

UN Staff Voice

Issue 11

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October 2016



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VIPs who participated along with the public at the Addis Ababa National Stadium during the celebration of UN@70



H.E. Mr. Dereba Kuma, Mayor of Addis Ababa, H.E. Ambassador Taye Atske-selassie, State Minister, MoFA and Dr. Carlos Lopes Executive Secretary, ECA.



Mr. George Okutho, Resident Coordinator (a.i.) at the time of the celebration and Country Director for Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia, ILO



The future of the continent at the ECA Compound waiting for their certificates of recognition for participating in the UN@70 celebration



Girls' empowerment during the UN@70

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ECA Executive Committee
& Chairman, FUNSA



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V. Chairman, FUNSA



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Mestawet Mistir, ECA/OES



Charles M. Ndungu, Printing
and Publications Unit, ECA



Dana Palade, CMS, ECA

Tribute to Mr. Makane Faye

UN Staff Voice magazine would like to thank the former President of the ECA Staff Union and Chairman of the Federation of United Nations Staff Unions and Associations (FUNSA), for his dedicated contributions to the well-being of staff. His negotiation efforts to bring staff and management together resulted in the creation of UN Staff Voice Magazine, (which started in 2011 as UNECA Staff Voice), the first of its kind in the history of the Commission. UN Staff Voice is where both staff and management express their views with the ultimate goal of how best to achieve the Organization's objectives.

Build on past achievements and keep on moving forward

By Seble Demeke

“Coming together is a beginning; Staying together is progress; Working together is success.” Henry Ford.

Our sincerest apologies to all readers for this being the first issue of UN Staff Voice this year 2016. Due to the intensified training programme on UMOJA on the Management side and the election of a new staff representative body, on the Staff Union side, has taken this long to get back in harness.

The achievements of the United Nations and its dedicated staff over the last 70 years has been documented, witnessed and given full credit by many around the

world. Today, those who have worked for the Organization since its beginning in 1945, should be proud with the results: its 70-year track record stretches from international peace and security, to sensitization about such lofty goals as human rights, the right to development, the right to education, the right to self-determination, the right to protest against any system or establishment, the right to health, public accountability and the right to bring corrupt officials and wrongdoers to justice, the right to travel and countless other freedoms. Groups, individuals and nations around the world benefited from these privileges. Congratulations to the UN and its staff for their contribution in addressing some of the extraordinary challenges faced by mankind.



Seble Demeke



UN Staff Volunteers and Students receiving Certificate Awards for their active participation during the UN@70

Achievements such as these help us to move forward with confidence, dedication and determination. Today, the Organization is faced with new challenges and unexpected problems arising from different corners of the world. We are noticing an unprecedented movement of people (men, women, children, sick and disabled) forced to leave their birthplaces (many against their choice) while others pursue their quest for a dream life in parts of the world previously unknown to them. Never, since the Second World War, have we seen such a flood of human beings failing in their attempt to reach their destinations. **We are also witnessing people of the 'greener pastures' doing their utmost and building iron security fences to keep migrants out of their territories while governments endure harassment and accusation by their nationals for allowing this flux of migrants in to share the social benefits, jobs and other birth privileges to which citizens feel entitled.**

Climate change brings to humanity untold disaster. We see some countries flooded with rain while others are stricken by unmanageable drought. Health-wise, we hear about emerging epidemics like Zika and Ebola. Diseases caused by bad contaminated air are on the rise and doctors around the world are struggling to contain them.

The United Nations and its staff are faced with the above and many other challenges. While we recognize the past achievements, we should be vigilant and commit to tackling the current problems as we strive to achieve even more to make our world a better and safer place to live. For this to be realized, every citizen of the globe has a responsibility and an obligation to contribute towards peace, tranquility, economic growth and social progress by bringing our acts and minds together for the benefit of our world.

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Welcome to the Staff Union Officers

By Sandra Zawedde, Chair, Polling Officer

If you have lived long enough, you to some extent understand the dynamics of an election process. That makes me no exception. But, organizing the Staff Union election for the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa is an interesting ball game all together because of the mixed feelings around running for Staff Union Office. For some, holding a Staff Union Office is believed to be the best way to serve the interests of Staff, whereas others perceive this Office as a battle field and therefore would gladly refrain from the front line activities at war.

Irrespective of the feelings and while being open to the opinions of many, we must be reminded that holding a Staff Union Office, transcends service from an age, grade level, experience, disability, function and gender aspect. The Staff Union provides us with the opportunity to Shelter ourselves under the influence and responsibility of our own choice. No doubt, it is the Office where we unconsciously continue to renege responsibilities.

Once again, if you have lived long enough, you will agree that good institutions (made up of competent people) are a blessing and it is always considered unwise for us to enter blindly into needless obligations during election periods. Remember, it is easier to confer power than to withdraw it.

This year, we started the Staff Union election process in May, 2016. Like other election processes, ours was also not free from questions. We now have competent Bureaus and a Staff Union Council initially voted on the basis of the Divisional endorsement, if you will, a popular



Sandra Zawedde, Chair, Polling Officer

vote and later by the Electoral College vote where the Divisional representatives that form the Staff Council now vote the leadership of the Executive Committee and Staff Council. The election process will end with the Election of Arbitration Committee Bureau which will be at the upcoming General Assembly.

All in all, the elections went well and the College of Polling Officers would like to welcome and appreciate those colleagues that have taken up the POSITIONS OF HONOUR, because they demand sacrifice. Last but not least, I commend all the colleagues, Staff Union members from all Divisions who participated in the processes that will realize the strengthening of the Staff Union as a public duty institution.

Men trust too much to organization; but organization is injurious without wisdom and strength to use it aright.anonymous.

Newly elected ECA Staff Council and Staff Executive Committee Members



The incoming staff representatives of ECA with Carlos Lopes, Executive Secretary

STAFF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BUREAU

President	Mr. Joseph Baricako
Vice President	Mr. Tsega Amensissa
Secretary	Ms. Agare Kassahun
Assistant Secretary	Mr. Belay Tesfaw
Treasurer	Mr. Mekbib Petros
Assistant Treasurer	Mr. Ayenika Godheart

STAFF COUNCIL BUREAU

Chairperson	Mr. Nassim Oulmane
Vice-Chairperson	Ms. Emebet Mesfin
Secretary	Mr. Gideon Rutaremwa
Assistant Secretary	Ms. Sofanit Abebe
Member	Mr. Nassirou Ba
Member	Mr. Laurent D'Aronco Guiseppe
Member	Mr. Thierry Amoussougbo
Alternates:	Mr. James Murombedzi
	Ms. Jane Karonga
	Ms. Hodane Youssouf

The Elected officials will serve a two year term beginning July 18, 2016.

Incoming President, ECA Staff Union Executive Committee and Chairman, Federation of United Nations Staff Unions and Associations (FUNSA)

Joseph Baricako, President, ECA Staff Union Executive Committee
and Chairman, FUNSA

By Seble Demeke

Congratulations on your election as President of the ECA Staff Union Executive Committee and also as Chairman of the Federation of United Nations Staff Unions and Associations (FUNSA).

Q1. It is a big honor to be trusted by the staff to safeguard their rights, interests and benefits and ensure they are “defended vis-a-vis management in an equitable, consistent and unified manner”. How do you intend to discharge this function?

JB: Thanks for affording me the opportunity to speak to UN Staff Voice. While it is, indeed, a big honor to be chosen to handle staff issues, it also is a big responsibility. On behalf of our newly-elected Committee and, on my own behalf, I want first of all to express my heartfelt gratitude to the staff who have trusted us. The Committee and I are committed to working to fulfill our mandate. Our commitment is to meet their expectations and we are proud to take on the challenges.

The matters related to “the positions, interests, welfare and duties of staff” are our key concern. Those create an enabling working environment. They help increase staff performance and contribute to the



achievement of the ECA objectives. Therefore, our approach is to negotiate in a constructive, equitable and consistent way with management to ensure that staff interests are defended in a fair and unified manner and the negotiations are in line with the principles of the United Nations Charter, International Labor standards as well as the rules and regulations of the United Nations.

Q2. Is this your first time to be involved in staff issues? Kindly brief us about your professional background and your interest in becoming a Staff representative?

JB: It is not the first time. Prior to being elected President of the

Staff Union, I have been involved in staff issues at ECA for a decade. I joined ECA from a completely different working environment: academia. Since then, I have come across many issues affecting staff. I became extremely sensitive to the need to improve their working environment. I was also part of the outgoing council. In that capacity, I represented the Subregional Offices, having been elected in the Subregional Office for Central Africa, where I have handled successfully a couple of staff matters.

Q3. This is a responsibility which requires a lot of devotion, commitment and time. What are the steps that you are planning to take, the challenges you expect and how are you going to overcome them?

JB: The outgoing President retired end of April. Following this, we were elected end of June. The provisional former leadership were addressing urgent and interim issues until the elections. To date, most of the organs of the Staff Union are in place and are working tirelessly. We have a lot of concerns to address, ranging from personal and administrative problems of the staff to matters of collective concern such as security allowance, pension entitlements, medical coverage, local salary surveys, staff recreation and fitness, catering services and price negotiation, to mention a few. All these issues are of prior importance and the challenges ahead are complex. With a strong commitment, staff support and a result-oriented approach, I will use efficiently the time allocated to staff

representation to address gradually our pending and emerging issues, despite the numerous challenges ahead.

Q4. The current issues on the table include transparency in Union discussions with management. Which priority areas are you going to tackle for ECA staff members?

JB: Like all other staff unions, the ECA Staff Union aims at improving our working conditions and promoting a healthy and conducive environment, as outlined in article 8 of the UN staff rules and regulations which stipulates that: "The Secretary-General shall establish and maintain continuous contact and communication with the staff in order to ensure effective participation of the staff in identifying, examining and resolving issues relating to staff welfare, including conditions of work, general conditions of life and other human resource policies". Being seriously concerned about the recurrence of such conduct prohibited under SGB 2008/5 because they are counterproductive and hinder both the achievement of expected results and the unleashing of staff potential, the Staff Union will work tirelessly to ensure that the UN ethics and values enshrined in the rules and regulations are strictly respected.

With respect to leisure, plans are ahead to revamp the gymnasium and diversify staff recreational activities. Fortunately, Management has graciously accepted to contribute to this effort and we are also managing activities such as catering and the restaurant with a view to improving quality and client service delivery. In this quest to serve our staff better, we have to work together with Management, both in our individual and collective capacities, to achieve the Organization's objectives.

On a different note, discussions of the host country agreement have been ongoing for a while but because we have yet to see concrete and substantial progress, we will maintain close contact with ECA Management to conclude the negotiations and have the agreement signed as soon as possible. Similarly, a UN Staff Village project has been initiated within the FUNSA framework, benefiting from the support of other UN agencies. We intend to work expeditiously to achieve tangible outcomes. These are only some of the work priorities of the Staff Union.

