



Economic Commission for Africa
Committee on Gender and Social Development
Second session
Addis Ababa, 11 and 12 October 2017

Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

Consideration and adoption of the report of the second session

Draft report of the second session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development

Introduction

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

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

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

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

* E/ECA/CGSD/2/1

I. Opening of the session

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

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

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

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

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

10. Ms. Biha reported that ECA had taken the lead in ensuring the synergies of both the 2030 Agenda and Africa’s Vision Agenda 2063, which provided the framework to guide both planning and implementation while facilitating monitoring of progress by member States.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

II. Election of the Bureau

18. The following countries were unanimously elected:

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

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

19. Following the election of the new Bureau, the preliminary agenda and programme of work for the Committee's first session were adopted unanimously by the Committee. The agenda was as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of the Bureau.
3. Consideration and adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
4. Reports to the Committee on Gender and Social Development — reporting and discussion:
 - (a) Subprogramme 9 — Social development policy;
 - (b) Subprogramme 6 — Gender and women in development.
5. Parallel sessions:
 - (a) Informality and inequality in Africa;
 - (b) The demographic dividend in Africa: an entry point to implementing and monitoring the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development;
 - (c) An urban lens on national development planning;
 - (d) Women's economic empowerment: boosting female entrepreneurship in Africa.
6. General discussion on the theme of the second session, "Achieving the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063: from planning to implementation of the gender and social development goals for inclusive and sustainable development":
 - (a) Presentation of the Issues Paper;
 - (b) Four breakout sessions;
 - (c) Reporting back on the breakout sessions and discussion on the way forward.
7. Consideration and adoption of the report of the second session.
8. Closing of the session.

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

A. Subprogramme 9 — Social development policy

1. Presentation

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

the Population and Youth Section, the Urbanization Section, and the Employment and Social Protection Section.

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

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

23. He concluded his presentation by highlighting some of the planned activities for the period 2018-2019 in support of member States, including policy research on youth; strengthening of national capacities in production of quality urban data; capacitating planners to integrate urbanization in national plans; and review of interlinkages between urbanization and agricultural transformation. Activities would also aim to enhance the capacities of member States to contribute to the Global Compact on Migration; design and implement suitable policies to address the challenges of informal employment and skills mismatch, especially for youth and women; monitor investments in social protection policies and programmes, and contribute to achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals on social protection; and develop suitable policies to implement the African Regional Nutrition Strategy while contributing to reduce human exclusion and achieve those targets on child stunting.

2. Discussion

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

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

26. Some participants expressed the importance of linking urbanization to national development planning given the new challenges faced by member States, such as climate change, which called for integrated responses.

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

28. The need for ECA to consider adapting its tools and guidelines to better respond to post-conflict countries in the continent, and their specific contextual needs and priorities, was also underscored.

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

B. Subprogramme 6 – Gender and women in development

1. Presentation

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

31. Among knowledge products, African Centre for Gender has produced various reports on social protection, women's economic empowerment, artisanal and small-scale mining and the African Gender and Development Index. In addition, technical capacity-building services were provided to member States and to the African Union Commission. ECA also aimed to lead by example. The recent results from the gender marker exercise showed that ECA had more room to cover to ensure that its outputs and budget catered to gender issues more effectively.

2. Discussion

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

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

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

35. **ECA-African Development Bank Joint Gender Index.** A representative of the African Development Bank commented on the joint index being developed

between ECA and the African Development Bank, at the behest of member States. The Index, which would be based on the ECA's African Gender and Development Index and the African Development Bank's Africa Gender Index, was expected to be launched in 2018.

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

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

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

V. Parallel sessions

A. Informality and inequality in Africa

1. Presentation

39. In presenting a report on informality and inequality in Africa, Mr. Adrian Gauci, Economic Affairs Officer, Employment and Social Protection Section, Social Development Policy Division stated that the high level of initial inequality and the pace and nature of economic growth in Africa were some of the reasons for the slow decline in poverty in Africa. Furthermore, economic growth had not created enough employment opportunities, and as a result, an estimated 268 million people, or nearly 63 per cent of the working population, were in vulnerable, or informal employment in 2016, working in a self-employed capacity or as unpaid family workers. Informal workers, mostly young people and women, ranged from poorly educated individuals for whom informal jobs were the only alternative to unemployment (the "involuntarily" informal), to the highly educated young urban adults who had opted to be "voluntarily" employed in the informal sector, or run informal enterprises, in order to, for example, avoid cumbersome regulations or taxes.

