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**General discussion on the theme of the second session,
“Achieving the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063:
from planning to implementation of the gender and social
development goals for inclusive and sustainable development”:
(a) presentation of the issues paper: From planning to
implementation of the gender and social development goals
for inclusive and sustainable development**

Issues Paper**From planning to implementation of the gender and
social development goals for inclusive and
sustainable development****I. Introduction and background**

1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted in 2015, represents an ambitious effort to end poverty, transform lives, protect the planet, address inequalities and pave the way for sustainable and inclusive development for all. This is articulated in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals that are aimed at transforming economies and societies and ensuring that everyone participate in order to “leave no one behind”.

2. The Sustainable Development Goals emerged from the experience of attempting to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, which had been drawn up at the beginning of the twentieth century as one of the most far-reaching development agendas ever proposed. The premise was simple, but ambitious: by the year 2015, the world’s Governments would have made significant progress in reducing the worst forms of human deprivation. While the Millennium Development Goals galvanized political consensus on time-bound targets, a required focus on more structural causes of human deprivation was absent.

3. In 2015, the Millennium Development Goals made the transition to the Sustainable Development Goals. The latter outline an inclusive and comprehensive sustainable development path anchored on three pillars of a holistic economic, social and environmental development framework to promote overall sustainable development.

*E/ECA/CGSD/2/1

A. Mandate of the Economic Commission for Africa in relation to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063

4. The mandate of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is to promote the economic and social development of African member States, foster intraregional integration and facilitate international cooperation for Africa's development. As part of the development arm of the United Nations, ECA provides critical thinking on Africa's development through research and knowledge generation.

5. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, ECA has supported member States in implementing the global commitments with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals and regional development frameworks such as Agenda 2063.

6. Working with the African Union Commission and other partners, ECA was actively involved in defining the priorities for Africa through organizing regional consultations that culminated in the Common African Position on the post-2015 Development Agenda, which outlined the continent's contributions to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, the New Partnership for Africa's Development led to the new continental development agenda, namely, Agenda 2063, which is the continent's development blueprint to achieve a prosperous Africa on the basis of inclusive growth and sustainable development.

7. Against this backdrop, ECA has repositioned itself to support member States with greater evidence-based policy interventions in their implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 for stronger results. It engages with member States to adapt the Sustainable Development Goals to the national context and supports the African Union, the regional economic communities and member States in achieving the objectives contained in the 2030 Agenda and the Agenda 2063 for Africa's social and economic development.

8. The 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 constitute the guiding frameworks for the work of ECA and its substantive divisions, including the Social Development Policy Division and subregional offices, in supporting member States through technical/advisory services, policy research and influence and capacity development within the context of the structural transformation agenda on the continent.

B. Recommendations of member States at the Committee on Gender and Social Development in 2015

9. In implementing the recommendations of the first Committee on Gender and Social Development, held in December 2015, subprogrammes 6 and 9 have undertaken analytical work and advisory services, including capacity-building, in support of the targets specific to the social development aspects of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Specifically, the Social Development Policy Division undertook work in gender, social protection and employment and population mobility and their linkages to economic and social development, as well as in the opportunities and challenges of urbanization. In addition, the Division, in collaboration with other substantive divisions and subregional offices, conducted capacity-building for and provided advisory services to member States in its focus areas to ensure that development on the continent is both inclusive and equitable. The report of the Division's work within the two subprogrammes will be presented separately.

C. Objectives, scope and limitations of the issues paper

10. The issues paper highlights key issues so that policy discussions may be generated on what member States are currently doing in terms of planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. It also serves to offer member States an opportunity to exchange success stories and challenges faced in the early implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national level and its integration into policies, plans and strategies, with a special focus on the gender and social dimensions of sustainable development.

