ECA and Africa: Fifty Years of Partnership
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Fifty years is a milestone worth celebrating in the life of any organization. That the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is this year commemorating its Golden Jubilee is cause for celebration, not only for its longevity, but also for its many achievements on behalf of Africa during this period.

When ECA was founded in 1958, Africa was at a crossroads. African countries were just beginning to attain independence and there were great expectations and aspirations for the establishment of capable nation-states that would individually and collectively promote economic development and raise the living standards of their people. ECA was the first continental intergovernmental organization established to accompany its member States in this endeavour. It has been able to fulfill this mandate by conducting research and policy analysis, using its convening power to build consensus and give Africa a voice in the global arena, and providing technical assistance to help build human, institutional and infrastructural capacities.

The Commission, which occupies a unique niche, given its dual role as a pan-African institution and a United Nations body, is best known for its independent thinking, which has enabled it to play a critical role in the history of the African continent. It has been able to work with its member States and other pan-African institutions to articulate a wide range of continental development priorities and regional development programmes, notably, the Lagos Plan of Action, the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes, and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD).

Many of the ideas advocated by ECA in its economic and social research over the past half-century have become part of mainstream thinking and have underpinned its work in key programme sectors such as agriculture, environment, gender, governance, industry, information and communications technologies, trade and transport. Moreover, in order to effectively support policy formulation by its member States and regional organizations, ECA keeps track of all aspects of social and economic development in Africa.

The normative work of ECA enhances its convening power, which it uses to bring together a cross-section of
stakeholders, especially its member States and the regional economic communities (RECs), but also increasingly civil society organizations, in various forums to address specific issues. This key activity helps to build regional consensus on major development concerns and lends weight to Africa’s voice in the international arena. In this role, the Commission has been able to support Africa in various international negotiations across a wide spectrum of sectors.

Through its technical assistance activities, ECA has assisted its member States, the RECs and other major regional and subregional organizations to develop capacities for designing and implementing several development policies. In addition to these fiftieth anniversary celebrations, it is also important to acknowledge the successes of the many African regional and subregional institutions established through the Commission’s activities in various areas, including money, finance and banking, regional integration, socio-economic research, industry, minerals and natural resources.

Some key messages have emerged from the Commission’s activities over the years. For example, the importance of African unity in meeting global and regional challenges, which resonated at the first meeting of the Commission in 1958, continues to find expression in the continent’s regional integration agenda. Similarly, attention has now been drawn to the imperative of African ownership of its development agenda and the importance of building capable states that base their policies and strategies on popularly articulated domestic priorities and mobilize societal resources for common goals and aspirations.

The importance of adopting unifying themes while acknowledging the diversity of conditions in the continent, and the need to strike the right balance in policy advocacy, have also been brought into sharper focus.

Partnership has been a hallmark of the work of ECA. Since its inception, the Commission has always recognized that the limited budgetary resources allocated for its operations would not be adequate for it to fully carry out its mandate, and that it would have to rely on extrabudgetary resources. Accordingly, ECA has worked with African governments and institutions to carry out specific activities, partnered with international development agencies to advocate on behalf of Africa, and obtained direct financial support from many bilateral partners to carry out specific development programmes.

Fifty years on, and Africa is again at a crossroads, especially as recently restored growth in the continent is not yet sufficient to enable the continent to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the target date, and as the global economic outlook continues to be a cause for concern. Therefore, it is essential for Africa to pause and reflect on its development path, to ensure that recent progress is kept on course and even further deepened. This is why ECA has undertaken a repositioning exercise to realign its strategic orientation to new continental priorities, and has started examining Africa’s future role in the global economy.

I am indeed privileged to be the Executive Secretary of ECA as it celebrates its Golden Jubilee. I was preceded in this position by six illustrious sons of Africa, to whom
I wish to pay tribute: Mekki Abbas, Robert Gardiner, Adebayo Adeleji, Issa Diallo, Layashi Yaker, and Kingsley Y. Amoako. Their leadership, vision and service shaped ECA into the respectable think-tank that it is today. I would also like to acknowledge the service and contributions of hundreds of staff members who, over the years, have worked in various capacities to help the Commission address the challenges that Africa faces today.