Q5. What methods will you be using to communicate with staff on essential issues which will have an effect on their acquired rights?

JB: The channels of communication exist and are clear. For personal issues of staff which need to be taken forward to Management, direct and confidential routes of communication exist. With respect to general and common issues, the statutes provide a framework from staff representation at the electoral unit level up to the General Assembly of Union members.

Q6. The main objective of FUNSA is "To safeguard and promote the legitimate interests of the staff of the United Nations." in Ethiopia. What are the steps you are planning to take to ensure that this and other objectives of FUNSA are fully achieved?

JB: The interests of ECA staff are compatible with those of other UN staff in Ethiopia. We already have a work programme with common projects as exemplified by the UN Staff Village. While strengthening the existing framework and ensuring concrete delivery, our objective now is to sensitize and bring on board those UN agencies which have yet to become members of FUNSA, to jointly pursue such common projects.

Q7. What are the methods, if any, that you will be using to ensure coordination with other Staff Union Federations i.e. FICSA, CCISUA, UNISERV and any staff association, union or Federation having similar objectives?

JB: We are full members and partners of all these staff federations and associations you are mentioning. One of our objectives is "to maintain working relations and cooperation with other staff unions and associations of the United Nations System", especially in addressing issues of collective interest.

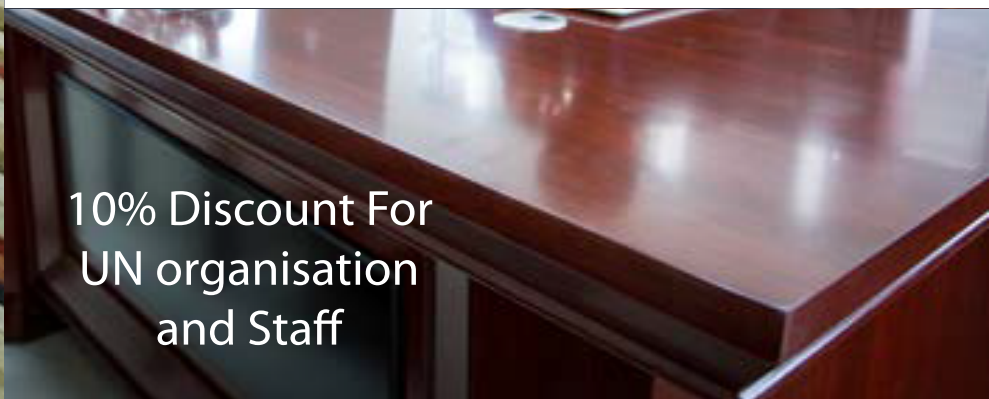
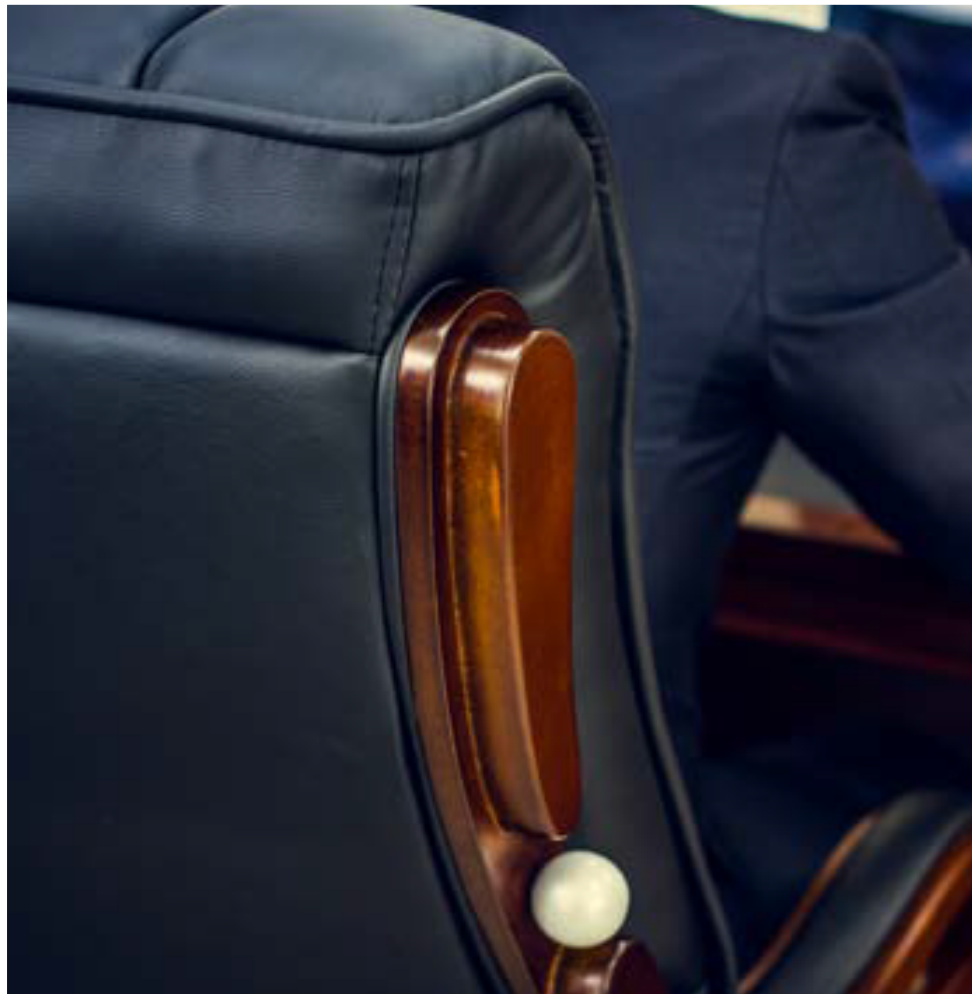
Q8. How do you envisage to improve the current UN Staff Voice magazine?

JB: The magazine has grown up since its launch in 2011. We are now at issue number 11. I recall that it was initially an ECA Staff Voice magazine but thanks to the dynamism of the Staff Union and the management of both ECA and UN agencies, it has become one UN Staff Voice magazine. We have to note it has not been produced since 2015. My plan is to produce it on a regularly basis. Furthermore, we need a variety of topics covered and full involvement of agencies and staff. From my experience, ECA staff across the continent like it and read it. Therefore, they deserve a high quality and informative magazine and we can make that happen.

Q9. Tell us anything else that you would like us to know about you which will benefit the staff?

JB: The Staff Union belongs to all the staff, not members only! All our activities require the active contribution of staff; hence we are relying on their full support and commitment. Staff representatives and Management alike have an important role to play, in pursuing ECA objectives in particular and those of the UN in general. Needless to say, we cannot achieve those objectives if we do not have open communication and permanent feedback to ensure that we are reflecting the genuine thoughts of the staff in our constructive and positive negotiations.

Thank you For Your enlightening interview



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Ahunna Eziakonwa-Onochie, UN Resident Coordinator, UN Humanitarian Coordinator & UNDP Resident Representative

By Seble Demeke



SV: *Thank you Madam Resident Coordinator for accepting to be interviewed by the UN Staff Voice Magazine.*

Q1. It has been almost one year since you arrived in Addis. How are you adjusting to your new life here?

RC: As a young woman, I always dreamed of working in Ethiopia one day. This was after I visited in the early 1990s. There was something about the authenticity of the country and the people that I found appealing. So, in a way, you could say that my appointment as UN Resident Coordinator many years later is a dream come true. I feel very privileged to be here at this time when Ethiopia is seriously pursuing a very ambitious development agenda that will lift its people out of poverty. I feel I am part of an exciting journey and I am full of anticipation, full of hope. It is wonderful to share that experience with my family, and they too are getting to know the country, the people and the unique cuisine! My daughter has grown fond of Injera.

Q2. Being the RC in Addis Ababa/Ethiopia which has 29 UN organizations, and is acknowledged as the third largest United Nations presence after New York and Geneva, is rewarding. Furthermore, you are also the first woman RC here in Addis Ababa, the UNDP Resident Representative and a UN humanitarian Coordinator. How are you coping with all these responsibilities? What are the challenges?

RC: As mentioned earlier, I feel quite privileged, honored

and humbled to be in Ethiopia at this critical juncture in the country's development trajectory, and in this position. As RC/HC and UNDP RR, I enjoy a position of influence on one hand, and submit to a position of service on the other hand. For me, leadership is about service. It's about using the privilege and influence of my position to serve the cause of humanity. As someone with a deep passion for African development, I feel there could not be a better time in history to serve this country in this capacity. I am personally an ambitious person. I like challenges, and I like to set high goals and then invest robustly to achieve my goals, of course working with others. I think Ethiopia has set very ambitious development goals, and why not? Africans have to dream big and then back it up with action. No one thought it would be possible to eradicate Polio until one man dreamt it, and then worked hard at it. Because I am passionate about my work, I do not see it as a burden, but rather as a blessing. That makes it easier.

I am proud to be the first female in this position. I think the world is witnessing an hour of recognition of the leadership capacity of women. The trend is finally in the direction of engaging the other half of the world, and it is an honor not only to bear witness to this recognition in my life time, but also to share a small part of the evolution. Having said that though, I am aware of my unique position to act as a role model for young female UN staff and that is a responsibility that I take very seriously. I am always pushing my female colleagues to dream big and work towards that dream. The inspirational words from one of the continent's powerful women and Nobel Peace Prize winner President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia always comes to mind; "The size of your dreams must



Commemoration of World Refugee Day



Commemoration of World Refugee Day

always exceed your current capacity to achieve them. If your dreams do not scare you, then they are not big enough."

I come to Ethiopia having served as a Resident Coordinator in Lesotho and Uganda, so I do bring with me that experience but of course each country is unique and the UN Country Team in those countries were smaller than they are here in Ethiopia. As you have noted, the UN presence in Ethiopia is one of the largest in Africa, and the world, and that indeed brings many opportunities as well as challenges, including the need to ensure a strong nexus between our development and humanitarian interventions. I am privileged to work with a UN country team that comprises very seasoned and talented heads of agencies and this is the resource I rely on to ensure that we have a strong UN in Ethiopia that matches the hour of need.

Q3. Are you intending to make some changes if so in which areas?

RC: The UN in Ethiopia is a 'self starter' in terms of ensuring that we Deliver as One – harmonizing what we do and how we do it. We have seen good results in terms of the advancement Ethiopia has made on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), where the country met six out of the eight MDGs. **2016 heralds a new world for all of us-the introduction of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). My role as the UN Resident and UNDP Resident Representative as well as Humanitarian Coordinator, is to ensure that we build on our success and position ourselves strategically to meet the opportunities brought about by the SDGs to deliver prosperity for people and planet.** Climate change is also another issue that

the UN will be increasingly taking into account as we roll out our intervention and engagement in the country. Drought is becoming more severe and frequent in Ethiopia and the UN in Ethiopia is changing the way we approach development and humanitarian interventions by ensuring stronger coherence between the two, and working with the Government and other partners towards significant resilience building.