40. The common features of informality used in the study focused on low productivity and low skills, particularly for subsistence informality. The predominance of young people and women engaged in informal employment was a reflection of the inability of those vulnerable groups to actively participate in formal labour markets. Furthermore, it should be noted that acquiring the basic skills of literacy and numeracy were not homogenous across all groups. Primary school completion rates remained low and the level of basic skills was not sufficient to ensure access to the formal labour market. Given the centrality of the labour market within countries, and its far-reaching effects on poverty and inequality, the results of the research would be of critical importance in implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, and providing synergies across the goals enshrined in the Agendas. The emphasis on employment as a top priority in Africa needed to be complemented by sectoral policies that were anchored on equity, which, in turn, would "leave no one behind". Furthermore, recalibrating training and productivity enhancing

interventions remained vital for providing opportunities to involuntary informal workers to move out of the “informality trap”. Finally, gender-sensitive policies needed to be cross-cutting across national and sectoral plans.

41. It was, therefore, important to establish clear linkages between informality and inequality for targeted policy interventions. A clear understanding of the bidirectional linkages between informality and inequality in Africa would provide empirically grounded information for the design of more inclusive policies and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

2. Discussion

42. In the ensuing discussion, participants underscored the importance of a clear working definition of informality to allow for measurement and data collection. They noted the pervasive nature of informality in most member States. The participants observed that as informality was not a homogeneous phenomenon, it needed to be decomposed in order to ensure that interventions would be well targeted. They further observed that informality was driven by a number of factors, including, lack of inclusive growth, exogenous shocks and recessions, which compelled many people to work informally. The participants noted that women were disproportionately and overly represented in the informal sector. As examples, 63 per cent of women in Cabo Verde and 78 per cent of women in South Sudan, respectively, were working in the informal sector. In that regard, a participant noted that there was a clear distinction between voluntary and involuntary informality. Vulnerable groups, such as women and young people, were often involuntarily informally employed.

43. Estimates of extreme and moderate poverty, should rely on the definitions of poverty line (as they reflect accurately the country situation), rather than figures provided by the World Bank. The need to have robust, reliable data disaggregated by gender and age was raised. There was considerable consensus that the lack of quality education was one of the key drivers for workers to be involuntarily informally employed.

44. Participants also shared country experiences and specific policies related to employment and vulnerable groups in Cameroon, Chad, Ghana, Senegal, South Sudan and Zambia. The focus of the country example was on social protection programmes was to aimed at assisting in enhancing productivity and providing training to women and young people working in the informal sector.

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

1. Presentation

45. In his presentation of the report on the demographic dividend in Africa, Mr. William Muhwava, Chief, Population and Youth Section, Social Development Policy Division, ECA explained that the demographic dividend was a boost to socioeconomic development, which was expected when countries entered a phase of low age-dependency during their fertility transition. He added that the demographic dividend was embraced by African Heads of State as a rationale for linking population to socioeconomic development. Mr. Muhwava said that the demographic dividend would be used as an entry point to capture the interconnections of the population to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In that respect, the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development monitoring framework had been developed and would be used by member States to guide implementation of the commitments of the Declaration on Population and Development in a way that was comprehensive, compact and integrative.

46. The presentation highlighted that young people aged between 15 and 24 years constituted a substantial proportion of the population in Africa – and that, moreover, that proportion was expected to increase rapidly in the future. Most activities focused on addressing current youth issues and concerns, however, alternative policy options and scenarios on the future of young people and development were almost nonexistent. There was a need for practical future-oriented policies and related programmes to engage youth effectively in all aspects of the development of their countries and of the continent as a whole. He said it was clear that a new emergent and integrated Africa could be fully realized only if its demographic advantage — its “large youth population” — was mobilized and equipped to help drive Africa’s integration, peace and development agenda. According to him, as part of its contribution to Africa’s socioeconomic transformation agenda, the research would result in alternative policy options and scenarios for the continent, concerning the future with respect to young people and development.

47. ECA work on international migration was welcomed by member States, who expressed the need to deal as a matter of urgency with both the positive and negative outcomes of migration. Member States in the subregions requested that ECA provide support both for the development of programmes that address the structural drivers, and for the enhancement of inherent potential benefits of migration. Member States suggested that ECA support the development of migration policies that are development-sensitive and, conversely, those that are migration-sensitive.

2. Discussion

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

49. It was pointed out that planning and programming in most African Union member States had moved on from sectoral to take on a multisectoral approach and, therefore, there was a need to involve individuals from many sectors in designing population policies and programmes, including researchers and the academic community, politicians, religious and civic leaders, and development practitioners.

