to translate its normative and analytical work into operational activities at the sub-regional levels. These Offices carry out their mandates through: (i) technical assistance to the Sub-Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and to Member States on the harmonisation of policies, including advice in response to the specific needs of Member States; and (ii) the facilitation of regional integration by serving as focal points for dialogue on policies and sharing information between the Commission and the actors concerned in the sub-regions.

Every year, the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) assembles high-level decision-makers from Member States with the goal not only of debating economic and social performances and proposing relevant recommendations, but also of verifying the activities of the Office and supervising the development and general implementation of its work programme, including the formulation of priority objectives for the sub-region. The ICE thus provides guidance for the programmes of the Office by ensuring the optimal inclusion of sub-regional priorities and makes recommendations in order to resolve issues involving the economic and social development of the sub-region. These recommendations may, if necessary, be examined by the joint meeting of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the AU and the ECA.

The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) is welcomed every year, at its request, by a Member State of the sub-region. Thus the 20th session of the ICE for West Africa will be held on May 18-19, 2017 in Ouagadougou, at the request of the Government of Burkina Faso. The theme of the ICE is: ***“Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 in West Africa: The role of development planning”***. This session of the ICE will be preceded by an Ad Hoc Experts’ Group Meeting, which will be held on May 16-17, 2017 in Ouagadougou on the theme ***“Impact of the ECOWAS EPA and the CET on the structural transformation and dynamic integration in West Africa”***.

II. The objectives and theme of the 20th Session of the ICE

The main objective of the 20th Session of the ICE is to debate recent trends that could impact the economic and social development of West African countries, in order to identify the main challenges to be met and to make recommendations to accelerate the growth and the economic transformation of the sub-region. With this outlook, the participants will examine four statutory reports prepared by the Secretariat. The delegates will examine, one by one, a report on the activities of the Office, a note on economic and social conditions in 2016 and the outlook for 2017 in West Africa, a report on the implementation of the regional and international agendas and a report on sub-regional initiatives in West Africa. At a time when renewed interest in development planning has been observed, the Committee will also focus on the role of this important tool in the implementation of the sustainable development goals.

III. Justification for the central theme of the 20th Session of the ICE

The meeting will be held in an international context marked by two years of efforts by countries to launch the implementation of the sustainable development goals. If the level of policy coherence of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union is over 85%, as shown by an analysis by the ECA, it should be remembered that the African continent was the only one to present a common post-2015 position. This position was broken down into six priorities that are closely in phase with the seventeen SDGs. Among them are structural economic transformation and inclusive growth, which cannot be achieved in an environment of scarce resources except through good development planning. Since then, a large number of States on the continent have been engaged in the revision of their National Development Strategies or in the reorientation of their visions to ensure coherence with the new global framework of reference represented by the SDGs.

The 20th Session of the ICE will thus be the opportunity to analyse the efforts made by countries to ensure this coherence. It will also be the opportunity to discuss efforts undertaken by countries to set in place a monitoring-evaluation framework of the SDGs in general and of development policies in particular. Specific interventions by countries could encourage sharing of experiences. As for the recommendations of the Committee, they could enlighten both the Member countries and the ECA to provide better support to countries wishing to proceed in this direction.

IV. Participation

The 20th Session of the ICE will see the participation of delegates from 15 West African States, as well as high-level representatives and experts from the ECOWAS, the WAEMU, the Mano River Union (MRU) and other IGOs from the sub-region. The African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Bank and the NEPAD will also be represented. Aside from the ECA, other agencies of the United Nations System will contribute to the success of the meeting, as well as other development partners and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

V. Documentation of the ICE

Discussions during the 20th Session of the ICE will be supported by the presentation of the following statutory reports:

- Report on the implementation of the SRO-WA Programme of Work in 2016 and the outlook for 2017
- Note on the economic profile in 2016 and the outlook for 2017 in West Africa
- Report on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Report on sub-regional initiatives: Update on the progress of the region towards a single currency

VI. Results expected of the 20th meeting of the ICE

The results expected of the ICE meeting are the enrichment and adoption of the reports which will be presented by the ECA SRO-WA, as well as the formulation of recommendations for policies and strategies for decision-makers, for the formulation of national development programmes and for the acceleration of the regional integration process. A detailed report of the meeting will synthesise the presentations, the debates, the enrichments made to the documents presented, the main conclusions and recommendations.

VII. Organisation and format of the meeting

The 20th Session of the ICE will take place in the form of plenary sessions and a round table during which the reports produced by the Office and the papers by eminent experts will be presented and discussed. These

reports will be published on the website of the ECA SRO-WA: <http://www.uneca.org/sro-wa/>.

VII. Working languages

The working languages are French and English.

VIII. Date and place

The 20th Session of the ICE for West Africa will be held in Ouagadougou on May 18-19, 2017. It will be preceded by an Ad Hoc Experts' Group Meeting (AEGM), held on May 16-17, 2017, in Ouagadougou, on the theme "Impact of the ECOWAS EPA and the CET on the structural transformation and dynamic integration of West Africa".

IX. Administrative arrangements

The ECA SRO-WA and the Government of Burkina Faso will take care of all logistics at the local level, including hotel reservations, reception at the airport and the shuttle (transportation services) to and from the hotels. Additional details on other administrative arrangements will be provided in the information note which will be sent to participants who have confirmed their participation.

X. Contacts

At the ECA SRO-WA:

Confirmations of participation, requests for more information and any other request relating to the meeting should be addressed to:

**Director, ECA Sub-Regional Office for West Africa
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Scanned copies of all correspondence must be sent to Mrs. Kadijatou Amadou, Executive Assistant to the Director (Tel: +(227) 20 72 73 12; email: amadouk@uneca.org) and to Mr. Ochozias Gbaguidi, Section Head and ICE20 Coordinator (Tel: +(227) 20 72 73 33 and Cell: +227 92 19 57 62; e-mail: ochozias@un.org).

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