The country team just started implementing the fifth United Nations Development Assistant Framework (UNDAF 2016-2020). UNDAF is aligned with the country's Growth and Transformation Plan II and the SDGs. The framework is a key programming tool in the Delivering as One process with the following five pillars to guide the UN interventions for the next five years;

1. Inclusive growth and structural transformation
2. Resilience and green economy
3. Investing in human capital and expanded access to quality and equitable basic social services
4. Good governance, participation and capacity development
5. Equality and Empowerment

Q4. How is UNCT dealing with the drought stricken parts of the country?

RC: The UN Country Team has been working closely with other development and humanitarian partners to support the government of Ethiopia to respond to the worst drought crisis in decades. This has included helping to mobilise resources to fill the gaps, as well as on the ground presence of various UN agencies, helping deliver supplies to save lives and prevent the outbreak of diseases.

Under the strong leadership of the government, we were able to avoid what could have been a humanitarian catastrophe. The impact of climate change is stronger and sometimes outpacing a country's capacity to cope. Even though the rains have come and alleviated some of the concerns, they bring new problems such as flooding which would also require assistance. **So it's not yet over and we are asking the international community to stand by the government and the affected populations for the duration, including supporting the communities to recover, and helping safeguard hard-earned development gains.** Above all, we have to continue supporting the reinforcement of systems and structures of the government for future disaster risk preparedness. Development plans must also be risk informed for them to be sustainable.

Q5. How many people are affected?

RC: The latest Humanitarian Requirements Document (HRD) places 9.7 million Ethiopians as needing humanitarian assistance due to the recent drought and floods. The crisis currently requires US\$612.4 million to help these people with emergency food and non-food assistance for the second half of 2016. I must however recognize the remarkable generous response of Ethiopia's donors to the \$1.4 billion appeal and the Government's unprecedented contribution from its own resources. These two funding sources helped us to reach over 70% funding to the original appeal which is impressive in the current challenging financial environment globally.

Q6. How is UNCT working with the government so far?

RC: The UN in Ethiopia has an existing framework the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) that is guiding the UN's support to the country's development and transformation agenda, Growth and Transformational Plan.

Q7. It seems that El Nino is going to be with us unless some drastic improvements are made to reverse the poisoning and destruction of our environment. What preventive measures are being taken to cope with crises?

RC. As highlighted in the World Humanitarian Summit, we are committed to transcend the humanitarian-development divide to change people's lives from delivering aid to ending need. However, this cannot be achieved without first trying to properly study and

analyze our response to the current crisis, and learning from both our mistakes and our triumphs. We are discussing this lessons learned approach within the community and with the Government. Among others, we are collaborating with the Government and other partners to undertake a diagnostic study on resilience that will assess the country's resilience context; appraise the achievement and limitations of the existing resilience interventions in Ethiopia, and propose a game-changing approach to building resilience to climatic shocks.

In the meantime, we will continue to support mainstreaming of development-oriented responses to the crisis. It is important that partners continue to engage through existing government systems and policy frameworks. The more they are used, tried and supported, the stronger their resilience to future shocks.

Q8. Switching to the Heads of States meeting in Kigali and the declaration of an AU passport for all African citizens by 2018, what is your view on that, especially in the recent development at the EU?

RC: Personally, I believe that the introduction of the AU passport is a bold move from our Heads of States side. The open border policy will help Africans to benefit from opportunities and potentials that exist in their own countries, and help to solve the problem of illegal migration and human trafficking.

Q9. Some African citizens are so eager to have one African passport, they say why wait until 2018?

RC: The adoption of the AU passport by the heads of states didn't come easily. I believe it is important to give realistic timeframe for the implementation of the one passport policy as it needs critical discussion on protocols and legislations on its execution.

Q10. Any message that you would like to pass to the staff.

RC: Working as a UN staff member is not just a job but must be a passion and a mission. It is calling from deep in your hearts, and one of the most rewarding work opportunities in the world. The United Nations is a manifestation of a big dream and every day we need to come to work remembering that and committing ourselves to delivering on that dream of building a better world and nurturing our shared humanity.

Thank you Madam RC for your valuable time.

Reflections by the Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist, UNECA

Highlights of the African Union Summit, 10-18 July 2016

Abdalla Hamdok, Deputy Executive Secretary and chief Economist , ECA



The Twenty seventh (27th) Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Kigali, Rwanda successfully launched the African Union passport aimed at facilitating the free movement of people in the continent. To heighten the call for self-reliance, the Heads of States also took a historic decision to institute a 0.2% levy on eligible imports as a means of raising revenue to finance the Union.

The decision comes at the heels of a retreat of the Heads of States, which took place on the 16 July 2016 in Kigali emphasizing the need to fund itself as well as operationalize the peace fund.

Alternative Sources of Financing (ASF)

As the continent looks forward, the 'principle of self-reliance' of the African Union has always been an enduring value. Africa has much to celebrate as it finds itself in a better position to build and foster an

effective and efficient organization that can demonstrate strong African initiatives and priorities which can be implemented. In line with the vision of our founding fathers, this new commitment to institute a levy of 0.2 percent on eligible imports is a milestone decision towards fully financing and providing predictable funding for Africa's renaissance, transformation and integration agenda. The levy is expected to fund 100% of the operational budget of the AU, 75% of the programme budget and 25% of peace support operations budget.

Africa is unified to take ownership of the Union, its programmes and agenda while reducing dependence on partners who have made significant financial and technical contributions since its inception. It has to be emphasized that in the last fifteen years the OAU/AU has been searching for an equitable and efficient self-financing mechanism to support its development agenda and operationalize the Peace fund. Proposing to mobilize non-treasury resources for funding is most welcome. The

significance of this decision is that the revenues collected from the levy will automatically be paid into an account owned by the AU at the member states central banks. This will go a long way in addressing some of the existing challenges of timely contributions, default and arrears while at the same time shifting the responsibility away from national treasuries.

The durability of this proposal will however be less in the conceptualization but rather in the likelihood of its implementation. Africa can truly claim its ambitions of independence once it has successfully implemented and achieved self-reliance. A critical aspect of this decision is the progress made towards peace and security, the provision to generate 65 million USD annually over the next five years will be critical for addressing Africa's peace and security challenges and avert development setbacks. These positive changes also come at a time where increasing trends are witnessed of the diminishing partner contributions. So integral to its implementation requires not only developing the mechanisms and putting in place the requisite regulations but also the capacity to enforce them.

The African Union Passport

The common African passport meets the AU's specific aim and objectives of 'creating a strong, prosperous and integrated Africa' stressing the importance of fast tracking integration on the continent to achieve socio-economic growth for the wellbeing of the African citizens. It seeks to guarantee not only the free movement of persons,

but goods and services around the continent - in order to accelerate progress towards economic integration-at regional and continental levels.

The breakthrough paves the way for a multitude of benefits making it easier to build cultural ties and affinity, a pan African identity of inspiration and buoyancy participating in economies and transferring knowledge and skills where feasible. It will also endeavor to bring down barriers and promote economic and social convergence, streamline regulations, promote trade and job creation all serving to expand growth in the continent.

The free movement of people is indispensable to Africa's regional integration agenda. It is also embed in Agenda 2063 that has a strong desire to see a continent 'driven by its own citizens'. Africa's burgeoning demographics of youth less than 25 years is to reach 50% by 2030. The "demographic window of opportunity" provides the potential for economic growth especially when associated with targeted investments in education and health. Harnessing the full potential of the youth is necessary for driving the continent's economic transformation.

With the African economic and political landscape ripe for change, Africa's youth can be the solution to the realization of the African Union vision of an "Integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa

Africans must seek growth that is primarily anchored on their priorities and that is capable of delivering structural transformation

Discussion with Carlos Haddad, Director, Division of Administration, ECA



By Seble Demeke

Thank you so much for sparing your valuable time to be interviewed by the UN Staff Voice Magazine.

Q1. You arrived in ECA on 6 April 2015. A year has passed since you joined the Commission and assumed the responsibility of administrator. How have things gone so far? Are you now well acquainted and comfortable with the policies and practices of the house?

CH: So far, things are going well. However, after one year, I am still discovering.

Q2. Of the five UN Regional Economic Commissions, ECA is the largest, having over 750 regular posts, five sub-regional offices. What does your job entail in-terms of management of staff and financial resources?

CH: My work entails management and administration covering HR, finance, procurement, supply chain,

facilities management, conference facilities, medical services. Lately, since last year, I was the implementation coordinator of Umoja. Since then, we moved forward quite well in implementing Umoja in ECA. In financial terms, we are the arm of ECA on its budgeted deliverables. Our job is very important as we assist ECA in the delivery of its mandate through recruitment of staff, consultants, and procurement of goods and services including construction.

Q3. What are the achievements, improvements made and challenges encountered during the year of your leadership as administrator?

CH: The first achievement we managed was to implement Umoja on time despite reservations expressed about ECA's readiness to manage its implementation within cluster 4. It was painful. We had many hurdles along the way, mainly teamwork and collaboration but we crossed each hurdle as colleagues came finally together. On the technical side, however, our biggest challenge was data cleansing. Throughout the process, we discovered years of unsettled transactions, some exceeding 15 years. As

you know, migrating data from one system to another requires thorough clean-up or removal of all unnecessary information be it debts collection to recording properly sick leaves. Through a steady exercise, the colleagues worked very long hours and we made it.

The second achievement was the finalization of the access roads of ECA, which had been pending since 2012. In the past years, ECA launched two bids, which were unsuccessful. The last bidding exercise was finalized in April 2015 with a proposed delivery schedule of 8 months starting from the mobilization date. That meant we were not able to finish those roads before July 2015, for the Conference on Financing for Development (FFD), and our main objective had been to make the UN compound ready for that Conference. In order to achieve our target, we worked with the Ethiopian Government, through the Addis Ababa City Road Authority and we finalized all the roads.

Another announced achievement was the finalization of the parking lot, which was a slope of dust that turns into mud in the rainy season and it did accommodate less vehicles than its real capacity. The availability of parking space was one of the issues that I used to hear repeatedly. Now we have a nice cobblestoned parking and a lot fewer complains about the availability of parking. I consider that the finalization of the parking is an important achievement to the benefit of the staff. In addition, to add more parking space, we resumed the work on the North car park, which is supposed to add few hundred parking spaces to what we have now.

There were few other challenges of resolving pending issues since few years. To name a few, we resolved a legal issue with the construction company for the New Office Facility Building. The renovation of the roofing of UNCC Conference Rooms 1 and 2 and carpeting contracts have been finalized in terms of procurement and contract and the work will be starting by the end of this year after a two biennia delay. Furthermore, we have also worked on the beautification of the compound.