50. One participant informed the Committee that his country had successfully involved faith-based agencies and religious leaders to clarify the role of Islam on matters related to population and the demographic dividend. He said that his country was using a more holistic approach to population issues. Several representatives informed the Committee that early-age marriages were delaying the onset of the demographic transition. The Committee was further informed that laws banning early marriage had been enacted by legislative bodies in a number of member States.

51. The Committee recommended that ECA support member States in implementing and monitoring the demographic dividend through the Addis Ababa Operational Guide, taking into account a number of contributing factors, including:

- (a) The relevance of demographic data and research in informing policy formulation, implementation and monitoring;
- (b) The existence of African traditions, values and practices that continued to support a large family norm;
- (c) Young people, in particular girls, continued to drop out of school;
- (d) The African population was youthful, experienced poor access to appropriate health, was poverty-afflicted and deprived, had

relatively few skills and limited opportunities for employment or access to regular incomes and livelihood, and had unequal access to resources.

52. While recognizing the importance of the Demographic Dividend, participants noted that some subgroups needed attention, including infants, women and the ageing population. It was recommended that a core part of the work of ECA should be based on the age-structural transition approach on population dynamics.

C. An urban lens on national development planning

1. Presentation

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

54. Furthermore, she observed that although urbanization offered significant opportunities, it was a necessary but not sufficient condition for growth. The quality of urbanization mattered immensely. Therefore, to promote quality urbanization, enormous efforts based on a strategic and multi-sectoral vision were required.

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

56. In conclusion, she stated that a commitment to harness urbanization for structural transformation had been made at the global and regional levels in the form of the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2063 and the New Urban Agenda. However, as urban issues were multi-sectoral, the harnessing of urbanization could only be done by integrating it in national development planning for which ECA was in the process of preparing a guidebook to assist member States.

2. Discussion

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

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

59. Participants noted that for most African countries, the priority and focus in terms of development planning remained on the primary sectors, rural areas

and agriculture, and, as a result, a paradigm shift was needed in the continent to give urbanization adequate consideration. In that regard, the work of ECA was seen as being of paramount importance.

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

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

D. Women's Economic Empowerment: Boosting Female Entrepreneurship in Africa

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

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

64. The participants acknowledged that there was an overarching vision with regard to women's economic empowerment in all countries. The political will was evident and the aspirations could be seen in the laws and strategies. In addition, some participants noted that in their respective countries, quotas requiring that 30 per cent of enterprises receiving government contracts were female-owned.

65. The discussion turned to challenges at the planning and implementation phases. One key challenge noted was that plans were often not finalized. As a result, the legal framework was not at a stage that could support the implementation phase. Another challenge was sectoral segregation, which limited women to less lucrative sectors or at the lower levels of the value chain in a given sector. Productivity differentials were often rooted in such sectoral segregation.

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

A. Presentation of the Issues Paper

1. Presentation

66. In his presentation, Mr. Jack Zulu, Social Affairs Officer in the Social Development Policy Division, ECA reminded participants that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted in 2015 by the General Assembly with a time horizon of 15 years. He added that the Sustainable Development Goals were universal, comprehensive and ambitious in scope, with three inter-related pillars of economic, social and environmental development. The Goals were indivisible as they were interlinked across targets and built on the experience related to the Millennium Development Goals which involved efforts aimed at tackling poverty and inequality, transforming lives, protecting the planet and fostering inclusive sustainable development. A mantra for the 2030 Agenda was to “leave no one behind” for inclusive development that could “transform our world”; in contrast, Agenda 2063 was aimed at achieving an “integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa”. Both agendas were inclusive, people-centred development frameworks and were mutually reinforcing.

67. In the presentation, he highlighted the work of the Social Development Policy Division, especially with regard to addressing the 2030 Agenda related to gender and social development – Goal 1 on poverty; Goal 2 on nutrition and hunger; Goal 3 on good health and well-being; Goal 4 on education, Goal 5 on gender equality; Goal 6 on water and sanitation; Goal 8 on inclusive growth and employment; Goal 10 on reducing inequalities and Goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities and then reported on progress in Africa towards achieving those Goals. For example, concerning Goal 1, Africa was home to more than half of the world’s population living on less than \$2 per day, which supported the need for inclusive growth, productive and decent jobs and social protection programmes to combat poverty.