I salute the Government and people of Ethiopia for their generous hospitality in hosting the Secretariat in Addis Ababa. Africa Hall, entrusted to the care of ECA in 1962 by His Imperial Majesty, Emperor Haile Selassie I, remains the symbol of Africa’s capital to this day.

In preparing this Jubilee Book, we drew liberally from previous books prepared for the Silver Jubilee (1983), the 35th anniversary (1993) and the 40th anniversary (1998), as well as other sources. We also consulted widely with ECA staff, past and present.

I invite you to join ECA in celebrating this important landmark and to accompany the Commission in serving Africa to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

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The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is the regional arm of the United Nations Secretariat in Africa. Established in 1958, it was the fourth such commission created in the aftermath of the destructions caused by the Second World War. The counterparts of ECA for Europe and Latin America were established in 1947; that for Asia and the Far East in 1948, and the fifth and last one, for Western Asia, was established in 1973.

Unlike for the first three, however, the establishment of ECA came only after a protracted campaign by African countries in the UN General Assembly (UNGA). Various arguments had been made against the idea, one being that the regional commissions were designed to facilitate post-war reconstruction, and since Africa was not severely damaged during the war, it did not need such a commission. Another was that Africa was still under European colonial rule. Yet another argument was that while North Africa and Ethiopia had been severely damaged during the war, they could be covered by the Commission for Europe, rather than have a separate Commission for them.

The first formal initiative to establish a special Economic Commission for Africa is traceable to the draft resolution introduced by a delegate of India to the Fourth Session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1947 for the establishment of a special Economic Commission for North Africa and Ethiopia. The Indian proposal was rebuffed, however, in part due to its limited geographic scope. It took another ten years of inaction in ECOSOC until Ghana, upon gaining independence and

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participating in UNGA for the first time, raised the issue of an Economic Commission for Africa.

Supported by 28 other countries, Ghana sponsored a draft resolution for the establishment of ECA, which was subsequently adopted as GA resolution 1155 (XII) of 26 November 1957. As instructed by this resolution, ECOSOC, on 29 April 1958, finally established ECA. The Commission held its first session in Addis Ababa, its new headquarters, from 29 December 1958 to 6 January 1959.

When ECA was established in 1958, full membership was extended to 15 States, eight of which were independent African States: Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia. The other seven member States were the colonial powers, namely Belgium, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom, and the independent white settler colony, the Union of South Africa.

In addition to being the regional arm of the UN Secretariat in Africa, ECA is also Africa’s first international, continent-wide organization. For five years, from its establishment in 1958 to the founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963, it was the one regional forum for waging the critical battles for economic progress on the continent and against colonialism, racism and racial exploitation. Indeed, by succeeding in establishing a Commission that covered the whole of Africa, African countries paved the way for the founding of OAU.

A Challenging and Comprehensive Mandate

ECA was given a broad initial mandate. At the first session of the Commission, the then UN Secretary-General, Mr. Dag Hammarskjold, laid down its guidelines, suggesting that ECA should be:

1. An institution, which would serve as a centre for consultations where governments could freely define and elaborate the form of their cooperation;
2. An institution where the economic needs of the African people would be expressed and where action designed to meet these needs would be initiated and stimulated;

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2 ECOSOC Resolution 671A (XXV), 29 April 1958.
3. An institution which would make a body of technical services for the study and exploration of common problems available to countries and to regional and subregional groupings;

4. An institution which would be a well-organised clearing house for the exchange of information and experiences and which would provide analysis and critical appraisal of this information; and

5. An institution which would establish close relationships with the various programmes of the United Nations, including the substantive work of the specialized agencies.

Today, 50 years after its establishment, the mandate to promote the economic and social development of African countries through international cooperation remains relevant, while the landscape for its contribution to Africa’s development continues to be shaped by continental priorities. The most recent developments that have influenced the direction of ECA have been the transformation of OAU into the African Union (AU) and the articulation of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) framework.

AU aims to speed up the political and socio-economic integration of the continent, promote and defend African common positions at international institutions and establish the necessary conditions to enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy. The main objectives of NEPAD are to eradicate poverty; place African countries on the path of growth and sustainable development; halt the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process; enhance the continent’s full and beneficial integration into the global economy; and ensure a speedy empowerment of women.

