



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 March 2018
Original: English

**Economic Commission for Africa
Committee of Experts of the Conference
of African Ministers of Finance, Planning
and Economic Development**
Thirty-seventh meeting

Addis Ababa, 11 and 12 May 2018

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

Statutory issues

Progress report on the work of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted for consideration to the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in response to its request to receive regular updates on reports that the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning¹ submits to its Governing Council and management. It is based on the report of the Director of the Institute presented to the Council at its fifty-sixth meeting, held in Dakar on 19 March 2018.

2. The Institute functions as a subsidiary body of ECA. Pursuant to resolution 839 (XXV) of the Conference of African Ministers, the Institute has been integrated into the ECA programmatic process as its subprogramme on development planning and administration. In 2013, it became the training arm of ECA following the restructuring of the latter.

3. The year 2017 was a very productive one for the Institute. It continued to be characterized by strategic shifts in the delivery mechanisms and orientation of the Institute's programme during the biennium 2016-2017. Those shifts were introduced as the Institute's immediate response to the capacity development needs expressed by States members of ECA in the context of the implementation of national priorities in respect of both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, as well as the increasing number of requests for Institute services from member States.

4. Key among the strategic initiatives implemented were the revamping of the contents of several core courses; the development and delivery of new courses; the master's degree programme in industrial policy, delivered in collaboration with the University of Johannesburg; the launch of an e-learning programme as a training delivery method and the subsequent delivery of two training sessions in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR); the development and testing of the Institute's own e-learning platform; the launch of an initiative to digitize the Institute's rich library collection; and the review of the Institute's organization chart, with the aim of aligning it to meet the increasing demand for its services. The year 2017 was a success both for the

* E/ECA/COE/37/1

¹ The African Institute for Economic Development and Planning is a pan-African institution created by the General Assembly of the United Nations with the primary purpose of accompanying and supporting African countries in their quest to build their human resource capacities as a necessary prerequisite for sustaining independence and promoting socioeconomic development. Its main activities, derived from its mandate, are organized around a portfolio of capacity development and training programmes, along with a set of policy research and dialogue initiatives. It also offers on-demand advisory services to Governments and public institutions and serves as a forum for the exploration of alternative thinking on African development.

Institute's programme and member States. Overall, programme performance was excellent, with 99 per cent of all planned programme outputs delivered on time and meeting expectations for quality, as evidenced by the responses provided by trainees on the evaluation questionnaires given to them at the end of each course.

II. Supporting the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda through training and research

Training

5. The development process in Africa is driven by two overarching frameworks: Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda. Their realization will require changes or adjustments in the development approach taken by countries. One of the main challenges for countries is to be more creative in order to better master their development processes, to become full-fledged actors in the world economy, to improve their fundamentals, to involve all actors more tangibly, to mobilize adequate resources and to be able to translate their economic gains into improvements in the well-being and welfare of all their citizens in an equitable and sustainable manner.

6. Since 2016, Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda have been guiding Institute training and research activities. The training programme has been adapted to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, their alignment with Agenda 2063 and their integration into the national development plans of African countries.

7. Twenty onsite courses were delivered on issues relating to data analysis and macroeconomic modelling for development planners; sectoral policy and planning in the areas of trade, industry, agriculture and energy; international trade negotiations in support of the continental free trade area; social policy and the management of gender-responsive economic policy; efficient mineral resources management focused on governance, contracts and negotiations; and domestic resource mobilization.

8. New courses on long-term planning and prospective studies, the green economy and trade policy analysis have been introduced to take into account the evolution of the training expectations of African countries. Of the 20 courses, 10 were Institute core courses, including a tailor-made course, and 10 were organized in collaboration with partners. The majority of courses received an overall rating of 90 per cent or higher from course participants.

9. During the biennium 2016-2017, there was a 64 per cent increase in the number of applications for Institute courses, compared with the biennium 2014-2015. A total of 3,760 applications were received during the biennium 2014-2015 (1,812 applications in 2014 and 1,948 applications in 2015), which rose to 6,156 during the biennium 2016-2017 (2,542 applications in 2016 and 3,614 applications in 2017). That increase was the result of the introduction of online courses and an increased interest on the part of member States in the Institute's capacity development programme.