11. The issues paper also provides a platform for assessing prospects, challenges and opportunities for member States to explore in order to accelerate implementation of the two related Agendas. Notwithstanding the fact that all the goals in both initiatives are intrinsically connected, the paper focuses on the following nine Sustainable Development Goals:

- (a) End poverty in all its forms everywhere (Goal 1);
- (b) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture (Goal 2);
- (c) Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages (Goal 3);
- (d) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (Goal 4);
- (e) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (Goal 5);
- (f) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (Goal 6);
- (g) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all (Goal 8);
- (h) Reduce inequality within and among countries (Goal 10);
- (i) Make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (Goal 11).

II. Transformative agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals

12. The 2030 Agenda marks a departure from aid-driven and externally driven initiatives and constitutes a reorientation of the development paradigm towards domestically funded development initiatives that are driven by developing countries, thereby ensuring national ownership, something that was missing in the Millennium Development Goals. Some of the useful lessons learned from the efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals were the following:

- (a) Disparities among subnational levels and among social economic categories;
- (b) Limited financial resources available from the State;
- (c) Unavailable or incomplete data on many indicators;
- (d) Top-down implementation approach from the central Government;
- (e) Inadequate communication strategy and advocacy.

13. In a sense, the Sustainable Development Goals build on the progress, experience, lessons learned and the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals. A key lesson carried over from the latter to the former is the importance of inclusive and people-centred development planning as a

means to achieve the time-bound targets. This has the potential to generate unprecedented improvements in the lives of people around the world.

14. A distinct feature of the Sustainable Development Goals is their strong emphasis on domestic resource mobilization in terms of financing, which is critical to the effective implementation of both the 2030 Agenda and the aspirations contained in Agenda 2063. On the other hand, the Millennium Development Goals were criticized for being overly dependent on external financing and for being minimalist or too narrow, therefore leaving out many priorities, such as employment and decent work, sustainability and climate change and a reduction in inequality and discrimination, all of which are among the top contemporary challenges in almost all developed and developing countries.

15. The thrust of the Sustainable Development Goals is to move countries into a future free from poverty and deprivation and one that enhances human rights, equality and sustainability, with a strong emphasis on gender equality. There are significant synergies and relationships between the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and their importance in achieving sustainable development in Africa. Recent analysis by ECA shows that there is 65 per cent convergence in terms of the goals contained in both Agendas, while 37 per cent of the targets are strongly matched.

16. While the 2030 Agenda has a focus on the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental), Agenda 2063 concerns structural transformation and people-centred development, underpinned by strengthened productive capacities, especially in agriculture, industry and science, technology and innovation.

17. Given that nearly 75 per cent of the world's poorest countries are located in Africa and that 7 of 10 most unequal countries are located in Africa, the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 are important tools for achieving inclusive and equitable development on the continent. Both agendas are therefore complementary and important for Africa, given that together, they offer a holistic approach to tackling many of the continent's social and economic challenges.

III. Progress in achieving the social indicators contained in the Sustainable Development Goals

18. Although remarkable progress was recorded in achieving the social indicators contained in the Millennium Development Goals regarding universal primary education, gender parity in primary education among boys and girls, infant and under-five mortality rates and a reduction in the prevalence rates of HIV, there were notable challenges in some areas.

19. For example, Africa recorded slow progress in reducing poverty, inequality and maternal mortality owing to a lack of inclusive growth and limited employment opportunities, weak social insurance schemes and inadequate health personnel and poor health infrastructure, especially in rural areas. In addition, many countries faced serious challenges, from poor planning and fragmentation in funding to weak institutional and policy environment. Other constraints were inadequate financing and weak data systems to facilitate the effective monitoring and evaluation of results.

20. This points to some serious implementation gaps with regard to the Millennium Development Goals. They therefore represent an unfinished agenda, which the 2030 Agenda serves as an attempt to fill. More precisely, the 2030 Agenda is an attempt to close those gaps on a number of issues, including gender and women's empowerment, poverty, hunger and malnutrition, education, health and employment, in a broader and more coordinated manner.