The dual role of ECA as a regional arm of the UN and a significant pillar of the regional institutional landscape in Africa endows it with unique comparative advantages that enable it to make distinct and valuable contributions to its member States’ efforts to address these challenges. Its strength derives from its role as the only UN agency mandated to operate in Africa at both regional and subregional levels and to harness resources and bring them to bear on Africa’s priorities. This is particularly important because AU and NEPAD perspectives are primarily regional and subregional. This comparative advantage is also reflected in leadership role of ECA in UN inter-agency support to NEPAD as strategic coordinator of the Regional Consultation Meetings.
Organizational Structure

The Conference of African Ministers of Planning and Economic Development is the regional legislative organ of the Commission. It currently holds its meetings on an annual basis and reports to UNGA through ECOSOC. It is supported by its own technical committee of experts, several sectoral technical committees and the Inter-governmental Committee of Experts of the five subregions. The sectoral technical committees meet on a biennial basis.

The Commission is serviced by a secretariat, led by the Executive Secretary and headquartered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with five subregional offices located in Yaounde, Cameroon (Central Africa); Kigali, Rwanda (East Africa); Rabat, Morocco (North Africa); Lusaka, Zambia (Southern Africa) and Niamey, Niger (West Africa). UNGA approves the Commission’s work programme and allocates it’s core budget on a biennial basis. The Executive Secretary also mobilizes additional resources from various cooperating partners to supplement the budget allocated by UNGA.

Adaptable Programme Orientations

While its basic mandate has not changed substantially over the years, the Commission has undergone considerable changes in order to carry out its mandate as a regional commission of the Secretariat, guided by and adapting to the changing development realities and requirements of its member States. Indeed, ECA has gone through many a transformation, with its evolving and dynamic programmes reflecting the hopes expressed by the UN Secretary-General at the Commission’s inaugural session: That there was a need for “the existence of some flexible institutional arrangement such as the Commission can provide…”

Since its establishment, ECA has undoubtedly shown a strong commitment to Africa’s development. It is noteworthy that with the exception of the eight founding members, all the other member States of ECA gained independence after the Commission’s establishment. Hence, its history is intrinsically intertwined with that of post-colonial Africa, which it was established

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4 “Statement by the Secretary-General at the Inaugural Meeting,” Addis Ababa, (ECOSOC document E/CN.14/18), annex VI, 29 December 1958, 21.
to serve. It can therefore be said that ECA has been shaped by the recent history of Africa, and that it has, at the same time, contributed to shaping the Africa of today. In this regard, it is instructive to note how the evolution of its structure and work programmes guide and reflect the priorities of each of the five decades that the continent has experienced since 1958, summarized as follows.
The first decade coincided with the independence of the majority of countries in Africa. It was thus a decade when special emphasis was placed on laying the foundations for institutional and human resource development across the region. Besides setting up the administrative framework of the secretariat, the Commission focused its initial programme on the compelling development issues of the time: building capacities for development through training in development planning, agriculture, industrial development, transport and natural resources management. These were underpinned by the development of statistics for social and economic research and development planning.

At the same time, the Commission not only promoted the creation of numerous important regional and subregional institutions, such as the African Development Bank (AfDB), but also established its own subregional offices for West Africa in Niamey in 1963, North Africa in Tangiers in 1963, Eastern and Southern Africa in Lusaka in 1964 and Central Africa in Kinshasa in 1965. The structure and locations of these offices was subsequently realigned with the regional economic communities as they evolved over the years.

1968-1978: Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration.
This was the era of consolidation of regional economic cooperation and integration among African countries. The programme therefore focused on promoting continued human resource development, economic cooperation and integration, industrialization, natural resources development, population, social development (almost exclusively in relation to problems affecting women in development), international trade, finance, agriculture, transport and communications.
1978-1988: Articulating and Advocating a Collective Response to Africa’s Crises
The late 1970s saw a marked deterioration in the socio-economic conditions of Africa and a subsequent quest for a unique African response and solution to the situation. The third decade thus focused on socioeconomic policy analysis and formulation to meet this challenge. ECA conceptualized key economic and social strategies and programmes, which made up the policy framework for Africa’s socio-economic development. These included the Lagos Plan of Action, the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa and the Industrial Development Decade for Africa.

This decade saw attempts to arrive at a more holistic approach to development policy formulation and implementation on the continent, encompassing a greater emphasis on institutional and people-centred initiatives to catalyse change. ECA was a leader in this effort, emphasizing the importance of human and social objectives, promoting gender and development issues, good governance and the “capable State”.