One very important achievement for us was the organization of the Third Financing for Development conference while working on Umoja implementation as most of the DoA team was dedicated to Umoja related reconciliation and data cleaning activities. Despite our busy schedule we managed to host close to 11 thousand people for the Conference, I would say, without a single glitch, which was impressive and that was the work of the entire ECA. DoA team was really superb in getting on top of the preparations.

Q4. What is the objective and goal of the Umoja Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)?

CH: Basically, it is a system that integrates all business functions into a single application. That means linkage between human resources, budget, accounting, assets, procurement, etc. An Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system like Umoja, helps us streamline business processes, reduce paper work, integrate functions and have the biggest advantage of a comprehensive reporting process. Because when you integrate all these systems and data, what comes out of it is very impressive reporting giving you snapshots and useful details about what we have been doing. Therefore, one of the most powerful outcome, other than streamlining, is the comprehensive reporting that we would benefit from, which goes beyond ECA. With an application like this, ECA is now linked to the entire UN Secretariat system.

Q5. Can you highlight some of the major differences between IMIS and Umoja?

CH: IMIS was only a financial system and did not integrate HR, procurement, assets, and other functions. Therefore, it did not capture many things in one place and that is the major difference. IMIS was created to capture only part of the business but ERP Umoja captures the entire business process. Now there remain certain modules to build on what has been rolled out within the next two years and incorporated as additional elements to make the business process even more streamlined. IMIS was a stand-alone system to cover part of financial management while Umoja covers all parts of the business.

Q6. Some payroll-related functions have been transferred to UNON, can you please let us know the reasons and whether this trend will continue and be extended to other functions?

CH: It is true; part of the payroll is being handled by UNON in Nairobi. Now the trend is that the organization has identified five areas to be consolidated either at a regional or global centers. This means that any of those functions will not be done at the Regional Commissions, duty stations and peacekeeping missions. This is the global service delivery model (GSDM) that the organization is working on. The UN Secretariat is expected to present a proposal to the General Assembly about the business model for the next biennium on how the GSDM is going to be implemented. Payroll is certainly one function to be processed from a regional or global service center. Similarly, we expect that services related to onboarding, benefits and entitlement, travel and procurement to be performed from regional or global service centers. This relates to your previous question on what is the benefit of ERP Umoja. It is about creating efficient, streamlined, and transparent processes. Hence is the consolidation of business functions in regional and global service centers.

Q7. Why wasn't ECA selected to become the hub?

CH: A study is being conducted by Headquarters to assess the suitability of 11 duty stations away from Headquarters, including the Regional Commissions, to host delivery of those services that have been identified.

Q8. What are the criteria for a duty station to be selected as a hub?

CH: Actually, there is a long list of criteria ranging from security, visa facilities to UN, host country agreements, the number of flights coming to the city, to the number of international carriers, the likelihood of natural disasters, etc.. The list of criteria is very comprehensive. We have been providing data and supporting the case for Addis as a suitable hub.

Q9. Is this movement, the implementation of the Global Service Center model be good or bad for the UN?

CH: Yes, I find it a very good initiative, and a very good way for the Secretariat to conduct its business. The concern with loss of jobs is a valid and painful one. However, the result of the exercise brings cost savings and benefits realization. There are going to be opportunities for staff to move and work in those regional or global services centers. I know for a fact that UNICEF has used the same model. However, instead of going to several regional service delivery centers, they elected to go for one, and that is Budapest, Hungary. Many local and international staff opted to work in Budapest. Many of their operational staff moved to work in the substantive areas.

Q10. There appears to be a trend of delegating some functions like raising travel requests, travel claims advances, time and attendance to individual staff instead of staff and admin assistants. What is the reason for this move?

CH: This is the architecture of the application itself. The objective is to streamline and remove bottlenecks. For example, instead of asking an HR officer to tell me about if my passport details in the system, I can check it myself. This kind of information was not available to us before. On the operational side, now substantive divisions performs important parts of the transactions creating good segregation of duties. The system also allows greater level of delegations.

Q11. What are some of the challenges in the implementation of Umoja?

CH: We are faced with few challenges. The system still has programming bugs that is being corrected regularly. Some are easy to correct and some requires us to wait a long time before fixes are introduced. Also, some of the workflows are not working properly because of wrong mapping of users. ECA reviewed and revised user mapping several times already and we continue to make revisions as soon as we discover the needs to do so. So far, we have done more than 300 hundred adjustments to this mapping, giving people what they are supposed to do.

One important challenge that comes with such a system is the learning curve. We continue to organize trainings to build the capacity of our staff to master the system.

Q12. How will programme support staff in general, and GS staff in particular, be affected by Umoja?

CH: It is going to be a new way of doing business. A new experience to go through not only support staff but to all of us. Eventually for the programme support staff, there will be a new module covering a result based budgeting. This is also going to be a new way of working for them.

Any message to the staff?

Learning is an important aspect that we all need to focus on. I urge all of us to attend and participate fully in all the training sessions we organize. In addition, all of us should project a good image of ECA. We should all work diligently to have ECA being the center of excellence in whatever we do.

Thank you again for your time.



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UNCARES Ethiopia conducted its sixth life skills training from August 08-12, 2016



Mr. George Okutho, Country Director, ILO; Ms. Miriam Maluwa, Country Director, UNAIDS with the Children of UN Civil Servants in Ethiopia

By Emawayish Seme UNCARES Coordinator, ILO

The training course was attended by 120 participants. UNCARES Ethiopia's life skill training intervention for adolescent age group is a comprehensive behaviour change approach. **The training focuses on the development of the skills needed for life such as self-esteem building, relationship skills, communication, decision-making, critical thinking and problem solving, managing emotions, assertiveness, resisting peer pressure, and setting boundaries to facilitate successful and smooth transition to adulthood. In addition, the training also addresses reproductive health issues such as prevention of HIV infection and other STIs.**

The life skills training focuses on two age groups, 13-15 and 16-18 years old. The program provides quality training by tailoring and designing the manual according to the age group and socio-cultural context of Ethiopia.

According to the UN Health Care Clinic, currently there are 4,000 dependent children in the UN-family among which 866 are in the age range 13-15 while 700 are in the age range from 16-18. This indicates that the remaining 2,434 children are under the age of 13. To date UNCARES has reached a total number of 334 Adolescents (67 adolescents youth in 2014, 147 youth in two rounds in 2015 and 120 adolescent children in 2016).

The life skills trainings applied various methodologies



including games, story-telling, role-plays, video-shows, discussions and group work to bring about the desired skills or change. The life skills training used the Youth Action Kit Manual as a reference material coupled with the use of attractive art and craft.

This year's participant repeatedly mentioned the respect of human right in different ways of their exercise. In fact the closing ceremony which was organized in connection with the world Olympic, was a live testimony in how different people from different countries with different back group participate with discipline, and love with respect to each other. **The Olympic parade by the youth brought beautiful ideas that they hold dear to their heart such as Openness, faith, respect, inclusiveness, Humanity, honour, open mindedness etc.** In connection with the parade a very short choreography was displayed on oneness, holding one another, helping one another, unity, respecting the rights of another, in UN terms delivering as one.

The Impact of Illicit Financial Flows from Africa on Africa

By Deresse Degefa, MPD, ECA

What is Illicit Financial Flows?

Over the last few years, illicit financial flows (IFFs) have been at forefront of discussions on financing for development at various regional and international fora. In this regard, the report of the High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa considerably raised awareness on the scope and magnitude of illicit financial flows from Africa. In fact, a few argue that illicit financial flows have become a global agenda largely because of a collective intervention by African countries through the establishment of High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa in 2011 at the 4th Joint African Union Commission/United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (AUC/ECA) Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

It is very logical to define the term “illicit financial flows” first before proceeding to discuss the various aspects of these flows. The term illicit financial flows evolved in the 1990s and were initially interchangeably used with capital flight. Capital flight is generally understood as the movement of capital abroad in order to secure better returns, often in response to an unfavourable business climate in the country of origin. **However, illicit financial flows is generally referred to cross-border movement of capital associated with illegal activities. Although there are various definitions of the term, perhaps the most common and broader definition of illicit financial outflows is to describe it as money illegally earned, transferred, or used that crosses borders.**

Illicit financial outflows include money flows relating to corruption, tax evasion, criminal activities, faulty trade mispricing, illegal trade in natural resources and contraband goods, and trafficking of drugs, weapons and humans. The report by the High Level Panel on IFFs from Africa identified that commercial activities (trade mispricing, transfer pricing and base erosion and profit shifting) are by far the largest contributor to illicit financial flows from the region, followed by criminal flows, and outright bribery and theft by government officials.



Scale of IFFs from Africa

The next appropriate question is “why illicit financial flows have become a critical issue in the last few years?” The fundamental reason behind the intensive discussions on the subject at regional and national levels is that illicit financial flows from Africa is not only high but also increasing over time. **Illicit financial flows from Africa has received a growing attention as a key development challenge as the capital outflows from the region reduce domestic resources required to finance the development agenda of the continent.**

The scale of illicit financial flows from Africa cannot be measured precisely due to lack of data. However, various estimates indicate that huge sums of money have been illegally leaving the continent every year. **The report of the High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa indicates that Africa is losing US\$50 billion to US\$60 billion a year through illicit financial outflows. However, it should be noted that these estimates are more likely be underestimated given the inadequacy of the data and the diverse channels through which illicit capital flows.**

Impacts of IFFs

Although the impacts of illicit financial flows from Africa cannot be precisely quantified, they have considerable negative consequences on the region’s socio-economic and political development. Illicit financial outflows represent a major leakage on the resources of Africa by denying the affected countries of the region substantial amounts of potential public revenues or investment funds, which could otherwise be used to finance the region’s development and/or complement foreign loans and aid payments by the public sector. Africa has been unable to mobilize enough domestic revenue to finance its development.

Widespread tax evasion and tax avoidance as a result of illicit capital outflows not only complicate the task of mobilizing tax revenue but also make the provision of basic public services more difficult. It means public investment funds are scarce for the funding of infrastructure and social policy measures. It also forces African countries to resort to external borrowing or exacerbate external debt burden of the region.

IFFs drain foreign exchange reserves, dwindle investment inflows, and worsen poverty, inequality and unemployment in Africa. Illicit financial outflows have a considerable investment and growth-inhibiting effect which indirectly undermines the continent's efforts to reduce poverty and hinder the potential progress of human development in the region. These outflows also stifle trade and worsen macroeconomic conditions of the region.

The outflows of capital can also affect social development through their impact on the quality of political institutions, social cohesion and political stability. In other words, illicit financial flows deteriorate the governance of the region by weakening the capacity of state institutions and encouraging corruption and rent-seeking. The capital that illicitly leaves the region may provide

powerful incentives for organized crime, corruption, and rent seeking which in turn fuel even more illicit financial flows from the continent.