21. The Sustainable Development Goals are indivisible and wholly integrated in scope and coverage. For example, one cannot discuss the Goal on health in isolation from gender, poverty, hunger, education, water and sanitation. Health has implications for the other Goals and vice versa. The same can be said for gender or poverty in relation to the other Goals. The focus of this paper is on the gender-oriented and social-oriented Goals, in line with the mandate of the Social Development Policy Division.

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere (Sustainable Development Goal 1)

22. On the basis of the 2013 data, 389 million Africans are poor, and women and young people bear the brunt of poverty. Currently, 1 in 2 Africans live on less than \$2 per day, and the unemployment rate stands at 22 per cent but masks disparities across age, gender and subregions. Although the continent has recorded a reduction in extreme poverty (which stands at \$1.90 per day), the decline has been rather slow, falling by 15 per cent between 1990 and 2013.

23. In dealing with extreme poverty, social protection programmes should be expanded both in content and coverage, with a special focus on the poor and vulnerable groups.

2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture (Sustainable Development Goal 2)

24. Africa's food security and nutrition situation are worsening in absolute terms. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the number of undernourished people increased by 30 per cent between 1990 and 2016. Some 355 million people in Africa were moderately or severely food insecure in 2015. Food insecurity is much higher in North Africa than on the rest of the continent. In Eastern Africa, notwithstanding the recent increase in food production, the food security nutrition situation remains precarious. The proportion of undernourished people in Eastern Africa is 32 per cent. The situation is of serious concern in most countries in East Africa, such as Burundi (57.5 per cent), Ethiopia (40.4 per cent), Rwanda (37.9 per cent), Uganda (34.2 per cent) and Djibouti (33.4 per cent).

3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages (Sustainable Development Goal 3)

25. Health and well-being are the cornerstones for productive lives free from poverty. There have been significant gains in health since 2005, including a substantial decline in child mortality and the prevalence rate of HIV. Maternal mortality rates in Africa excluding North Africa dropped by 35 per cent during the period 2000-2015, while North Africa has already met the target of 70 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births.

26. Chad, the Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda and Sierra Leone register more than 500 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. Other challenges include the rapid rise of non-communicable diseases due to changing lifestyles and to widespread lesser-known tropical diseases such as river blindness, bilharzia and elephantiasis.

27. In order to galvanize the gains made in health, Africa needs to invest in health systems on a sustainable basis. Redistributive fiscal policies allowing for social protection systems that target the poor, women and children and the marginalized and vulnerable are indispensable to addressing inequities and inequitable conditions among people.

4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (Sustainable Development Goal 4)

28. Many African countries have attained universal primary education, with wide variations across and within countries. The level of skills attained at primary school, however, are insufficient to drive structural transformation and industrialization in Africa and, therefore, the need to increase investment in secondary and tertiary education. On average, Africa's secondary school

enrolment ratios stand at 53 per cent for boys and 45 per cent for girls, making it the lowest in the world. There is a need to focus on skills for productivity to boost employment prospects for dropouts to make a smooth transition into the world of work.

5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (Sustainable Development Goal 5)

29. Gender disparities have narrowed at the primary and secondary school levels in Africa, but progress remains slow, in particular at the tertiary level. Gender parity in primary school increased from 86 per cent in 1990 to 96 per cent in 2013, while parity in secondary schools rose from 71 per cent to 90 per cent.

30. Reducing disparities and enhancing women's access to economic opportunities can generate broad productivity gains and improve other development outcomes, including prospects for the next generation. Gender inequality in the labour market causes lost benefits to individuals, households and society as a whole. The attainment of gender equality and women's empowerment and the consideration of young people in development planning and implementation are therefore critical dimensions of inclusion in Africa.

31. Notwithstanding these challenges, many countries have adopted national gender policies and instruments, while at the same time putting in place gender machineries aimed at enhancing women's empowerment. An effective implementation of the latter, however, remains a challenge.