Prof. Adebayo Adedeji, a Nigerian, was Executive Secretary from 1975 to 1991, during which period ECA tackled the challenges of a new international economic order to Africa and adopted landmark policies such as the Lagos Plan of Action. Prof. Adedeji worked to correct the adverse impacts of SAPs on African economies, offering an alternative - AAF-SAP. He led the establishment of the RECs, beginning with ECOWAS in 1975; drew up the African Charter for Popular Participation, and pushed for the proclamation of UNCTADA I by the UN General Assembly.

M. Issa Ben Yacine Diallo, from Guinea, succeeded Professor Adedeji in August 1991. He was the Director of Cabinet of the UN Secretary-General and served as ECA Executive Secretary for a transition period of one year, during which he launched UNTACDA II as envisaged in the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.

Mr. Layashi Yaker, former Algerian Ambassador and Minister, became Executive Secretary of ECA in 1992 when he led the Commission to the Rio Summit. He also led the effort to carry out ECA’s Rio Declaration follow-up activity: building African countries’ capacity for sustainable development by devising strategies for Agenda 21 implementation. Mr. Yaker adopted a Plan of Action to harmonize the objectives of IDDA II with those of UNTACDA II in order to facilitate implementation of both initiatives.

With the coming into force of the Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (AEC), ECA, again, reoriented its strategic directions in response to the changed institutional landscape in Africa. Among the key decisions made was significant rationalization of its programme orientation and governance structure in keeping with UN reforms, the establishment of the MDGs and in enhanced partnership with AU/NEPAD programmes and structures.

In this regard, ECA transformed all its sectoral ministerial conferences into the relevant technical committees, retaining only the Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. The work programme was organized on a thematic basis around which partnerships were built. These were aimed at increasing focus, cost effectiveness and impact on African development. The programme focused on the following themes: economic and social policy; food security and sustainable development; development management; information for development; regional integration; and gender. Later, further adjustments were made to take on board the dynamics created by the establishment of AU.

2008 - Onwards: Integrating Africa into the Global Economy

Africa has adopted NEPAD as the framework for social and economic development for achieving the MDGs as acknowledged and integrated in the AU vision for the twenty-first century. In response, ECA has once more restructured its programme in support of the AU vision and priorities, with focus on achieving results in two related areas: promoting regional integration and meeting Africa’s special needs and emerging global challenges. The work programme is organized around 10 sub-programmes designed to avoid duplication of functions, promote complementarities, eliminate inconsistencies and place required emphasis on priority sectors.

The sub-programmes are focused on the following themes: trade, finance and economic policy; food security and sustainable development; governance and public administration; information and science and technology for development; economic cooperation and regional integration; gender and women in development; subregional activities for development; development planning and administration; statistics; and social development. Three support Divisions facilitate programme implementation: administration, conference and general services and policy and programme management.

Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, the current Executive Secretary, is from The Gambia. Mr. Janneh took over ECA in 2005, at a time when the African institutional landscape was being re-shaped and the new millennium was in its infancy. Mr. Janneh, therefore, put emphasis on re-aligning the programmes and services with the priorities of the African Union and its NEPAD programme. In this way, ECA is better positioned to address Africa’s development challenges, its special needs and regional integration goals, using a better collaboration between ECA, AfDB and AUC.

Mr. Kingsley Y. Amoako, a national of Ghana, served as Executive Secretary from 1995 to 2005, during which ECA concentrated on helping African countries to leapfrog into the information age. He institutionalized the African Development Forum and the Big Table as platforms for African policy makers and their development partners to build consensus on key African development issues, providing the Commission with the opportunity to exert its convening power at the highest level.
How ECA Works

The services currently offered by ECA to its clients can be broadly grouped within the following four knowledge-based areas:

**Policy Analysis and Advocacy.** Policy analysis is the foundation for the policy initiatives and reforms necessary for economic and social advancement in Africa. Advocacy is closely linked to it and is focused on internal and external constituencies. Within Africa, it involves promotion of sound policies and dissemination of best practices in economic and social development. Externally, it is geared towards promoting increased understanding of the complexity of the African development context. An important part of the advocacy work is fostering regional cooperation and integration by helping member States to strengthen intra-regional linkages and helping to establish and strengthen subregional organizations and institutions.