What should be done to curb IFFs?

Although the problem of illicit financial outflows from Africa should be tackled at the root, there is a need for global financial and technical cooperation as moving illicit outflows of capital from Africa often involve non-African private and public actors through various secrecy mechanisms which are sometimes the result of policies and laws adopted by intergovernmental bodies and governments outside Africa. That is why illicit financial outflows from Africa is an African problem but the solution requires global cooperation, it is an African problem with a global solution.

At home, Africa needs prudent macroeconomic policies to improve the attractiveness of domestic investments relative to the illicit transfer of capital abroad. This should be complemented by strengthened institutions, the rule of law, and better governance if indeed Africa is to curtail illicit financial flows on a lasting basis. African countries should also take primary responsibility for improving capacity and accountability to curtail all types of illicit financial outflows from Africa.

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The 27th Ordinary Session of the African Union

*By Rawda Omar Clinton, Programme Officer Capacity Development Division
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa*

At its 27th Ordinary Session which took place in Kigali, Rwanda, on 17 and 18 July 2016, the African Union (AU) Summit took a historical decision to institute and implement a 0.2 percent levy on imported goods from outside the continent to finance 100% of the operating budget, 75% of the programme budget, and 25% of the peace and security budget of the AU Commission, starting from 2017.

The decision also calls for the amounts collected from the levy to be automatically paid by each national administration into an account opened for the AU with the Central Banks of each member State for transmission to the AU Commission.

The Summit also decided that the AU Peace Fund shall be endowed from the 0.2 percent levy with an amount of USD 325 million in 2017, rising to USD 400 million in 2020. The Peace Fund will be established with three thematic windows: Mediation and Preventive Diplomacy (Window 1); Institutional Capacity (Window

2) and Peace Support Operations (Window 3). A new enhanced governance structure and independent fund management will be put in place to ensure strong oversight and accountability.

This builds on recent Decisions of the AU Assembly which focus on member States covering a greater share of the Union's budget with a view to weaning itself from external dependency in the long run. The leadership of the Union has reached these decisions based on four principles: (i) solidarity, (ii) equitable payment; (iii) capacity to pay; and (iv) no single country bearing a disproportionate share of the budget.

The implementation of the Decision will drastically reduce the dependence of the AU on external partners to finance development projects of the Union. Indeed, the Union heavily relies on donor support, which, experts say, affects and influences the priorities and approaches in dealing with African affairs. In the current US\$475-million budget of 2016, international partners and donors contributed up to 76 per cent. The AU budget for 2017 is US\$782 million. African Heads of State and Government were troubled by



this high dependency on outside financing and wanted to put in place a financing mechanism that would enable the continent to take charge of its own destiny. At the Sandton Summit last year, they took a bold decision and gave instructions that African countries should finance 100 per cent of the operational activities of the AU Commission, to the tune of at least 75 per cent of substantive programmes of the AU and also finance at least 25 per cent of peace-keeping operations on the continent. Dr. Donald Kaberuka, former President of the African Development Bank, was subsequently appointed by the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr. Zuma, as the AU High Representative of the Peace Fund for AU peacekeeping operations.

Given that the Fund will be resourced through the finances of the Union, Dr. Kaberuka was also asked to look into alternative mechanisms of financing outside the scale of the member States' assessed contribution. Dr. Kaberuka's proposal was presented and adopted at a retreat of Heads of State and Government and finance ministers held in Kigali on 16 July 2016.

According to the Kaberuka formula, assessed contributions will be increased through a 0.2 per cent levy on eligible imports¹, which is expected to raise about \$1.2 billion every year. Beginning 2017, this levy will be collected by the tax collection authorities of African countries and channeled through central banks (as opposed to collection from national treasuries), in a bid to prevent defaults or delayed payments that have been rampant among member countries in the past. Currently, contributions are assessed based on a formula factoring in the GDP of respective national economies. It had been built on the principles of solidarity, equitable payment, capacity to pay and ensuring that no country is left behind no matter its socio-economic and political situation. The challenges with this mechanism have been delays or outright defaults in the release of assessed contributions to the AU, leading to external donors having to finance AU programmes and peace and security activities.

By relying less on donors and funding its own activities, the AU hopes to have a larger say on what it considers priority and how to address its development agenda. Such self-financing is a strategy to secure sustainable financing for the AU through a 0.2% levy on imports to African countries and to fully fund the functioning of the AU Commission and cover 75% of the implementation of its programmes cutting dependence on external funding. It is also expected

to change the mode of cooperation with international partners from aid to trade to investments and international cooperation for mutual benefit.

In addition, each region would also be asked to contribute US\$65 million from the import levy for the Peace Fund. If all goes according to plan, this would secure AU financing to fulfil the obligation of covering 25% of peacekeeping operations in Africa. If this can be achieved, the so-called 'Obama plan' for the United Nations to fund the other 75% from assessed UN contributions should kick in.

ECA has been in the forefront in the construction of regional integration in Africa. From institution building, to rationalization of institutions and self-financing of their programmes, ECA's contribution remains tremendous. In the early 2000, the Commission's work assisted CEMAC, ECCAS, SADC, COMESA and UMA to put in place their respective self-financing mechanisms based on the experiences of CEAO, UEMOA and ECOWAS. Specifically, the community levy on imported goods adopted by the AU Summit has already been proposed by ECA in a study carried out in March 2004 and shared with the AU Commission at that time.

Implementing the new plan could be an immense administrative challenge, particularly that since products like medicines and fertilizer would be excluded from the levy. Who would be charged with drawing up the lists of taxable items? What kind of problem would be anticipated by national revenue authorities? How do we ensure transparency and compliance? There are many issues that one can legitimately raise. But, there are also arguments saying that RECs such as ECOWAS and ECCAS have already implemented a similar levy to finance their commissions, showing how it can be done.

¹ The new levy exempts imports of intermediary products such as fertilizers, medicines and baby food products, among others.

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ECA's Printing and Publishing Unit

Winner of the 2015 SONORA Plate Green Leaf Award for Africa and the Middle East

By Charles M. Ndungu, Chief, Printing and Publication Unit.

What is Sonora Plate Green Leaf Award?

The SONORA Plate Green Leaf Award was launched in 2014 by Kodak, a program recognizing excellence among Kodak customers that are leaders in environmental initiatives worldwide. Award entrants are judged on a range of criteria, including management practices to improve energy and water efficiency, participation in local community sustainability initiatives and the use of eco-conscious materials and supplies. All submissions are reviewed with scores determined by a panel of Kodak judges.

The ECA Printshop, which is ISO-14001: 2004 certified won the award in December 2015 and was recognized as a user of KODAK SONORA Process Free Plates and for its focus on minimizing and reducing consumption of power, water, and other consumables. **By transitioning its pre-press operations from chemistry-based to process free computer-to-plate technology, the printshop has eliminated all the processing steps associated with traditional plate making, reducing**



water and energy consumption, while minimizing waste and chemical pollution. In addition to their use of SONORA Plates, the printshop now uses 100% recycled paper both for office and conference documents production.

This is a first in the Middle East and Africa for any organization to win the Award, so we are indeed very proud.

ECA printshop is committed to sustainable printing: "The printshop is on a journey to become a more responsible printer. We started by publishing conference documents on recycled paper. Today, ECA is printing all major flagship publications on chlorine-free paper". By moving its pre-press operations to process free plate making, the unit maintains our commitment to print responsibly, while reaping the benefits of increased productivity and the conservation of critical energy and water resources" says Mr. Charles Ndungu, Chief, Printing and Publishing unit of Economic Commission for Africa.



Charles Ndungu, Chief, Printing and Publishing Unit receiving the Award from Mr. Warren Bell, Kodak Business Manager Eastern Africa

Reflection on UNOPS Contractual modality for ICTSS Individual Contractors

By Yimer Alamin, Core Infrastructural Unit, ITCC

The Information Technology and Telecommunication Service Section (ICTSS), in order to provide ICT services to ECA-Headquarters, Sub-Regional Offices and Collocated UN Agencies, has been using both staff and non-staff members with different contractual modalities. **It is a normal practice in the United Nations system organizations to use consultants and other non-staff personnel for jobs that are temporary in nature.**

However, the situation in ICTSS is quite different as the Individual Contractors have been working for extended periods of time under Special Service Agreements (SSAs). In principle, non-staff members are supposed to work on temporary jobs and their services are required for limited durations. On the contrary, in ICTSS, the Individual Contractors constitute a significant part of the total workforce and engage in critical service tasks. It can be said that they are staff by a de facto employment relationship.

The manager of ICTSS in the past had inclined towards non-staff contractual modalities for many reasons including:

Pressure to deliver under tight budgets;

- Resources allocated to regular posts have been frozen or have not increased adequately over the years; and
- The modality found to be appropriate for the Section's dynamic work environment as it is easy to establish and terminate non-staff contracts depending on its changing needs.
- The increasing use of non-staff contractual modality for repeated and extended periods has led to the formation of two parallel workforces with different rights and entitlements. It has created a situation introducing different statuses for similar types of work in the system. It has adversely impacted the psychological contract that represents the mutual beliefs, perceptions, and informal obligations between ECA and Individual Contractors.

The management of ICTSS had felt the unsustainable nature of this arrangement and had tried to resolve the issue. The first attempt was made in March 2003 when ECA/ICTSS made a Service Delivery Agreement with United Nations International Computing Center (UNICC). However, the arrangement could not stay longer and was



cancelled due to budgetary constraints as it found to be less cost effective.

The untimely cancellation of the Service Delivery Agreement had given ICTSS no option but to turn back to the SSA arrangement to secure the services of the Individual Contractors. However, the termination is presumed to have an adverse impact on the psychological contract as it affected negatively the Contractor's positive perception of the mutual obligations that arose in the context of their relationship with UNECA, and ultimately affected both the working environment and their motivation.

After going through with this SSA contractual modality for quite a long period of time, it was during January 2016 that UNECA/ICTSS hired non-staff personnel through United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and resolved the long persisting problems. The UNOPS modality can be considered one of the greatest achievements of the Section.

With this arrangement, ICTSS needs to mitigate such risks in the use of non-staff workforce as:

- Losing control of core functions and services if they are increasingly transferred to the temporary workforce;
- Loss of reputation because of unfair employment practices that may be contrary to United Nations values and international labor principles;
- Loss of institutional knowledge due to increasing the temporary workforce;
- Blurring of organizational culture, causing tension and low morale among the workforce by creating various statuses and providing different benefits for similar work;
- Loss of the international character of the workforce through discretionary recruitment of a temporary workforce;
- Exposing programmes/projects to a lack of ownership due to temporary and unfair contractual modalities.