68. Mr. Zulu informed the Committee that during the biennium (2016-2017) ECA had assisted member States in integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into their national development plans. In that regard, he noted that ECA had provided a wide range of support, including for the strengthening of institutional capacities, while singling out its Integrated Planning and Reporting Tool as a key initiative that would reduce transaction costs for reporting on the two agendas – the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In addition, he emphasized the role ECA had played in fostering the data revolution in Africa to address data gaps and to facilitate the effective monitoring and evaluation of international and regional agendas. The presentation was concluded with a series of questions to guide the debates in the breakout sessions on the implementation of gender and social development goals by member States.

2. Discussions

69. In the ensuing discussion, participants commended ECA on the important work that it was doing with regard to gender and social development, in particular in assisting member States to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals in their national development plans. They shared examples in which national plans, policies and laws had been aligned to address issues related to gender equity. They also requested ECA to provide assistance in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through its gender marker.

70. Participants further highlighted various national initiatives aimed at the integration of Sustainable Development Goals in the national development plans, including with regard to education, employment and job creation, environment, health, gender parity and women's empowerment. The need to ensure national and community ownership of programmes through training and sensitization at all levels to achieve the shared visions was also stressed.

71. During the discussion, the need to recognize the interrelated nature between the Sustainable Development Goals and the plan to achieve them was highlighted. Gender and social development outcomes were linked to all the goals not just to the ones that directly involve them. Accordingly, even though only eight of the Goals were considered in the thematic Issues Paper, the other nine Goals were also relevant.

72. It was also underscored that horizontal coherence was required in implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in order not to overburden member States with multiple commitments. There was further need to identify commonalities between the two agendas and national development plans.

73. Also highlighted in the discussion was need for institutional coordination and a cluster approach, whereby sectors involved in efforts to achieve a specific Sustainable Development Goal could be brought together to achieve a common objective. This would necessitate linking budgets to objectives, as was being practiced in some countries. On a related issue, the importance of fostering integrated financing of programmes in a more holistic approach, rather than through specific and vertical agendas was emphasized. Finally, it was suggested that evidence-based modelling procedures were needed to inform policymaking. To come up with such procedures, member States must identify and prioritize data needs.

B. Four breakout sessions

C. Reporting back on the breakout sessions and discussions on the way forward

74. Following the discussions, a series of recommendations were developed.

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

A. Recommendations

Agenda item 4. Reports to the Committee on Gender and Social Development

(a) Subprogramme 9 – presentation

- (a) Experts expressed the need for further support by ECA in implementing and assessing policy implications of the tools developed by ECA;
- (b) It was proposed that member States further link urbanization to the national development planning processes and frameworks to better respond to this new emerging trend in the context of Africa's structural transformation;
- (c) It was requested that ECA strengthen its collaboration with the African Union Commission and the rest of the United Nations system in supporting member States in implementing, monitoring and evaluating Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.

(b) Subprogramme 6 — Gender and women in development

For member States:

- Take steps to institutionalize the African Gender and Development Index at the national level in order to ensure ownership and sustainable penetration of the Index into evidence-based policymaking.
- Develop new and strengthen existing policies and programmes of social protection for women in the informal sector and domestic workers.

For ECA:

- Assist member States to adapt the ECA's gender parity marker for use as part of their gender budgeting initiatives.
- Strengthen the ECA programme on women's economic empowerment to identify effective interventions, including those related to promoting access to finance, for adoption by member States.

For ECA and the African Union Commission:

Strengthen partnerships to assist countries in promoting gender equality and inclusive growth.

For ECA and the African Development Bank:

Speed up the process of developing a single African Gender Index to be launched in 2018, and ensure that member States are involved in its development and finalization.

Agenda item 5. Parallel sessions

(a) Informality and inequality in Africa

Member States should:

- Focus on increasing access to quality education.
- Facilitate sectoral policies that deal with employment, education, gender and youth in national plans and visions.
- Anchor equity in national plans to tackle income inequalities and inequalities of opportunities.
- Conduct a thorough analysis of the drivers of informality, which vary from country to country, before prescribing policy solutions.

- Standardize the definition of informality to allow for data collection and comparison across countries and over time.
- Apply a comprehensive approach in efforts to reduce inequality by helping young people, especially women, avoid the “informality trap” based on the view that secondary education, skills, health and employment are linked.