10. A total of 488 African public officials attended the core courses, including 29 attendees for the tailor-made course. The number of residential course participants increased by 7.7 per cent from 2016 to 2017. The participation of women, however, decreased from 40 to 28 per cent, notwithstanding the efforts of the Institute to increase their attendance. Although IDEP is strongly committed to balancing the participation of men and women, the higher proportion of men employed in mid-level and senior-level positions in African Governments is an acknowledged limitation. Throughout the biennium 2016-2017, the average representation of women among participants stood at 34 per cent.

11. The Institute also hosted two continuing education courses for ECA staff from headquarters and subregional offices: one on statistical methods and analysis and the other on macroeconomic modelling and forecasts. A review of the course programme is planned for 2018, with a view to increasing the number of courses and of themes covered, in line with the designation of the Institute as the training arm of ECA.

Master's degree programme

12. In 2016, the Institute resumed its master's degree programme, in partnership with the University of Johannesburg, by launching an 18-month master of philosophy programme in industrial policy. The programme is a flagship activity of the Institute's capacity development and training programme. It began in the early 1970s and, over the years, evolved to become one of the central components of the work of the Institute. Recently, the decision was made to partner with reputable African universities rather than host the programme within the Institute. It is designed to expose mid-career and senior professionals and policymakers serving in Governments and intergovernmental organizations to structured training that covers various aspects of economic policy management, development planning and sectoral analysis.

13. The Institute is also exploring the possibility of launching other master's degree programmes, in particular a programme in collaboration with the Institute of National Planning of Egypt that would focus on development planning.

Research

14. The policy research work undertaken at the Institute complements its training programme and responds to the needs of policymaking communities and other stakeholders. The short courses occur alongside research-based activities such as high-level dialogues, monthly seminars and a fellowship programme. The research component provides strategic guidance to the courses to be delivered, along with updating and adapting their contents to changes in the environment and the development priorities of African countries.

15. A number of development seminars and high-level policy dialogues were delivered as part of the Institute's think tank mission. Such activities contribute to the nurturing of a research-policy nexus in Africa, offer a forum for African policymakers to engage in structured exchanges on thematic development topics with other stakeholders who are central to the development of the continent and promote the sharing and comparison of experiences in development practices.

16. In line with the 2017 Economic Report on Africa, which focused on urbanization and industrialization, the first development seminar centred on the New Urban Agenda, in the wake of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), and on the urbanization challenges that Africa has to consider in its development planning. It was further complemented by a high-level policy dialogue on the same issue, in collaboration with the ECA division in charge of urbanization, which resulted in the development of a curriculum dedicated to this issue.

17. Other IDEP development seminars on priority issues in Africa's development included the following:

- (a) "Ownership of agendas 2030 and 2063 by African countries", during which it was concluded that, to achieve full ownership of development agendas in Africa and to efficiently realize their objectives, it was necessary to define national priorities; strengthen national statistical systems to make available sufficient and high-quality data, with a view to improved measurement, monitoring and evaluation of the progress made in achieving the objectives of the Agendas; consider relevant cultural dimensions in order to ensure contextualization; and develop strong leadership for effective policy implementation;
- (b) "Big data for Africa", which addressed the need for the continent to fully harness the data revolution. It focused on the best way to design a strategy on big data, tackle security issues and leverage big data for monitoring and evaluation and achieving sustainable development. The development of partnerships with the private sector was also considered;
- (c) "Gender and climate change", which addressed the impact of climate change on the status of African women and how to decrease their vulnerability by helping them to build the resilience necessary;

- (d) “Transformative agriculture for Africa’s future”, which looked into food security, agricultural and agribusiness development issues at the national and continental levels, the role of public and community institutions and the policies and economic operators that help to ensure food security and resilience in Africa.

18. With the Government of Senegal, the Institute organized a high-level policy dialogue on the theme “Is Africa ready to invest in a green industry?”, at which the following elements were identified by participants as being key to efforts by African countries, as part of their structural transformation, to reduce the negative environmental impact of industrial operations: (a) strong political leadership; (b) the creation of an effective regulatory framework as part of national development plans that adapts international agendas to national situations; (c) an engaged private sector; (d) adequate and innovative resource mobilization; (e) progressive industrial investment; (f) sound communication and outreach; (g) knowledge management and the sharing of good practices; and (h) capacity-building.