6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (Sustainable Development Goal 6)

32. While several countries have made strides in providing access to water and sanitation, only a quarter of Africa's population has gained access to improved drinking water source since 2006. In addition, only 16 per cent of the population has access to piped water, with huge disparities between rural and urban areas. Even for those countries that have improved access to water, service is often inadequate or unsustainable, and water quality is not guaranteed, in particular in rural areas, where testing facilities are, at best, non-existent. Several factors impinge on the capacity of African countries to sustainably provide water and sanitation, ranging from recurrent droughts due to climatic changes, especially in the Sahel region, to general water scarcity. Water and sanitation are essential to the health, well-being and productivity of the population. Nevertheless, ensuring access to quality water and sanitation is critical to addressing women's and girls' time poverty and to keeping girls in school.

7. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all (Sustainable Development Goal 8)

33. Twelve per cent of the population in Africa is unemployed, with unemployment among young people at 21 per cent, while 80 per cent of the jobs are vulnerable. Less than 1 per cent of the unemployed receives unemployment benefits and only 19 per cent of Africa excluding North Africa's population is covered by social insurance. In 2014, in Africa excluding North Africa the proportion of workers living on less than \$2 per day was 61.1 per cent of total employment, compared with 28 per cent for the developing world.

34. A lack of decent employment results not only in household poverty, but also in losses to the economy as a whole in terms of potential output, tax revenue and human capital.

8. Reduce inequality within and among countries (Sustainable Development Goal 10)

35. Income inequality in Africa as measured by the Gini coefficient stands at 0.44, the second highest in all the regions of the world after Latin America and

the Caribbean.¹ While the average Gini coefficient in Africa has declined steadily since the early 2000s, countries show substantial variation and are almost evenly split across rising and falling inequality in recent years. Inequality is bad for growth and development. High initial inequality reduces the poverty-reducing power of growth, more so if inequality rises through the growth process.

9. Make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (Goal 11)

36. Africa is undergoing an urban transition and is set to be the fastest urbanizing region in the world in the coming decades. In 1990, only one third of Africa's population was urban (31 per cent). By 2035, the figure is projected to reach 49 per cent, thus presenting considerable demands on employment, services and infrastructure but creating advantages for economic growth. ECA notes that such a shift offers considerable opportunities for achieving continental and global targets for inclusive growth and transformation, including those found in Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.

37. Adopting a holistic approach to development planning and the achievement of the gender and social development Sustainable Development Goals at the national and subnational levels is essential to address the challenges identified in these Goals. This calls for strong institutional mechanisms and adequate domestic resources, in line with national priorities. In addition, in view of the centrality of data and statistics for monitoring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, the capacities of national statistical offices should be strengthened to collect, manage and process data.

IV. Integrating the gender and social development Sustainable Development Goals into national development plans and strategies

38. Achieving the gender and social development Sustainable Development Goals hinges on the extent to which they are integrated into the national development planning process, which presents a unique opportunity for realizing inclusive growth and development that fosters the agreed mantra of "leaving no one behind".

39. National planning frameworks constitute the basis for the implementation of internationally agreed commitments. Identifying horizontal and vertical synergies across sectors is a prerequisite for ensuring coherence in the integration of multiple development agendas into national planning frameworks. Specifically, facilitating an understanding of the interlinkages among the various internationally agreed initiatives avoids duplication in the integration process. Overlapping goals, targets and indicators are treated as single issues and not duplicated within the national plan.² Most important, countries should strive to manage trade-offs and optimize synergies across goals, targets and indicators.

40. An integrated and cohesive implementation and monitoring framework at the regional and national levels is crucial for measuring results, monitoring progress and conducting policy reviews. In Africa, several countries are beginning to use national development plans to implement, monitor, review and report on the Sustainable Development Goals.

41. To assist in the process of achieving the gender and social development Sustainable Development Goals at the national level, a three-step approach is

¹ See Economic Commission for Africa, *Economic Report on Africa 2017: Urbanization and Industrialization for Africa's Transformation* (Addis Ababa, 2017).