**Convening Stakeholders and Building Consensus.** The Commission exercises its convening power to organize major high-level conferences and meetings, including the annual Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the...
The Lobby at the UN Conference Centre

African Development Forum (ADF) and the Big Table, which are some of the most successfully employed means for dialogue, consensus building and outreach in Africa. Consensus building extends to formulation of common positions on important global issues and thus to moulding Africa’s “voice” on such issues.

**Technical Cooperation and Capacity Building.**
Technical cooperation takes the form of on-demand regional advisory services to member States and their intergovernmental organizations, training workshops, seminars and fellowships, institution building and field projects. Advisory services focus on clearly defined policy and technical challenges facing member States, for which the countries lack specialized expertise. More than 40 group training workshops and seminars are organized annually to enhance skilled human resource capacity in member States.

**Enhancing the UN Role in Africa.** The Commission’s regional vantage position facilitates coordination and synergies among UN programmes, mainly those of the Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies, in support of Africa’s development.

**Strong Subregional Presence**
The Sub Regional Offices (SROs) shape the Commission’s agenda at the subregional level, promote and support specific subregional priorities and programmes, and operate as subregional nodes for knowledge management and networking.
Every year, without fail, ECA celebrates the UN Day
Policy Orientation in Post-Independence Africa

The Africa we live in and serve is a continent endowed with diverse resources. These include people, arable land, petroleum and natural gas, other fuel and non-fuel minerals as well as timber, natural fibres, spices, and exotic fauna. Africa’s population was estimated at 963.7 million in 2007. Approximately 25 per cent, i.e. 733 million hectares, of world arable land is in Africa compared to 570 million hectares in Latin America and 628 million in Asia. Currently, 13 oil-producing countries in Africa contribute 12 per cent of global oil supply and new oil and gas discoveries and explorations are regularly announced in different parts of the continent. Africa also has a huge tourism potential that is yet to be adequately tapped.

The continent’s natural resources have undoubtedly defined its history, politics and economic and social development, often to the detriment of the well-being of its own people. Natural resources were the main factor behind the colonization of the continent and the demand for these resources continues to shape, at least partly, the political, economic, and cultural events in Africa today (figure 2.1).

Many African economies grew rapidly from independence until about the mid-1970s, with some of them outperforming some of today’s newly industrialized high-growth economies in East Asia. However, since then and until the late 1990s, most African countries experienced
Figure 2.1: Africa in the early 20th Century
The Africa We Live in and Serve

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...dramatic economic and social decline. Africa’s growth recovery in the 21st Century is encouraging but remains fragile and insufficient for the continent to achieve tangible social development. The continent must create and sustain the necessary conditions to speed up growth for faster progress towards its social development objectives, currently embodied in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Africa’s post-independence development history comprises four main moments or episodes: the period of euphoria of the new independent States characterized by State-led growth programmes of the 1960s and 1970s; the crisis period of the 1980s; the post-adjustment era of the 1990s; and the recent and ongoing recovery period of the 21st Century. Each of these periods is characterized by a specific development model and has experienced vastly different outcomes in terms of growth and social development.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, national policies were dominated by the drive towards consolidation of national political and economic independence. To achieve this goal, the new national governments embarked on State-led development programmes in which the government played a critical role as investor, banker, trader, and primary employer. Thus, the public sector grew rapidly as governments set up parastatal entities to run industries, agricultural projects, development finance institutions, commercial banks, marketing boards, and even import-export enterprises. Under this development agenda, public investment and public employment increased at high rates, resulting in high growth rates.

However, by the second half of the 1970s, it became apparent that the State-centred development model was unsustainable. It resulted in large macroeconomic imbalances, characterized by unsustainable budget, trade deficits and high inflation rates. This was due to the high growth of domestic demand, including public spending in support of non-performing enterprises, through subsidies, that implied high pressure on the budget. The development model deepened the dependence of African countries on primary commodity exports, which exposed them to the vagaries of international markets – especially the perennial decline in the terms of trade.

Moreover, the continent suffered severely from the oil shocks of the mid-1970s, which resulted in stagflation as inflation skyrocketed while production plummeted, with more adverse impacts in developing countries. At the same time, easy international money driven by loan pushing resulted in rapid increases in external debt. By the end of the 1970s, as debt continued to accumulate
while trade imbalances widened, it became increasingly difficult for African countries to meet their debt service obligations. Thus, the continent faced a deep debt crisis as it embarked into the 1980s, which continued throughout that “lost decade”.

The structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which were adopted by many African countries in the 1980s and which were meant to resolve mounting internal and external economic imbalances, were focused almost exclusively on macroeconomic stabilization and trade liberalization with no clear trade and industrial policy and little attention to national social development needs. SAPs have become classic examples, even within international financial institutions (IFIs), of international assistance to the developing world that went awry owing to lack of knowledge and understanding of the realities on the ground.

The lack of a people-centred social policy inherent in SAPs and the policy restrictions on expenditure were an indication that SAPs were externally imposed and therefore not owned by African countries. With no social safety nets for the poor, vulnerable, unemployed and other casualties of the transition, many fragile governments were undermined by the resulting social and political unrest and lost power. A major deficiency in SAPs was the policy to leave accumulation and growth to market forces without adequate attention to shortcomings in markets, institutions and physical and human infrastructure in Africa (UNCTAD 2000). Consequently, freeing markets and privatizing public enterprises did not generate adequate private investment to expand exports, output and employment.

Economic and social performance in the 1990s was not much better than in the 1980s. While many African countries achieved some level of macroeconomic stabilization, growth failed to take off. Poverty levels remained high and actually increased in many countries. At the same time, at the international level, the pace of globalization was rapid while Africa remained increasingly marginalized. Indeed, in spite of visible increases in the volume of global trade and private capital flows, the continent’s share continued to decline (UNECA 2006, 2008).

It thus became apparent that more innovative strategies were needed to boost growth as the continent entered the 21st Century. It is in this context that the international community, led by the World Bank and the IMF, launched the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative in 1996. The programme aimed at providing exceptional
financial assistance to eligible countries\textsuperscript{1} to help them reduce their external debt burden to sustainable levels. The initiative was further enhanced in 1999. As of 2007, a total of 40 countries had been identified as HIPCs, of which 33 were from Africa (World Bank, 2007a).

Further, in June 2005, the G-8 proposed the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI), which was launched in 2006, with the goal of cancelling all International Development Assistance (IDA), IMF, and African Development Bank (AfDB) debt claims on countries that had reached the completion point under the enhanced HIPC initiative. The ultimate purpose of this enhanced initiative was to assist these countries in speeding up their progress towards achievement of the MDGs.

In the context of the debt relief initiative in 1999, the IMF and the World Bank used a new approach to the challenge of reducing poverty by introducing poverty reduction strategies (PRS) that were country-driven, result-oriented, comprehensive and long-term, and that fostered domestic and external partnerships” (IMF, 2002). PRS was embodied within a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which served as a nationally-owned participatory framework for development assistance. ECA, in partnership with development institutions such as UNDP and the World Bank, has regularly provided research and capacity-building assistance to member States to prepare their PRSPs and related MDG-based plans.

The debt relief initiatives have resulted in reduction of the debt burden for the qualifying countries. They have also supported other reform efforts in creating a better environment for growth, which partly explains the recent growth recovery observed on the continent (UNECA 2006, 2008). This is the fourth (ongoing) commodity-driven growth episode of African economic development history.

Unfavourable External Conditions, Policy Failures and the Collapse of Growth During 1958-1999

The first decade of ECA operations was characterized by the struggle for independence by Africans, followed immediately by the rise of military governments. African economies were characterized by exploitative systems that inhibited the region’s economic transformation. The total production structure and supporting infrastructure had all been established to ensure only the production

\textsuperscript{1} To be eligible for HIPC financing a country must meet three conditions: (a) it faces an unsustainable debt situation after the full application of the traditional debt relief mechanisms; (b) it must be only eligible for highly concessional assistance from the International Development Association (IDA); and (c) it has established a track record of reform and has developed a PRSP.
and transportation of Africa’s minerals and other raw materials for export to the former colonial countries.

However, African countries maintained impressive growth rates during the decade of the 1960s. The immediate post-independence economic growth momentum of the 1960s, averaging slightly below 6 per cent, continued up to the mid-1970s but with a slight decline to just above 4 per cent a year. Africa’s growth during this period benefited from a number of favourable factors, including high commodity demand and prices driven by rapid increases in income in developed countries and a relatively stable political atmosphere after the struggle for independence. Also, growth in North Africa benefited from the discovery and increased exploitation of oil and gas.