19. The variety in the themes addressed illustrates the willingness of the Institute to engage in the priority areas that relate to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and their integration into national planning processes.

20. In terms of support for research and thought development in Africa, the Institute relaunched its fellowship programme, leading to the awarding of two fellowships supported directly by the Institute and one fellowship supported by ECA. The overarching objective is to afford professionals working on relevant economic management and development issues for various decision-making groups in Africa the opportunity to deeply examine a mutually-agreed topic in an environment conducive to creative and innovative thinking over a defined period of time. During the fellowship period, research seminars are organized to allow the fellows to present their work and receive comments and suggestions from peer researchers from other institutions. Research reports and policy briefs have been submitted by laureates of the programme and are currently under review for final publication.

21. A number of Institute training and research activities have been implemented either jointly or with partners, be they internal partners such as ECA substantive divisions and subregional offices, which provide resource persons, or external partners, including development partners such as the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the International Atomic Energy Agency, UNITAR, the Office of the Prime Minister of Senegal, the Ministry of Industry of Senegal, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning of Rwanda, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, the University of Johannesburg, the Open Society Initiative for West Africa, the African Futures Institute, the Tunisian Institute for Strategic Studies, the Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute of Eastern and Southern Africa, the African Development Bank and the African Union Commission. IDEP plans to further develop its partnerships with strategic institutions at the global, regional and national levels, including by involving the private sector and civil society.

III. Harnessing information and communications technologies for improved delivery

E-learning programme

22. The Institute’s target audience consists mainly of senior officials of various ministries throughout Africa, in line with the Institute’s official mandate. The Institute aims to be a centre of excellence in the service of member States for the development of the high-level human resources necessary for the progressive socioeconomic transformation of the continent. Given that the demand for participative development is increasing, the Institute has decided to work to increase both the number of and the diversity among programme participants through its e-learning programme.

23. In a survey administered by the Institute in 2016 to its target audience, a strong demand for distance training (e-learning) was revealed, with 89.4 per cent of respondents indicating that such training was an excellent concept and 97.2 per cent expressing the wish to take part in online refresher courses. The Institute also plans to target a greater variety of

participants throughout the continent, notably women and candidates other than public officials. Lastly, it seeks to build on information and communications technologies in the delivery of training courses.

24. In cooperation with UNITAR and ECA, the Institute designed and launched a course that reflected the theme of the 2017 Economic Report on Africa (industrialization and urbanization). The course lasted 6 weeks and was delivered in both English and French. For the 156 participant places, equally split between the two languages, there were a total of 516 applications (190 for English and 326 for French). With regard to the profiles of the participants, 33 per cent of those accepted were women; 81 per cent were from government ministries, with the rest drawn from academia, civil society and the private sector; their ages ranged from 23 to 52 years; and nationals of 23 African countries took the English course, compared with nationals of 21 countries for the French one (see figure I for more information on the completion rates and other disaggregated data).