² See Economic Commission for Africa, African Union, African Development Bank and United Nations Development Programme, *MDG Report 2015: Lessons Learned in Implementing the MDGs* (Addis Ababa, 2015).

suggested for countries in the initial mainstreaming process: (a) a review of existing strategies and plans; (b) setting nationally relevant targets; and (c) the formulation of a strategy and plans using integrated systems.

A. Reviewing existing plans and strategies to assess consistency and identify gaps

42. It is important to scan and detail the landscape of existing national and sectoral strategies and plans at the national, subnational and local levels and compare them with the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets to identify gaps and provide the basis for areas for change. Given the nature of the Goals, their realization will depend on how well they will be integrated into national development plans. Nevertheless, the integration process is most effective when the national development plan is anchored by a long-term vision and supported by an integrated monitoring and evaluation system. The challenge for many countries, however, is to assess whether sectoral policies and strategies are aligned and contribute in an integrated manner to this main and encompassing objective of the Goals.

43. It is also important to note that many Sustainable Development Goals and their targets refer to specific sectoral objectives and actions. In some countries, sectoral policies are already in place, and inclusiveness in these sectors has guided actions and policies, although a lot more needs to be done in many African countries.

B. Setting nationally relevant targets

44. Achieving the gender and social development Sustainable Development Goals requires a clear definition of national and subnational targets that reflect national/local realities and priorities. This should be informed by the lessons learned from the (unfinished) implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the recent assessment of the gender and social development issues in Africa. The reports and recommendations made for countries by the United Nations human rights mechanisms, such as the universal periodic review, could be used as valuable sources of information on the existing commitments that they made in various areas, including in relation to specific groups (e.g., women, children, young people, older persons, migrants, displaced people and persons with disabilities) and specific issues (e.g., education, health and access to justice).

45. Recent assessment reports arising from the 2017 Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in Africa, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and the African Gender and Development Index provide useful information on the included and excluded groups in the development process. Target-setting at the national level should be informed by robust, well-disaggregated and reliable statistics in order to support evidence-based policy interventions. Adequate national statistical capacities for data collection and disaggregation, especially by gender, age, place and vulnerable group, are therefore essential for setting national targets.

C. Formulating strategies and plans using integrated systems

46. The gender and social development Sustainable Development Goals are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Once countries have established their priority goals/targets, they will have to design/adjust their national and sectoral development policies and strategies, with a view to achieving the national goals/targets. The 2030 Agenda therefore contains calls for integrated solutions across sectors (horizontal policy coherence) and between various government

levels (vertical policy coherence). This approach offers an opportunity for the improved coordination and harmonization of policies to eliminate contradictions or unintended impacts, avoid overlaps, enhance efficiency and boost capacity to implement.

47. Strong institutions and effective gender and social policies are instrumental in promoting integrated approaches, given that they promote win-win scenarios and deal with trade-offs. In this regard, there is a need for clear institutional mandates that guarantee strong leadership and coordination and consultation mechanisms that facilitate the meaningful participation of all stakeholders. Equally crucial are strengthened capacities for evidence-based policymaking and effective links among the development plan, the annual budget and the multi-year expenditure frameworks.

48. Multidisciplinary coordination supported by political will at higher levels in Government is critical in breaking silos across ministries and sectors. Countries should therefore undertake an honest evaluation of the effectiveness of their current institutional arrangements for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, with a special focus on the gender and social development Goals. The role of planning agencies is paramount in ensuring effective coordination and implementation across the board.

49. In attaining coherence and alignment in public policies, several instruments and strategies are needed, ranging from budgetary processes and defining priorities in a specific context to building synergies and interlinkages in programmes and programming. Policies that promote inclusion by reducing poverty and inequality such as universal social protection, redistribution, pro-poor gender and equitable growth strategies and employment creation could go a long way in enhancing the achievement of the gender and social development Sustainable Development Goals.

V. Challenges

50. The current attempt to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into national development plans shows that the process presents challenges, as discussed below.