Finally, I would like to convey my heart-felt congratulation to those Individual Contractors whose remarkable patience has seen them through the very long period for this arrangement to materialize.



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By Bewketu Bogale, DOA/HRSS, ECA

For the last couple of years, the UN Secretariat has been striving to take advantage of the cost –effectiveness and other benefits of e-learning resources by introducing a number of online learning platforms. These e-learning platforms have relevant resources to equip UN staff members with skills/knowledge to improve staff efficiency and build on their competencies. With effect June 2016, Lynda.com is introduced as UN Secretarial wide e-learning resource replacing the old UN Skills Port.

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Staff Testimony

Since the introduction of Lynda.com, quite number of ECA staff have accessed to the online resources and used to learn new skills.



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Samson Ijjigu , HRSS



Excellent, just wanted to say that the courses on Lynda are really great and I'll be recommending it to everyone!

Heran Belete, SPOQD

Parking at ECA: Not Happy with ECA Management

By Tinsae Asrat, UN Retiree

At a time when the UN is advocating more than ever to convince the world that real solutions come from inclusion, I don't find it up to the level when ECA rushes for exclusion to try to solve just a parking issue. Yes, it has excluded its long serving, senior former staff of the UN. Yes, it has excluded the ones who have toiled in the prime of their working life to build the UN that we see today. Today, they are told not to drive into the compound if they come by car, given the almost-impossible parking availability outside the compound. (I recognise the effort done by the management of AFICS - retirees office - to protest against this decision of the ECA.) Normally, retirees would want to come into the compound just to get health services or to go to the UNSSCA Office and this wouldn't normally take more than an hour. Few people would want to waste their time just by coming for no reason. So, how much real parking space has the ECA managed to save by

preventing UN retirees from driving in? ECA could have limited the entrance time for retirees to start at 9:00 a.m. just to ensure that its active staff gets the priority over the space; let us not forget that people park only when there is a parking space.

Otherwise, the management should have sensed that it is alienating the former UN staff by not renewing their entrance permits; it is dividing the UN community here!

Not less to be said about putting the AFICS Office in the steep location - which is quite hazardous and not easily accessible to people of old age. Could it not have been possible for ECA to provide a few office spaces in the newly-built block? Respecting senior (international) civil servants/citizens augurs for a healthy society so let us remind ourselves that such a gesture could guarantee and nurture hope among active staff!

Let us go for inclusion in the office also, not only in the international arena!

What is Effective Communication?

By Sofia Ayele, UNECA Library

Communication sounds so simple: say what you mean. But too often, what we try to communicate gets lost in translation despite our best intentions. We say one thing but the other person hears something else which results in misunderstandings, frustration, and conflicts. Building a good relationship with co-workers requires good communication skills.

1. **Listen:** Most of us are not good listeners. Instead of truly listening to what the person is saying, we interrupt, prepare our response, or think we already know what the other person is going to say next. It's impossible to understand what someone needs or wants if we don't give them our undivided attention. Remember, hearing and listening are two very different things.
2. **Pay attention to body language:** It is well known that body language plays a key role in effectively communicating with co-workers. Body language includes facial expressions, posture, eye movement, and your position in relation to the person with whom you are speaking. You may be speaking clearly and saying all the right things, but if your body language is off, your coworkers will pick up the wrong message.
3. **Tone of voice:** Tone of voice is communicating with your voice when not using words. Through pitch, volume, tone of voice provides powerful clues into your true feelings. For example, tone of voice is a quick indicator of confidence, sarcasm, frustration,



agreement, assurance, fear or boredom.

4. **Be Clear and Concise:** Take time to organize your thoughts and make what you want to say as concise as possible.
5. **Be friendly:** Give a happy hello! Get into the habit of smiling and greeting your colleagues. It's amazing how far a little courtesy can go!
6. **Offer to help whenever possible:** Providing knowledge and expertise related or not related to work helps us build good relationships with co-workers. Your helpfulness will likely be reciprocated when you find yourself in need of assistance.
7. **Respect cultural differences and difference in work styles:** The work place is becoming more and more diverse. Your colleagues style of communication and work may be different from your own. Always embrace an opportunity to learn from others.
8. **Show respect to all co-workers:** Respect is the foundation of positive relationships. When you show your co-workers respect, you will begin to

understand the basis of their opinions, work habits, and beliefs. Understanding these differences help prevent negative discussion or offensive conversations that can strain relationships.

9. **In conclusion,** effective communication is essential for a productive work environment. It helps us build strong relationships with colleagues, creates good team environment and reduces conflict. As a result, we can achieve personal and organizational goals.



UNECA, my second home

By Konjit Habte Mariam Haile Selassie

How so? One would wonder!

It all dates back to early 1979, when I was a teenager who returned from abroad where I was on a foreign exchange program. During my stay there, my scholastic achievement rewarded me with a full Medical Scholarship. Unfortunately, circumstances at the time did not allow me to follow-up on the programme. This was a very challenging moment in my life. However, by the grace of God, I managed to withstand it. I then decided to work and pursue my studies.

I had a great passion to work for the United Nations and was very happy to learn about a vacancy at ECA where I applied and sat for the entry examination. Despite my good results, it took quite some time before the interview was conducted. In the meantime, I had another job offer, which I declined and waited for the ECA result. Finally, I was offered a one year contract by the Commission. This marked the start of my carrier at UNECA as a Library Clerk.

Joining this great multicultural work environment was an exciting experience. In those days, most of the works were done manually. Yet, there was good staff cooperation which made the work interesting. The good team spirit, the appreciative chiefs, the occasional social gatherings were quite motivating. As the years went by, I developed strong bond and respect from staff and clients.

As Vice and Acting President of the Staff Union, my cherished personal achievement was the struggle to defend the rights of staff which was done with the collaborative efforts of our Committee Members and the Management. Other areas where I contributed include working with different panels like the recruitment, promotion, grievances, including serving as Peer Educator, Chair of the Supervisory Committee,



Rapporteur of the General Assembly of UNSSCA and others. I feel privileged and honored to have served the General staff.

Being a Reference Librarian has allowed me to interact with hundreds of staff and others, to ensure their information needs are met. Our customers acknowledge our unreserved efforts to fulfill their requirements. We serve the whole UN family including Embassies, Government offices, Parliamentarians, Universities, Private researchers, etc. through walk in, calling or emails.

Indeed, UNECA is my second home! Here is where I grew, attended my higher education, gained a vast work experience, got married and raised children.

As I am approaching retirement, I thought it would be nice to share my experience and take this opportunity to thank the entire staff. Special thanks goes to those who had groomed and supported me in my carrier.

May God the Almighty bless our Commission and its staff, our beloved country Ethiopia including Mother Africa and the World!

Thank you!

Women's economic and social advancement is a crucial precondition for Africa's development. Putting Africa first!

UNECA Staff Activities

By Hiwot Taddesse, Administrative Assistant, ECA Staff Union,

Contributions by Tsetargachew Zewdie, Team Assistant and Tibebe Mulugeta, Manager ECA Gymnasium

The ECA Staff Union currently has a membership of 600 professional and general service staff as of March 2016. This is out of the total staffing strength of about 770

Christmas which is mainly done by the UNECA Staff Union by bringing together other organizations' Staff Unions. The office is also managing the Breast Feeding room which has been located in the Rotunda of the Africa Hall building since November 2013.

Beginning September 2013, the ECA Staff Union introduced a system whereby staff of ECA and FUNSA members could get reductions in different well-known



currently working for the Organization. The number of staff managed by the Union is five, which includes: the Manager of the gym, the Assistant Manager, two aerobic Instructors and one technician.

The main tasks of the Union includes servicing its members in the area of managing the Union's budget, its Gymnasium, the staff Cafeteria located at the Green House and other activities organized as necessary. Furthermore, it is also the task of the Union office to organize Town Hall meetings, meetings for elected ECA Staff Union as well as FUNSA members. In addition to the above mentioned tasks, the Office is now responsible for managing the FUNSA activities as needed as well as coordinating with the ECA and other organizations' administrations for announcements and other activities such as organizing family days for

Supermarkets and other shops for building materials, etc. The number of cards produced so far is around 1,100. In connection to getting more privileges and advantages from the outside markets, the Union has organized a Car Deal with well-known Car Dealers in town, securing substantial reductions for the staff. It is in the Union's future work plan to organize a second car exhibition and perhaps other products, depending on requests received which will benefit staff with a reduced price from the outside markets. It is also in its future plan to open a UN Books and Souvenir Shop to be managed by the Staff Union.

Emergency Loan service on a short term basis has been one of the main tasks of the ECA Staff Union. At the beginning of the loan period, the amount was Eth.Birr 5000 to be repaid within 4 months. This was further increased to Eth.Birr 20,000 repayable in

15 months. We currently have requests from several staff members to increase the current amount to Birr 30,000 which needs to be decided by the newly-elected Staff Union members.

Challenges: The Union has a problem of getting back regular contributions of staff as well as loan payments under the Umoja system, since the Staff Union system was linked to IMIS and has not yet been upgraded. Currently, the Union, in collaboration with ITSS, is trying to solve this problem.

Union's expectation from its members: ECA Staff Union members need to support their Union by attending the General Assembly meetings called by their Union. This would give members an open floor to discuss their views and expectations.

The following are the summaries of the activities in the area of finance and gymnasium management by the ECA Staff Union.

Contribution by Tsetargachew Zewede - Team Assistant

The financial activity of the Staff Union Office has increased significantly. The sources of income of the Union include membership contributions, interest from loans, Gymnasium fees, Subvention fund grant from HQ and advertisement income from the UN Staff Voice Magazine. As of now, the Union has about 600 General Service and Professional staff as its members. The Office also facilitates emergency loans for staff members. Currently, three hundred staff members benefit from this arrangement. In return, the Office gains interest income. The Staff Union Gymnasium is also visited on average by 70 to 80 Staff members and their families every month. There is, for maintenance purposes, a need to revisit the monthly subscription payment.

Recently the Union procured gymnasium equipment costing about one million Ethiopian birr in order to upgrade its facilities. There are also permanent expenditures for operational activities which include the salaries of five employees. Another major expense of the Union is Mission travel for its members to attend international meetings of staff unions and associations. In addition, some Staff Unions have agreed to participate and pay their share when the ECA Union organizes childrens' Christmas play day. The main responsibility rests with the ECA Staff Union. Furthermore, the Union has an obligation to pay its annual membership fees for CCISUA, FICSA and FUNSA.

Although the secretariat of the ECA Staff Union has few staff members, its activities are managed smoothly due

to the strong dedication and team spirit to support our colleagues. We feel very proud of the increase of the assets of the Union from less than half a million birr to more than seven million birr over the last eight to nine years.

Finally, we promise to continue working hard for the betterment of our Union.