Figure I

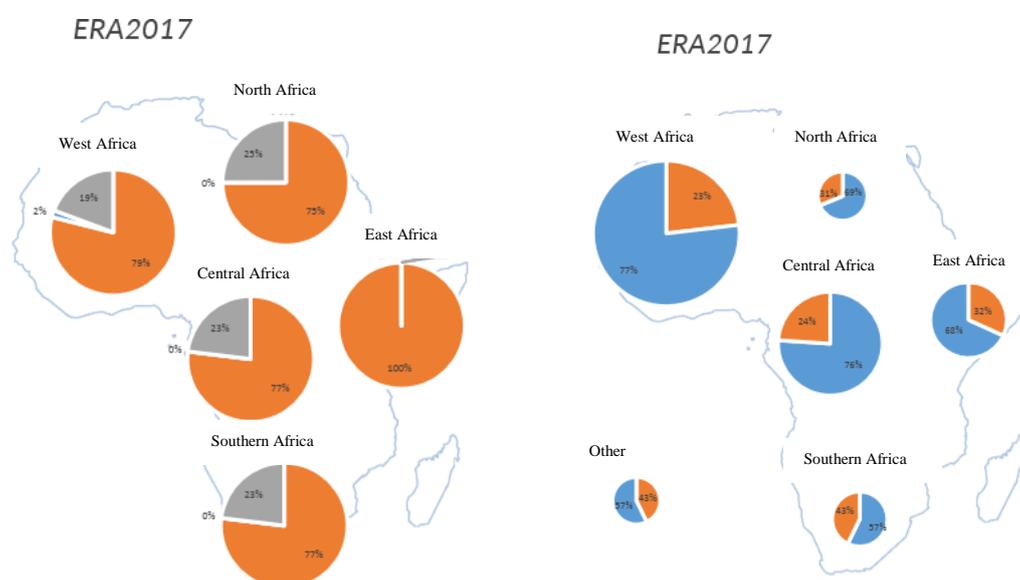
Course on the theme of the 2017 Economic Report on Africa: completion rates and gender distribution (Per cent)

Completion rates

- Civil servants
- Scholars
- Others

Gender distribution

- Women
- Men



25. Internally, the Institute implemented a pilot project that made it possible to design and launch a distance course on the basis of the 2015 Economic Report on Africa. It was successfully delivered in French over four weeks and allowed the Institute to test its own e-learning platform. The course was supported by Institute staff, who received relevant training from UNITAR colleagues.

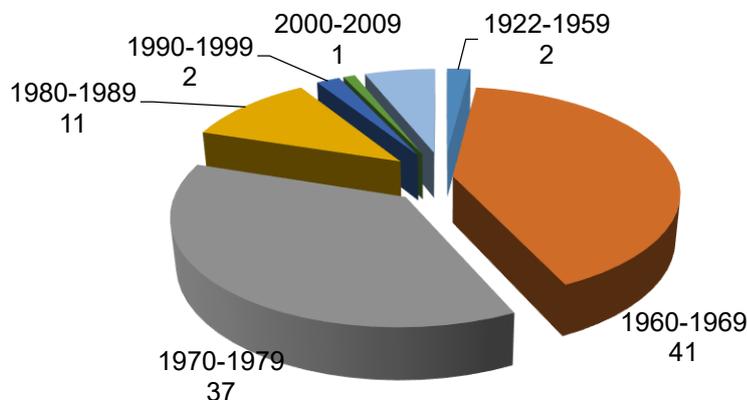
Library digitization

26. As part of its knowledge management mandate, the Institute developed a very rich library, consisting of publications produced by it and member countries. Through the digitization project, the Institute hopes to broaden the dissemination of those publications to the Internet and offline devices. The project is also aimed at preserving the original documents, many of which are quite fragile and in poor condition, by limiting their handling.

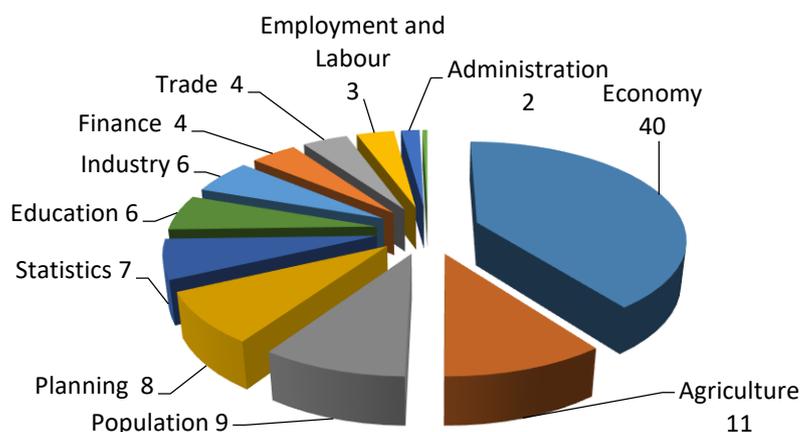
27. Approximately 520,000 pages of material, representing 5,800 titles with content from 49 countries, will be scanned to various file formats by 2018. See figure II for further analysis of the materials that will be digitized.