ECA should:

- Develop policy briefs on monitoring of social investments and knowledge products for analyzing various aspects of informality.
- Organize trainings and provide technical assistance to improve the design and implementation of suitable policies on employment and social protection.
- Provide support in developing new curricula, especially for technical and vocational education, and align the curricula with the demands of the job market.
- Extend support in designing and implementing suitable policies for specific components of informality rather than attempting to formalize the informal sector.
- Provide assistance in prioritizing gender in all interventions that deal with informality and inequality
- Conduct a thorough analysis of the drivers of informality, which vary from country to country, before prescribing policy solutions.

Member States requested ECA:

- To provide technical support and capacity-building, especially in monitoring and the follow-up of programmes.
- To assist in developing and applying the knowledge products and tools to enhance policy formulation and to more effectively conduct integrated research on gender and informality.

(b) The Demographic Dividend in Africa

For ECA:

- Work with Member States to conduct research and studies for baseline indicators to inform national development planning as a basis for comparing future reviews of the Addis Ababa Declaration PD and to measure progress.
- Design guidelines to assist mainstreaming and integrating demographic variables at different stages of the policy process starting with the design stage.
- Provide capacity-building on the integration of population variables into development planning to all member States. Work with national population agencies to sensitize politicians and policymakers on the Addis Ababa Declaration and its implementation guide.
- Dedicate the necessary resources to briefing and training policymakers in applying the objectives of the Declaration on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend. Policy briefs would be useful tools to use for this outreach.
- Undertake public awareness campaigns on the Demographic Dividend in member States.
- Build, with partners, the capacity and expertise of member States for demographic dividend interventions. Good practices generated from the continent and the Asian tigers should guide policy and programmatic interventions in member States.
- Continue work on migration and involve member States, focusing on addressing the structural drivers and enhancing the inherent potential benefits of migration

by supporting the development of migration policies that are development-sensitive and, conversely, development policies that are migration-sensitive.

(c) An Urban Lens on National Development Planning

For ECA:

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

For member States:

- (i) Strategically link national development planning with urbanization for structural transformation.

(d) Women's Economic Empowerment

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

- (i) Member States are in need of help to develop national plans and tackle the challenges lying ahead in designing and implementing the plan;
- (ii) Women entrepreneurs are in need of skills training in how to access and manage loans. Similarly, women entrepreneurs need to access bigger markets and the higher nodes of the value chains. Given that women entrepreneurs in Africa are largely driven by necessity, efforts should be made (through substantial analysis) to understand what factors drive necessity-based entrepreneurship and what alternatives are available to member States;
- (iii) Innovative strategies are needed to create financial institutions, such as women's banks or women's entrepreneurship funds, with simplified procedures to increase their access to finance.

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

- (i) Given that member States have implemented interesting strategies and programmes, information around such practices should be shared among others;
- (ii) International institutions in Africa, including ECA, must remain available to support member States with technical advisory services,

capacity-building programmes and knowledge products and tools with particular attention given to rural women;

(iii) ECA should support member States in availing information on procedures regarding access to finance, markets and business opportunities.

(c) **Dealing with structural factors.** There are deeply rooted challenges that women face in business that should be considered. For example, women's time poverty, negative norms on women's career progress, violence against women and harmful practices that limit women's human capital development and access to economic opportunities;

(d) **Setting affirmative action.** Various mechanisms should be created to help women to gain access to government contracts.

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

(b) Presentation of the Issues Paper

For member States:

Encourage government entities to align their medium-term plans, national strategies and priorities related to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 with those of stakeholders.

Strengthen their capacities in integrating the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in policies, budgets and programmes through evidence-based planning.

Encourage their sectoral ministries to align their plans for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and implementing Agenda 2063.

Strengthen institution mechanisms and coordination at the national level, such as through parliamentary committees on Sustainable Development Goals and gender, national steering committees, social development machineries and national planning committees on issues related to gender, urbanization and social development

Apply a cluster approach to encourage interconnectedness among different sectors and improve baseline data and quarterly or periodical reporting for data requirements

Apply a decentralized approach for implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Commit resources at the subnational and local government levels to execute programmes.

Explore new approaches and partnerships to support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 at the national and subnational levels, such as strengthening domestic resource mobilization and public-private partnerships for gender, social and urbanization programmes and support them through campaigns and advocacy to encourage national funding.

Set gender sensitive budgets in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063

Requested ECA to:

Provide capacity support in aligning gender and social development issues.

Extend technical advisory and capacity-building support for the establishment of national observatories and platforms for monitoring and evaluation of gender, urbanization and social policies.

Provide support in strengthening statistical systems, indicator development, data collection, analyses and disaggregation of indicators related to the 2030 Agenda and the Agenda 2063.

VIII. Closing of the second session

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