Contribution by Tibebe Mulugeta, Manager, UNECA Gymnasium: Overviews and Suggestions for Improvement

Overview: The Gymnasium Health and Fitness class Industry has benefited from recent marketing campaign aimed at fighting obesity as well as customer trends toward improved health. During the current month of school holidays, dependants of many staff members registered to participate at the ECA Gym. These show the consciousness of staff and their families about the benefit of regularly doing exercise for family well being. The increase is also due to the fact that most of those participating are teenagers and aware of the need for doing gym regularly as well as due to the fact that, compared to outside costs, payment to become a member is relatively low.

Over the last few years, the ECA gymnasium has increased significantly due to the support of the ECA Staff Union. The regular updating of the gymnasium with modern equipments and qualified aerobic teachers has motivated many staff members to join the Gym. It has also created consciousness among the staff on the role of exercise in preventing modern diseases such as diabetes, obesity, blood pressure and other health-related problems. The current Gym subscription fees are fairly reasonable, causing zero membership loss.

Activities: The Gym has different Cardio and Strength machine. There are also Aerobics classes from Monday to Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. New classes known as Insanity and T25 cardio workout class in the mornings and at lunch time with flat TV screen are expected to start soon.

Gym participation in different categories as of July, 2016 is as follows:

No	Staff Membres		Non-staff & Agency	Affiliate	AFICS
	Staff Paying	Deduction			
1	47	33	17	4	41
	Total			142	

Challenges: (1) Shower: Most of the time, the solar boiler is out of order and because of this, hot showers

are not always available. (2) Locker: the lockers are two old filing cabinets; they take space and are not at all comfortable for keeping clothes. (3) Printer: members frequently request copies of the Exercise programme & information but we can't help for lack of a printer.

New equipment: We have received new equipment which motivate staff to do more exercise. Below is the list of new machines installed in the Gym:

- Tread Mills
- Recumbent bike
- Spinning Bike
- Leg Press
- Abdominal incline Bench (Sit Up)
- Peck- Deck

Maintenance: The Gym Machine has a maintenance Schedule and they are checked regularly by the Gym technician

Suggestions also: Members suggested that to revise the price and increase activities by including for example, sauna bath, steam Jacuzzi pool, a small café place, a waiting area etc. Such activities would increase the membership. They also suggested to develop a new layout for the machine which means adding more treadmills, Rowers and cross trainer thereby preventing customer from long queues or having to wait for the machine to be free. Fulfilling costumers need is one of the most important parts of running the Gym. By pleasing members, we build a good reputation and assist the Staff Union to procure more equipment.

Suggestions also included: To find an appropriate location for more activities which includes: indoor & minor games like table tennis, chess, chinese checker, snakes and ladders, darts and so on...organize walking programmes with all Gym members at least on a quarterly basis.

Advertising: January is a good time to advertise for keeping fitness regimes on track.

There is one saying if getting in shape is one your new year's resolutions you don't have to break the bank to break a sweat. If you need having a healthy life and wellness and physically fit come to ECA Gym. Location of the Gym and the price per customer's offers are new way to improve the Gym any ways the ECA suggest that the location is well placed due to the early accessibility of the facility

Staff:

The ECA Gym is run by UNECA Staff Union and has five staff indicated below:

- One manager
- One Assistant Manager
- Two Aerobics Instructors
- One Technician

Compassion :

Our member : Ato. Tadesse Teklu has passed away recently and we would like to convey our condolences to his family and friends.



United Nations Day,
celebrated annually on
24 October, is dedicated
to the global efforts and
achievements of the UN

Ethiopia's President Mulatu Teshome extends support to preservation of Africa Hall

Addis Ababa, 1 June 2016 (ECA) - The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Mr. Carlos Lopes, met Ethiopia's President Mulatu Teshome on 31 May 2016 to discuss progress on plans to renovate the iconic Africa Hall as part of a larger project to modernize the building and also create a visitor's centre experience on the grounds of the ECA.

Mr. Lopes informed the President that the UN General Assembly had approved the scope, timeline and budget for the Africa Hall renovation project, which he underscored, aims to tackle structural integrity fixes and modernization of the building as well as "ensure heritage preservation and conservation of Africa Hall as a permanent symbol of Africa's history and unity."

The meeting underscored that Ethiopia, as the host government of the UN in the country would serve as the "champion" for the Africa Hall project and continue to assist the ECA with the mobilization of voluntary support from other member States and other entities willing to contribute. In approving the project, the General Assembly had encouraged solicitation of voluntary support for the project.

President Teshome welcomed the decision by the General Assembly and lauded the project as a "recognition of the fact that Africa Hall is a living symbol of Africa's rich history, whose preservation will serve, not just as a catalyst of African unity but also as a source of belonging for all of Africa."

He recalled Ethiopia's history as a founding member of

the United Nations and the country's full commitment to Africa's causes and expressed unreserved support from himself and the host government, "not just as a partner but a "vanguard", to ensure successful execution of the project.

The President stressed that a renovated Africa Hall would not just be an enhanced symbol of happiness for Ethiopians but Africa at large. He added that preserving the history resident there would also be a good source of learning for children, "so that they can appreciate the contribution of our forefathers to the unity of Africa."

Also present at the meeting was Assistant Secretary-General Stephen Cutts from the United Nations Office for Central Services, who highlighted the central role his office would play in the effective management of UN capital projects, including Africa Hall. He echoed Mr. Lopes on the imperative of assured Host Government support, which he said the UN General Assembly has always emphasized for all such projects.

"Addis Ababa is undoubtedly the diplomatic capital of Africa and all eyes will be on the success of such a challenging project," he said.

Planning for the multi-year project is underway, with construction expected to start in 2018 and full occupancy of the building planned in 2021.

Source: ECA Intranet

Issued by: ECA's Communications Section, PIKMD



Ministerial Meeting at Early Years

ECA's chief earns an honorary doctorate for his dedication to Africa's development

Awassa, Ethiopia, 09 July, 2016 (ECA) – Carlos Lopes, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Development Studies. Ethiopia's recognition of Lopes' intellectual contribution to Africa's development was conferred by Ethiopia's Deputy Prime Minister. Present at the ceremony was Minister Arkebe Oqubay and Ambassador Mohamed Idriss Farah of Djibouti. "It is with humility that I accept this Doctor Honoris Causa... I will continue to do my utmost to uphold this honour and trust," said Lopes in his acceptance speech. Thousands of students graduating at Hawassa University, one of Ethiopia's top institutions, drew inspiration from his acceptance speech as he spoke about Africa and its future.

"I am passionate about Africa; it has always been a subject of my interest and study," he said, adding it was significant that he was receiving this honour in Ethiopia, an emblem of Africa's liberation and a country rooted in a deep history of pan Africanism. He congratulated the new graduates, wishing them every success in future. "You are Africa's future," said the ECA Chief, urging the students, as they set out to conquer new opportunities, "should be inspired by renowned figures of Africa's independence like Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Lumumba and Amilcar Cabral who started their political engagements as young adults."

"Anything is possible. Be fearless, be courageous, be

ambitious and have conviction of action," he told the graduates.

He said that the choice for Africa is to use favourable tailwinds to achieve economic transformation, and to accomplish this through industrialization, stating, "We have to confront and change the negative narrative first. This cannot be achieved without changing the mindset." He said it was high time African economies moved up the global value chain and transform themselves from being mere suppliers of raw materials to producers of manufactured goods as well as suppliers of services to generate jobs, higher wages and diversified manufacturing.

He hailed Ethiopia as an example of a bold state-led development model with a long-term vision for structural transformation.

"From being one of the poorest countries in Africa, Ethiopia has in a decade and a half metamorphosed to achieve double-digit economic growth, quadrupled its gross domestic product per capita, increased life expectancy by 12 years, and reduced poverty by half," he said.

"If Africa is going to own its narrative, it has to be based on real changes," said Lopes.

Source: ECA Intranet

Issued by: ECA's Communications Section, PIKMD



Minister Arkebe Oqubay, Ambassador Mohamed Idriss Farah of Djibout and Executive Secretary of ECA, Carlos Lopes

The real reasons you procrastinate — and how to stop

By Ana Swanson April 27

iStock

Have you ever sat down to complete an important task — and then suddenly discovered you were up loading the dishwasher or engrossed in the Wikipedia entry about Chernobyl? Or perhaps you suddenly realize that the dog needs to be fed, emails need to be answered, your ceiling fan needs dusting — or maybe you should go ahead and have lunch, even though it's only 11 a.m.?

Next thing you know, it's the end of the day and your important task remains unfinished.

For many people, procrastination is a strong and mysterious force that keeps them from completing the most urgent and important tasks in their lives with the same strength as when you try to bring like poles of a magnet together.

It's also a potentially dangerous force, causing victims to fail out of school, perform poorly at work, put off medical treatment or delay saving for retirement. A Case Western Reserve University study from 1997 found that college-age procrastinators ended up with higher stress, more illness and lower grades by the end of the semester.

But the reasons people procrastinate are not understood that well. Some researchers have viewed procrastination largely as a failure of self-regulation — like other bad behaviors that have to do with a lack of self-control, such as overeating, a gambling problem or overspending. Others say it's not a matter of being lazy or poor time management,

as many smart overachievers who procrastinate often can attest. They say it may actually be linked to how our brain works and to deeper perceptions of time and the self.

- 5 tips to help you stop procrastinating
- Embed Share
- Play Video1:05

Procrastination affects many people, preventing them from completing their most urgent and important tasks. Here are some tips, selected from expert research, to help. (The Washington Post)

How exactly does procrastination work, and how do you stop it? Psychological research, comics and “The Simpsons” will explain.



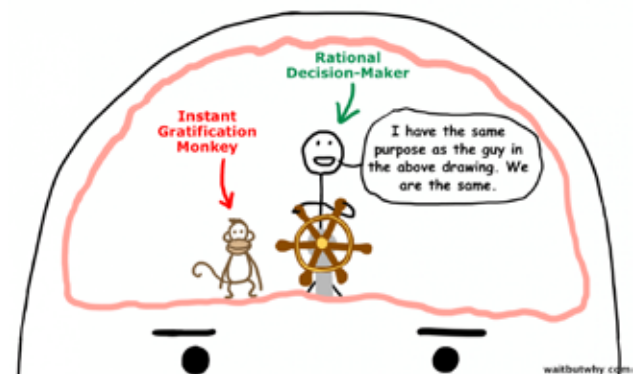
The real origins of procrastination

Most psychologists see procrastination as a kind of avoidance behavior, a coping mechanism gone awry in which people “give in to feel good,” says Timothy Pynchyl, a professor who studies procrastination at Carleton University, in Ottawa.

It usually happens when people fear or dread, or have anxiety about, the important task awaiting them. To get rid of this negative feeling, people procrastinate — they open up a video game or Pinterest instead. That makes them feel better temporarily, but unfortunately, reality comes back to bite them in the end.