After promising beginnings, Africa went through a long period of economic decline from the late 1970s to the late 1990s when GDP grew by an average of about 2 per cent a year (figure 2.2). The continent recorded an average annual population growth rate of close to 3 per cent during 1961-1969, which remained almost the same through the 1970s and 1980s before declining to 2.6 per cent in the 1990s and 2.4 per cent by the start of the 21st Century. GDP growth and per-capita income in Africa compared favourably with those of other developing regions from 1960 to the mid-1970s (table 2.1).

At the same time, average consumer price inflation rose, generally, from about 5 per cent in the 1960s to 15.4 per cent in 1980 and a peak of 41.5 per cent in 1994 (figure 2.3). From then on, tightened macroeconomic management under the structural adjustment programmes began to yield results, reflected in continuous reduction in the inflation rate, which stood at 9.4 per cent in 1998. By that time, most African currencies had stabilized, after going through periods of rapid devaluations and tight foreign exchange controls. As part of economic reforms, most African countries replaced fixed exchange rate regimes with flexible regimes, and eased or liberalized foreign exchange markets.

Terms of trade continued to deteriorate for African commodity exports until the end of the 20th Century. The deterioration began in the late 1970s when, historically, the high interest rates intended to curb inflation in developed countries brought about a recession, with reduced demand for African commodity exports, while at the same time increasing Africa’s external debt burden. As a result, a sharp fall in the prices of such commodities as copper, coffee, cocoa, tea and vegetable oils, which were the main exports of African countries, put commodity prices in real terms, by 1982, at their lowest levels since 1940. Added to all of this was the serious drought that affected an estimated 34 African countries in 1984-1985, resulting in serious water shortages that, in turn, adversely affected agricultural production, food supplies
and livestock, with the attendant huge disease burden and loss of human lives.

While macroeconomic stability improved in many countries by the end of the 1990s, Africa’s share in global exports and trade fell sharply from 4.1 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, in 1980 to 1.6 per cent and 1.3 per cent in 1999. During 1960-1999, the share of exports in Africa’s GDP was roughly constant (26 per cent), clearly indicating the inability of the continent to increase gains from globalization and trade liberalization spurred by SAPs. Failing to promote exports, Africa’s current account deficits remained high at close to 5 per cent of GDP in 1999.
The Causes of Low Growth and High Volatility in Africa

In addition to weak policies and institutions and exogenous shocks, the level and volatility of Africa’s growth reflect the structure of production, consumption, technology, and employment that have remained unchanged since independence (UNECA 1990 and 2007; World Bank 2000; Ndulu et al. 2007). The production base is narrow both in terms of size and of range of goods produced. The limited sectoral shifts that took place lacked the necessary dynamics to spur economic transformation.

The share of agriculture, the main employer and income source for the majority of Africans, in GDP declined over time, from 27 per cent in 1960-1969 to about 20

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**Figure 2.3: Terms of trade growth, inflation rate, investment rate and export growth in Africa, 1980-1999**

**Figure 2.4: Structure of output in Africa, 1960-1999 (% of GDP)**

Source: IMF World Economic Outlook 2008

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators 2007

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per cent in 1980-1999 (figure 2.4). The declining share of agriculture was mainly due to stagnation in agriculture and growth in the services sector. The share of industry remained about 30 per cent throughout the post-colonial times, with manufacturing contributing less than 50 per cent of total industrial output, which was dominated by primary commodity production and exports, especially oil and minerals.

Recent African Economic Recovery Still Inadequate for Speedy and Sustained Growth in the 21st Century

In recent years, African economies have experienced growth, driven mainly by improved macroeconomic management in many countries. This has resulted in price stability and consolidation of fiscal balances. Another favourable factor is increase in exports and high commodity prices driven by the rising international commodity demand, especially for oil and minerals. In addition, the continent has received substantial external financial resources in the form of new official development aid, debt relief, and private capital flows, including Diaspora remittances.