Figure II
Library collection of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning: distribution (Per cent)

A. Library collection of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning: distribution (year of entry into collection)



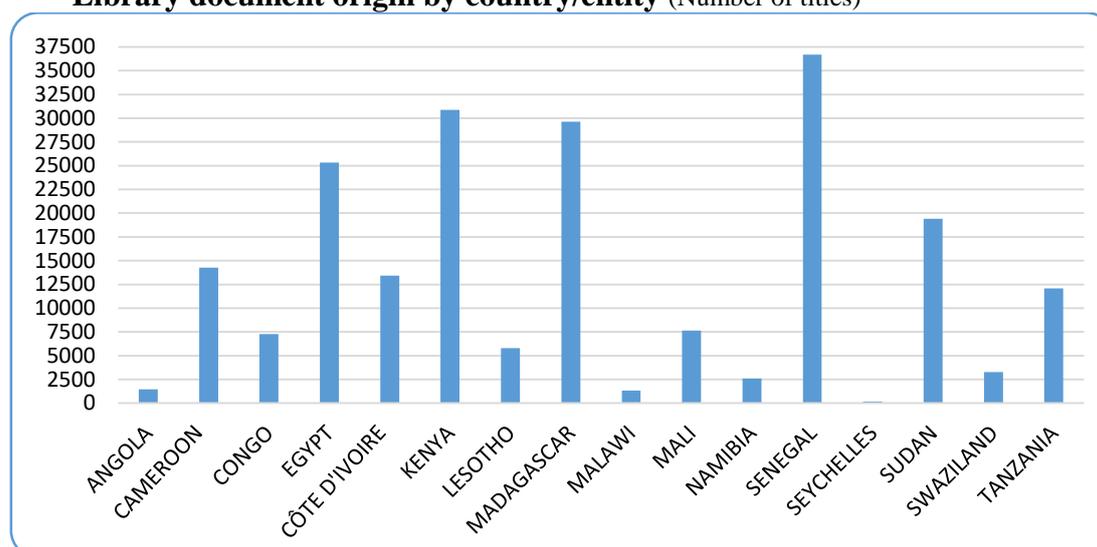
B. Library collection of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning: distribution (general topic area)



28. The first phase of the digitization project was successfully implemented in 2017, covering 3,323 titles from 16 countries, corresponding to 211,312 pages (see figure III).²

² The scanned formats are as follows: TIFF 300 DPI (dots per inch) for archiving, PDF/A 300 DPI with automatic indexing by optical character recognition for consulting and full text searching, and TXT UTF-8 with manual indexing for further description and searching in digital libraries and repositories.

Figure III
Library document origin by country/entity (Number of titles)



IV. Guidance

29. As a subsidiary organ of ECA, with responsibility for the delivery of subprogramme 8, Capacity Development, the Institute reports to the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. The work of the Institute is guided by its Governing Council, which is chaired by the Executive Secretary of ECA and composed of 10 representatives of member States, with two representatives from each of Africa's five subregions appointed on a rotational basis; a representative of the host country (Senegal); and a representative of the African Union Commission. The Council is assisted in its work by the Institute's Technical Advisory Committee, which consists of experts who report to the Council on programme content, quality and relevance.

Technical Advisory Committee

30. The third meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee was held in Dakar on 7 February 2018. It was preceded by a day of reflection on the theme of "New planning approaches to achieve the objectives of the 2030 and 2063 agendas". The meeting was organized in three major parts:

- (a) Briefing on the Institute, the Committee and its role in the light of the renewal of the membership of the Committee in 2017, pursuant to the recommendation of the fifty-fifth meeting of Governing Council;
- (b) Presentation of Institute activities during the period 2016-2017;
- (c) Presentation of Institute draft strategic orientations for the period 2018-2021.

31. It was a successful meeting, both in terms of its organization and the participation of all stakeholders. The meeting concluded with an overall assessment of the achievements during the biennium 2016-2017 and the strategic guidelines proposed by the management of the Institute. Members of the Technical Advisory Committee, observers and special guests enriched the discussions with their ideas, thoughts and comments, which are understood as recommendations to be taken into account by the Institute in the fulfilment of its mandate during the coming four years.