Once the reality of a deadline sets in again, procrastinators feel more extreme shame and guilt. But for an extreme procrastinator, those negative feelings can be just another reason to put the task off, with the behavior turning into a vicious, self-defeating cycle.

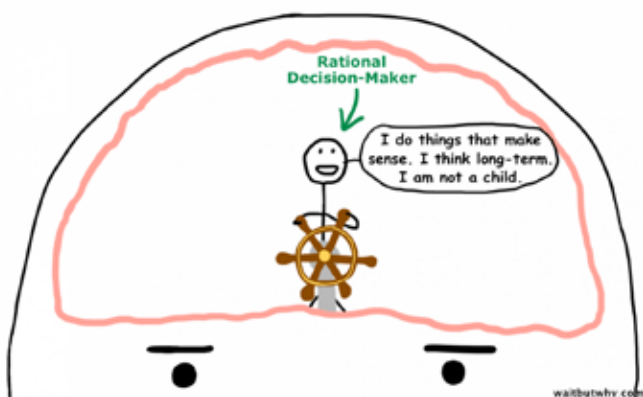
Procrastinator's Brain



(Tim Urban/Wait But Why)

The monkey seems as though he will be fun, but in fact he is a lot of trouble, as Urban's comics illustrate.

Non-Procrastinator's Brain



(Tim Urban/Wait But Why)

The brain of a procrastinator looks similar, except for the presence of a little friend, which Urban labels the “instant gratification monkey.”



(Tim Urban/Wait But Why)



(Tim Urban/Wait But Why)



(Tim Urban/Wait But Why)



(Tim Urban/Wait But Why)

This continues until things get really bad — the prospect of the end of your career or your schooling looms. Then something that Urban calls the “panic monster” kicks in and finally spurs you into action.



(Tim Urban/Wait But Why)

People can be various kinds of procrastinators, Urban says. Some procrastinate by doing useless things, such as searching for cat GIFs. Others actually accomplish things — cleaning their homes, working their boring jobs — but never quite getting to the things they really want to accomplish in life, their most important, long-term goals.

To illustrate this, Urban uses a concept that is known as an Eisenhower Matrix, a graphic that was included in “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.” It’s named after Dwight D. Eisenhower, the famously productive president. Eisenhower thought that people should spend their time on what was truly important to them — the tasks in Quadrants 1 and 2 below.

The Eisenhower Matrix

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	QUADRANT 1 IMPORTANT AND URGENT	QUADRANT 2 IMPORTANT BUT NOT URGENT
NOT IMPORTANT	QUADRANT 3 URGENT BUT NOT IMPORTANT	QUADRANT 4 NOT IMPORTANT AND NOT URGENT

waitbutwhy.com

(Tim Urban/Wait But Why)

The Procrastinator's Matrix

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	Q1 DO WHEN IT GOES FROM URGENT TO APPALLINGLY DIRE	Q2 DELEGATE TO FUTURE YOU
NOT IMPORTANT	Q3 DO WHEN Q1 IS URGENT	Q4 DO NOW (and maybe also just do forever)

waitbutwhy.com

(Tim Urban/Wait But Why)

Unfortunately, most procrastinators spend little time in those quadrants, Urban says. Instead, they mostly hang out in Quadrants 3 and 4, doing things that may be urgent, but are not important. Occasionally, when the panic monster takes over, they take a very brief detour to Quadrant 1.

Urban says this habit is disastrous because “the road to the procrastinator’s dreams — the road to expanding his horizons, exploring his true potential and achieving work he’s truly proud of — runs directly through Quadrant 2. Q1 and Q3 may be where people survive, but Q2 is where people thrive, grow and blossom.”

This is Urban’s own personal explanation of how and why he procrastinates — but his account actually corresponds with psychological research on the topic. Pynchon discusses the idea of the “monkey mind” — that our thoughts are constantly darting all over the place, preventing us from concentrating. And psychologists

agree that the problem with procrastinators is that they are tempted to give in to instant gratification, which brings people the kind of instant relief psychologists call “hedonic pleasure,” rather than staying focused on the long-term goal.

Important goals (the kind that occupy the first and second quadrants above) are more challenging but in the long run bring longer lasting feelings of well-being and self-satisfaction that psychologists call “eudaimonic pleasure.”

How to return to the land of the productive
Beyond trying to be kinder to our future selves, what else can people do about procrastination?

Tim Urban points out that the typical advice for procrastinators — essentially, to stop what they’re doing and get down to work, is ridiculous, because procrastination isn’t something that extreme procrastinators feel as though they can control.

“While we’re here, let’s make sure obese people avoid overeating, depressed people avoid apathy, and someone please tell beached whales that they should avoid being out of the ocean,” Urban writes.

But there are some simple tips, those who study the subject say, that can help procrastinators get down to business.

Interestingly, research suggests that one of the most effective things that procrastinators can do is to forgive themselves for procrastinating. In a study by Pychyl and others, students who reported forgiving themselves for procrastinating on studying for a first exam ended up procrastinating less for a second exam. This works because procrastination is linked to negative feelings, the researchers say. Forgiving yourself can reduce the guilt you feel about procrastinating, which is one of the main triggers for procrastinating in the first place.

But the best thing that Pychyl recommends is to recognize that you don’t have to be in the mood to do a certain task — just ignore how you feel and get started. “Most of us seem to tacitly believe that our emotional state has to match the task at hand,” says Pychyl. But that’s just not true. “I have to recognize that I’m rarely going to feel like it, and it doesn’t matter if I don’t feel like it.”

Instead of focusing on feelings, we have to think about what the next action is, Pychyl says. He counsels people to break down their tasks into very small steps that can actually be accomplished. So if it’s something like writing a letter of reference, the first step is just opening the letterhead and writing the date.

Even if it’s an extremely small action, a little progress will typically make you feel better about the task and increase your self-esteem, which in turn reduces the desire to procrastinate to make yourself feel better, he says.

Pychyl believes that teachers and parents should teach kids to deal with the temptations of procrastination from a young age. “A lot of teachers think that kids have time-management problems, when they procrastinate. And they don’t have a time-management problem. ... What they have is an emotion-management problem. They have to learn that you don’t feel good all the time, and you’ve got to get on with it.”

“Mark Twain is quoted as saying, ‘If your job is to eat a frog, eat it first thing in the morning, and if your job is to eat two frogs, eat the big one first,’” Pychyl says.

Urban basically says the same thing in different language.

Source: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/04/27/why-you-cant-help-read-this-article-about-procrastination-instead-of-doing-your-job/?utm_campaign=pockethits&utm_medium=email&utm_source=pocket

UN Staff who have served the organization 20-plus years



UN Staff who have served the organization 20-plus years, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with Secretary-General, Mr. Ban-ki-Moon, Madame Ban-ki-Moon and Mr. Carlos Lopes, Executive Secretary, ECA.



From the Executive Secretary's Blog

Book Review of: "Innovation Africa: Emerging Hubs of Excellence"

At a time when Africa has bold aspirations, through Agenda 2063, to confront large scale challenges like the ascendant demographic curve, green industrialization and domestic resource mobilization, it is imperative that innovation be inclusive in order to facilitate the creation of decent jobs, generate investments, and contribute to the continent's structural transformation. As a late comer, Africa has the advantage to leapfrog technologies, learn from others mistakes and reinvent things differently in a way that promotes sustainability as well as inclusiveness. But to succeed, deliberate policies are badly needed.

With this backdrop, the book "Innovation Africa: Emerging Hubs of Excellence" is a must read. Authors, Olugbenga Adesida, Geci Karuri-Sebina and João Resende-Santos not only illustrate Africa's experience with innovation to date but also point to its power for transformation. From the very onset, one is reminded that "Africa is no longer the place it was in the past ... the technological innovations taking place on the continent today offer the promise of transforming African countries from trading mainly in materials and commodities to trading in knowledge-intensive products."

The book posits that the popular "Africa rising" narrative originates from external (non-African) perspectives vis a vis what economic development and innovation systems means for the continent. By default, this perspective ignores many of the realities and opportunities that actually exist on the continent. The book however offers a refreshing alternative; a Pan-African narrative and prospective framework to address the challenges of development as well as underdevelopment to match the African context. For instance, the authors advocate for the development of inclusive innovation systems; the practice of self-reliance as opposed to dependency; and the importance for strengthened human and institutional capacity which includes the richness of the African culture and its endogenous potential.

Through a medley of nine case studies, from Nollywood's rise to Algeria's steel industry, sizeable innovations from hubs across different regions of the continent, are showcased. The success factors as well as lessons learned are analysed and concrete policy recommendations offered on what must be done differently going forward. It becomes clear to the reader that Africa has the ability as well as potential to innovate and that there are a multiplicity of the players driving innovation. For example, the study of Cape Verde's successful electronic government led by public sector, illustrates how policy

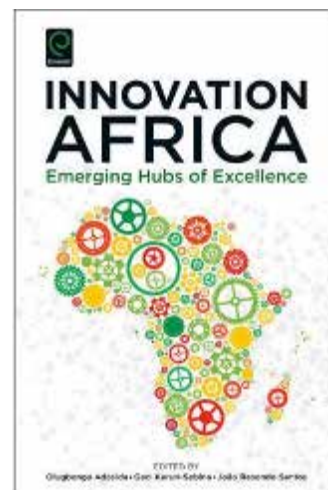
driven innovation has reduced the costs and time of doing business and worked-well in the context of a small island developing country. An analysis of the mobile technology innovation ecosystem in Kenya demonstrates how a combination of deliberate policies, infrastructure development as well as having the government in the lead, have been instrumental in providing the enabling institutional and macroeconomic environment needed for the innovation to thrive. The story of Ghana's Suame Magazine illustrates how the informal sector and its artisans have been key in the emergence of one of the country's most important industrial zones specialising in engineering and manufacturing. While a study on the Palm Residue Industry in Egypt showcases how innovation has transformed agricultural by-products into a local treasure with social and economic benefits spearheaded by the academic sector in cooperation with the private sector and local community.

A clear take away is that for innovation to mature, thrive and be valued, it must be supported by a conducive ecosystem. More must be done if Africa is to fully harness innovation systems and compete in the new world economy. In turn the book offers a menu of the deliberate policies needed in order to step up the pace of innovation in Africa, making it a treasure trove for policy makers, academics, business leaders and the public at large.

There is an exciting opportunity just around the corner to make Africa the continent of the future if we just pay attention to the messages of this book.

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

1 NO POVERTY 	2 NO HUNGER 	3 GOOD HEALTH 	4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY 	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 	7 RENEWABLE ENERGY 	8 GOOD JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION 	14 LIFE BELOW WATER 	15 LIFE ON LAND 	16 PEACE AND JUSTICE
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	 THE GLOBAL GOALS For Sustainable Development		

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