1. Lack of appropriate institutional architecture

51. Specifically, the relationship between national planning commissions on the one hand and the ministry of finance on the other tends to be weak. Owing to many competing demands, national budgets sometimes do not cover all the priorities reflected in the plan. In addition, many government agencies are still operating in silos, with minimal efforts to harness horizontal and vertical linkages to create synergies, especially between economic and social sectors.

2. Insufficient budgetary resources

52. The budget and medium-term expenditure framework is the bridge that links the plan to implementation. The extent of the alignment to the plan is informed by the extent of coordination between finance, planning and line ministries. This has implications for operationalizing commitments to planned activities. The spending targets agreed to by African member States for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and regional frameworks were never reached. Health expenditure that was agreed to was 15 per cent of government expenditure, but actual figures show 9.9 per cent on average. Similarly, gender spending is a priority but represents only 0.03 per cent of gross domestic product. Spending targets for social investment to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, which are contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, have yet to be determined. Indeed, there is wide variation between planned and actual spending on social goals, including gender, in most countries.

3. Dependence on foreign aid

53. Aligning resources to national priorities has proven difficult owing to the dependence on foreign aid. The Sustainable Development Goals represent a paradigm shift with regard to domestic resources, but significant resources are needed for achieving the Goals. In addition, aid predictability for planning purposes is particularly critical. These challenges do not deter from the need to ensure the alignment of national or regional social priorities with available resources. First, the planning procedure of medium-term and long-term resource requirements should emerge from the line ministry on health, education and women and inform plans and ministers of finance. Second, coordination and capacity-building in planning techniques need to be embedded in line ministries for improved alignment, costing and prioritization.

54. There is a wide array of options that countries could explore to finance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, such as domestic public resources (which are more sustainable), domestic and international private sector finance, debt financing, international trade financing and international development financing. In allocating resources in the national development plan to finance the gender and social development Goals, issues of equity should be taken into account to ensure that no one is being left behind in the development process.

55. The monitoring and evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals has tended to be fragmented and compounded by separate and multiple reporting and monitoring mechanisms demanded by donors. This is evident at the national level but also at subnational levels, in which separate plans for monitoring at lower levels of government, different methodologies and different management information systems for specific ministries create duplication. The effective evaluation of the magnitude and direction of resources, capacity needs and impact therefore becomes challenging.³

56. One of the innovations of the 2030 Agenda has been a deliberate emphasis on domestic resources or local financing to assure sustainability. The financing of the gender and social development Sustainable Development Goals in Africa is therefore strongly anchored to domestic resource mobilization. This focus is in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, in which there are calls for, among other things, public policies and the mobilization and the effective use of domestic resources, underscored by the principle of national ownership, as being central to achieving the Goals.

4. Lack of inter-sectoral coordination

57. While there are many sectors that relate to the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level and other tiers of government, the major change in member States is the weak intersectoral coordination for the effective implementation and monitoring of outcomes. This is particularly critical at subnational levels, in which institutional capacity is either weak or lacking. There is therefore a need for a multisectoral approach to Goal planning and implementation to avoid duplication and high transaction costs associated with a multiplicity of interventions. In this regard, institutional strengthening will be critical to fostering the coordination of interventions.

5. Lack of timely, accurate and disaggregated data and statistical systems

58. Emphasis is placed in target 17.18 of Sustainable Development Goal 17 on the importance of data, monitoring and accountability “to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data

³ Economic Commission for Africa, African Union Commission, African Development Bank and United Nations Development Programme, *MDGS to Agenda 2063/SDGs Transition Report 2016: Towards an Integrated and Coherent Approach to Sustainable Development in Africa* (Addis Ababa, 2016).

disaggregated by income, gender, age, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographical location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts”.

59. Strong national statistical systems provide a good foundation for timely and well-disaggregated data in support of policy simulation and accurate and timely reporting on development initiatives. With the broader reporting requirements occasioned by the global and regional development frameworks, strong and capable national statistical systems are critical. Measures to support systems and capacity development for data gathering and analysis are therefore urgently required.