32. The members of the Technical Advisory Committee acknowledged the Institute's contribution over time to the training of African civil servants in its various areas of responsibility. Noting that planning processes in Africa had not met expectations, they called upon the Institute to conduct additional research to better analyse the reasons for that outcome and to propose new ideas for planning. They welcomed the central role that the

Institute had given to the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda in its programmes to support the strengthening of the capacity of African countries and congratulated it for its successful organization of the high-level dialogue on the theme of “New planning approaches for the achievement of the objectives of Agendas 2030 and 2063” and for its determination to innovate its training and research activities in that regard. The members took due note of the activities undertaken by the Institute during the biennium 2016-2017 and congratulated it for the choice of themes addressed, the quality of the work accomplished and the quantity of activities implemented. After reviewing the strategic orientations defined in the draft strategic plan submitted for their consideration, the members approved the orientations as a whole and requested that a document amended following their deliberations be presented at the next meeting of the Governing Council for final approval. In that context, the members supported the proposal to organize a retreat to review the catalogue of Institute courses and encouraged it to make its distance learning programme a flagship activity for the coming four years. They noted and appreciated the efforts made to establish a knowledge management platform, the first phase of which is the project for the digitization of the Institute’s document collection, which should, in the long run, become accessible to the largest number of users. The members urged the Council to approve the strategic orientations and support a request to increase the resources of the Institute, in particular those received through the regular United Nations grant. They supported the Institute’s resolve to strengthen its partnerships and urged it to do so first and foremost internally with ECA and with regional organizations such as the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank. Lastly, they asked the Institute to prepare a note to present the various roles that members of the Committee could play, in addition to the role assigned to members by the Institute’s statutes.

Governing Council

33. The fifty-fifth session of the Governing Council was held in Addis Ababa in March 2017. At that session, the Council validated the revised statutes of the Institute and recommended that they be sent to the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for final approval. Owing to the adjournment of the 2017 Conference, the revised statutes will be presented at the 2018 gathering.

34. The fifty-sixth session of the Governing Council was held on 19 March 2018 to review the report of the Director of the Institute, the Institute’s proposed strategic orientations, the outcome of the third meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee, the audited financial statements for fiscal year 2017 and the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019. At the session, the Council did the following:

- (a) Noted with appreciation and commended the Institute’s management for the quality of the annual activity reports that had been presented, which the members unanimously adopted, and for the quality and relevance of the work achieved in 2017;
- (b) Requested management to finalize the draft rules of procedure for the Council and to circulate them to members by email for their consideration and approval;
- (c) Approved the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2017 presented by the auditor with an unqualified opinion;
- (d) Approved the strategic orientations for the 2018-2021 strategic planning period and subsequently requested management to prepare and present a full strategic plan for the same period at the Council’s next meeting, scheduled for October 2018;
- (e) Adopted the report of the Committee and its recommendations in full;
- (f) Approved the recommendation of the Committee calling for an increase in the amount of the General Assembly grant to the Institute from the current \$2,600,000 to \$5,000,000 per biennium. The Council noted that this was in line with the increased demands for the services of the Institute from African member States, especially with the advent of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and their clear emphasis on the critical role that capacity development has to play in the achievement of the goals and aspirations contained in those development frameworks;

- (g) Pledged its support to the ongoing efforts by management to recover outstanding arrears from member States;
- (h) Approved the recommendation of the Committee calling for the systemization of the support of ECA to the Institute's programme at the level of \$2,000,000 annually;
- (i) Approved the organization of a retreat of the members of the Committee in June 2018 to review the current catalogue of Institute training.

Alumni perspective survey

35. Following the impact assessment survey conducted in 2016, another survey was conducted in December 2017 with the aim of capturing the short-term impact and contributions that the 2016/2017 training participants were making in their countries. Of specific interest in relation to the present report were the topics on which participants recommended that the Institute offer training in their countries, which were analysed by the members of the Technical Advisory Committee at its third meeting. The results of the 2017 survey will be further addressed at the retreat that the Institute intends to organize in 2018 to review its catalogue of courses.

V. Increasing financial resources

36. The Institute's activities are financed by resources from five broad sources: (a) the regular United Nations grant, which is currently a fixed biennial subvention by the General Assembly, underpinned by an approved biennium programme budget and standing at \$2.6 million per biennium; (b) contributions from African member States through annual payments of assessed financial contributions based on a predetermined schedule, approved and adopted by the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development; (c) funds internally generated through tuition charges, overhead recoveries, conference room rentals and consultancies; (d) extrabudgetary funding from sources such as multilateral and bilateral funding institutions, private foundations and development partners; and (e) resources from ECA to support specific programmes and training activities that promote the generation of research and analytical studies.

37. Increased efforts by the Institute to recover payments of arrears of member States bore fruit in 2017. Fourteen of them paid a total of \$1,624,000, the highest amount in seven years (see figure IV). Morocco, the Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe, the top four countries in respect of payment of arrears (see table), are to be recognized and thanked. Special thanks go also to the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya, which have made advance payments, along with Angola, Burkina Faso and Namibia, which have no arrears. The efforts of the Institute to rally other countries and recover additional arrears will continue. All member States are still being called upon to continue paying their assessed annual contributions and to settle their outstanding arrears, which remain very high, at \$17 million as of December 2017.

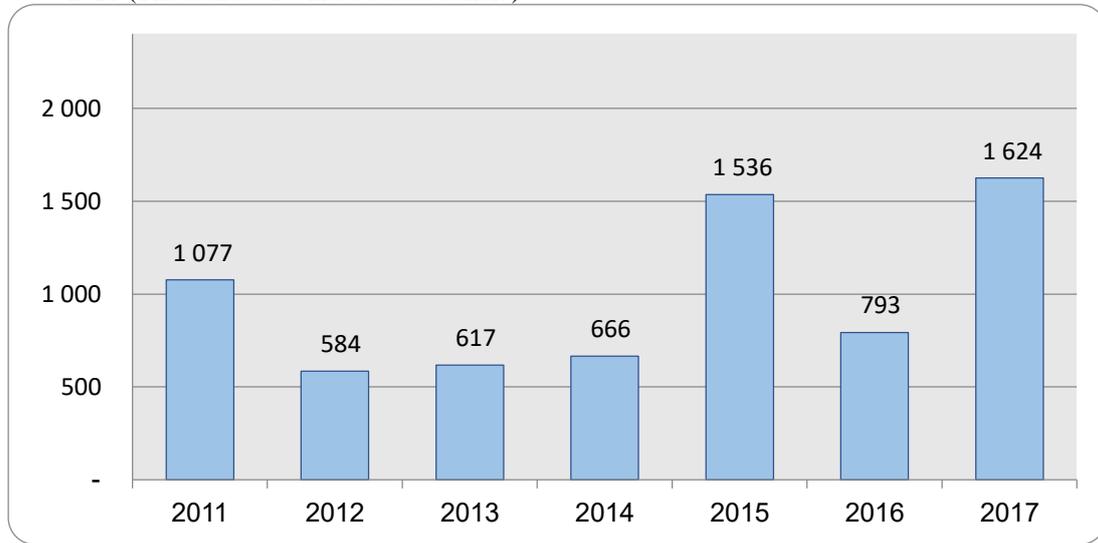
Table

Contributions to the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning by country, as at 31 December 2017 (Thousands of United States dollars)

Country	Annual assessed contribution	Amount paid in 2017			Total paid in 2017
		Annual contribution	Arrears paid	Advance payment	
Burkina Faso	15 000	15 000	15 000		30 000
Egypt	80 000	80 000			80 000
Kenya	3 000			21 828	21 828
Madagascar	20 000	17 182			17 182
Malawi	15 000	15 000	12 256		27 256
Mali	15 000	15 000	1 486		16 486
Morocco	32 000	32 000	104 898		136 898
Namibia	24 000	24 000			24 000
South Africa	80 000	80 000			80 000

Country	Annual assessed contribution	Amount paid in 2017			Total paid in 2017
		Annual contribution	Arrears paid	Advance payment	
Sudan	32 000	32 000	832 000		864 000
Swaziland	20 000	20 000			20 000
Tunisia	24 000	17 169			17 169
Zambia	32 000	32 000	57 518		89 518
Zimbabwe	40 000	40 000	160 000		200 000
Total	461 000	419 351	1 183 159	21 828	1 624 338