60. The availability of disaggregated social development and gender data is essential to the effective monitoring and evaluation of the gender and social development Sustainable Development Goals. Countries still lack such data, which is crucial not only to addressing social development-related and gender-related issues but also to implementing socially responsive and gender-responsive budgeting. To address this gap, greater national investment is required to strengthen national capacities to produce data and statistics and make it available to users.

6. Limited capacity of line ministries to design and implement programmes

61. Limited capacity to design and implement programmes in member States is a manifestation of a general malaise in institutions in countries. Many member States do not have a ready pool of human resources with the skills required to design and implement programmes. Public institutions have been losing staff to the private sector that pays relatively well, thus weakening their portfolio to design and implement programmes. In addition, the fiscal space in member States is constrained by many factors, such as a lack of diversified economies to generate sufficient resources for the sustained implementation of programmes. There is therefore a need to build and retain technical expertise supported by adequate budgetary resources.

7. Weak policy priorities

62. The coherent integration of the internationally agreed development initiatives into national planning frameworks is a necessary but insufficient condition for policy sequencing and prioritization, both of which are vital for policy impact. Given the limited human and financial resources, policymakers need to know *ex ante* the likely impact of their policy interventions on various segments of society. While it is true that medium-term plans identify key priority interventions over a time frame of, say, three to five years, it is neither feasible nor financially optimal for a country to undertake all the priority interventions simultaneously. Appropriate policy sequencing is therefore required to leverage intersectoral and intrasectoral linkages and optimize resources.

VI. Support provided by ECA to member States in integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into national development plans

63. To facilitate the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals into the national development plans of member States and the reporting of progress to development partners, ECA supports member States in a number of ways, including the following:

- (a) Developing a toolkit that aligns the indicators of the goals contained in the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 with the indicators contained in national development plans. This integrated planning and reporting toolkit harmonizes the integration of both Agendas into national planning frameworks to reduce the transaction costs of reporting on both initiatives. The toolkit is a support mechanism for the integration of multiple development frameworks into

national planning frameworks and facilitates tracking and reporting on national and internationally agreed development agendas;

- (b) Organizing workshops in collaboration with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank to help countries to develop an indicator framework for both Agendas. In addition, countries are being supported in mainstreaming the indicators of the Goals into their national development plans;
- (c) A recent high-level policy dialogue on development planning in Africa, held in Abuja, on the theme “Mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals into national development plans”. Representatives of 26 African countries attended the dialogue, and the initiative provided an opportunity for experience-sharing among the participants;
- (d) The current data revolution initiative for Africa offers opportunities to respond to the current data gaps, especially with regard to the integration of the gender and social development Goals into national planning processes.

VII. Issues for discussion

64. There are a number of issues for discussion:
- (a) How can sectoral ministries achieve more effectively the Sustainable Development Goals related to their areas of work and what support do they require in this regard?
 - (b) How can line ministries influence the overall development agenda in their countries, including through national development planning and what support do they require in this regard?
 - (c) What are the key lessons and experiences from the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals that the line ministries can use to integrate the gender and social development Goals into national development planning?
 - (d) What are the synergies and divergences in policy planning at the national and subnational levels that line ministries need to take into account to implement the gender and social development Goals?
 - (e) What institutions and systems need to be put in place to support the implementation of the gender and social development Goals?
 - (f) How can the gender and social development ministries ensure that sufficient budgetary resources are available for financing the achievement of the Goals and reduce the dependency on external and donor sources?
 - (g) What should member States do to strengthen national data collection systems to facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the gender and social development goals contained in the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and the design of better policies?
 - (h) What role can development partners play in the implementation of the Goals in the country?
65. There are lessons to be learned from the experiences of countries that have developed their voluntary national reviews in integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into their national development plans. The success of such integration hinges on the commitment of the political leadership in the countries concerned and of various stakeholders. Matching the Goals to the goals and targets of the national development plans not only facilitates the monitoring and

evaluation of the progress made by member States, but also helps to monitor any challenges in that regard.