Figure IV
Contributions to the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, 2011-2017 (Thousands of United States dollars)

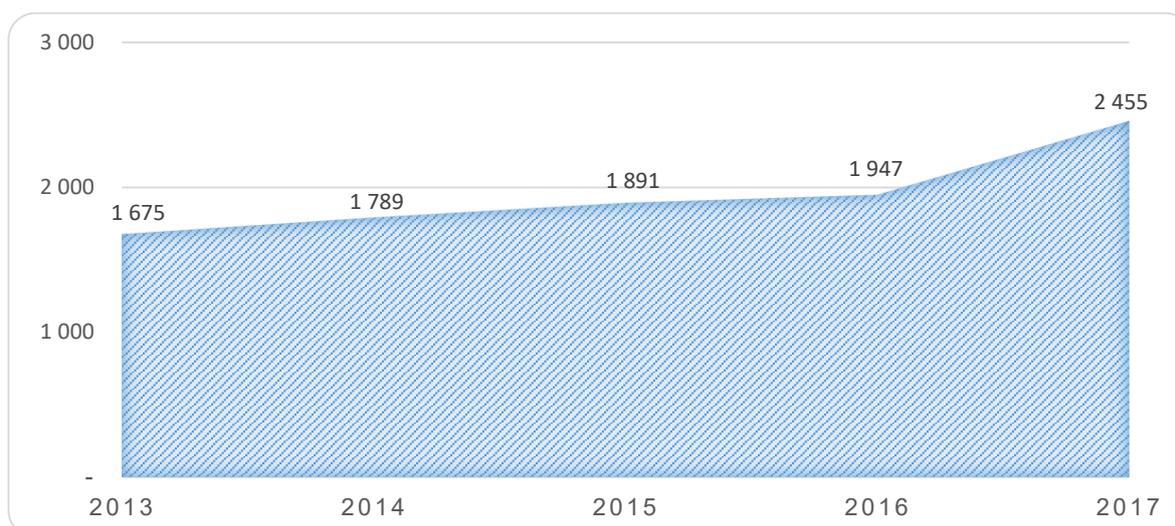


38. ECA has supported the delivery of short courses pursuant to its decision to consider the Institute to be its training arm. In that regard, 2017 was an excellent year, with the Institute receiving \$2,455,200, the highest amount since 2013 (see figure V). Once that support becomes more systematic, it will be able to increase the number of such courses that it delivers.

39. Beginning in 2018 and continuing to 2021, the Institute aims to increase its external resource mobilization, in particular with a view to meeting the objectives of its strategic orientations.

40. The Technical Advisory Committee, with support from the Governing Council, has called for an increase in the regular United Nations grant, as a natural consequence of the decision to have the Institute become the training arm of ECA and in line with the reforms undertaken by the Secretary-General, which give a central role to capacity development.

Figure V
Economic Commission for Africa support for the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, 2013-2017 (Thousands of United States dollars)



VI. Prospects for 2018

41. The year 2018 began under good auspices. The Institute kick-started its activities earlier than in previous years, with the organization of the third meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee, preceded by a one-day development seminar on the future of planning in support of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda, a workshop on investment in infrastructure in Africa, field visits to selected infrastructure projects in Senegal, a retreat for African and American investors, a course on data analysis for development planners and continuing education courses for ECA staff on development planning and on strategic communication skills.

42. The dynamics of success that characterized 2017 will continue to prevail in 2018, the first year of the implementation of the Institute's four-year strategic plan. In that regard, staff development and resource mobilization will continue to be a top priority.

43. Due attention will be given to the involvement of all stakeholders, with a view to further strengthening the position of the African public sector and contributing to its effectiveness through the development of partnerships, mainly with the private sector and the academic world.

44. Building on the ground covered in 2016-2017, in 2018 the Institute will strengthen the foundations for its rejuvenation and its full integration into the information age, ready to better address the top development priorities of the continent in support of the successful realization of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.