Africa’s recent strong growth momentum represents the fourth growth cycle driven by a commodity boom. This cycle started in the late 1990s and gathered momentum in 2000s. The continent achieved an impressive 5.8 per cent average growth rate during 2001-2007 (figure 2.5). However, both GDP growth and per-capita income varied substantially across countries and subregions (figure 2.6).
Although both oil-importing and oil-exporting African countries have sustained a relatively high and increasing growth rates, the continent’s 13 oil economies accounted for 54 per cent of Africa’s GDP and 59 per cent of GDP growth during 2001-2007.

This underscores the continued high African dependence on commodities, with oil and gas exports accounting for over 95 per cent of the export revenue of Nigeria and Libya. For the non-oil countries, primary commodities such as tea, coffee and cocoa dominate their exports. Indeed, strong agricultural commodity demand and favourable rainfall boosted economic activity in the agricultural, industrial and services sectors of many non-oil countries such as Ethiopia and Tanzania during the period.

Even with the narrow production base and growth insufficiency, almost all economic indicators improved since the turn of the 21st Century relative to the previous three decades (table 2.2). Overall, fiscal sustainability has improved in most countries with fiscal deficits turning into fiscal surpluses in 2005-2007. In most African economies, monetary policy focused mainly on
the control of inflation, which declined from 11.7 per cent in 2000 to 6.3 per cent in 2007. Meanwhile, African exchange rates stabilized since the late 1990s.

The external balances of the continent also improved since 1999, recording an average current account surplus of 0.63 per cent of GDP over 2000 - 2007. Again, this improvement was mainly a result of increasing current account surpluses in oil-exporting countries. Even for the landlocked African economies, which normally have larger current account deficits than other African countries due to high transportation costs and weak international competitiveness, the deficits have been declining as a result of debt relief.
Despite Notable Progress, Social Development in Africa Lagged Behind Other Developing Regions during 1958-1999

The period of economic stagnation and decline in Africa was accompanied by slow social development. The continent recorded very low levels of human capital in both health and education. At independence, primary and secondary school enrolment, adult literacy, and child and maternal mortality were worse than in other regions, including Asia. The newly independent States recognized the importance of education as a catalyst for social and economic development and adopted strategies to increase access to education and improve its quality. Marked improvements were also made in health standards in the region, especially with regard to mother and child care, prevention of communicable diseases and health education.

In the area of education Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), made some progress. In 1960, primary school enrolment in SSA was only 25 per cent, but by 1980, it had climbed to 60 per cent. After some decline during the 1980s, it reached 60 per cent again at the end of the Century. In contrast, primary school enrolment in the Middle East and North Africa started at higher rates, reaching about 80 per cent at the end of the Century. In 1960, SSA school enrolment was lower than that of all the other developing regions where it ranged from 40 per cent to 60 per cent. Until the end of the 20th Century, SSA was still lagging behind even though its primary school enrolment had more than tripled during 1960-1980 compared to Asia and Latin America where it only doubled (UNICEF, 1999).

With regard to gender balance, significant progress was made in education. In 1960, twice as many boys as girls attended school in Africa, whereas at the end of the Century the ratio of girls to boys attending school was 0.86 for primary and 0.82 for secondary enrolment in SSA and 0.9 and 0.93 for Northern Africa, respectively (UNICEF 1999 and UN 2007).

In terms of health, the continent remained far behind other developing regions, in spite of some notable progress in the 1990s and thereafter. Whereas child mortality in 1960 was 35 per cent higher in SSA than in Asia, by 2005 the difference was five times the rate in Asia and, in some SSA countries, child mortality even increased (World Bank, 2000). In contrast, North African and Middle East
countries that started at almost the same level attained much lower child mortality rates, comparable to Latin America and Asia, by the end of the Century (figure 2.7).

The population of the region rose precipitously and is still rising at higher rates than in other regions, although in 1960 population growth in SSA was lower than in Latin America. In North Africa and the Middle East, population growth is slightly lower than in SSA but has followed a similar trend (figure 2.8). Persistently high population growth in Africa is a factor in its slow and uneven advancement in gainful employment, education, health care and living conditions in general. For instance, estimates for 1975, stated that out of a total regional labour force of 140 million, up to 45 per cent was either unemployed or underemployed (ILO 1976). Furthermore, Africa has undergone a dramatic social change since independence, especially with respect to demography. One of the driving factors is the rapid urbanization, which drives changes in social relations and family structures, and erodes safety networks (figure 2.9).
The Challenge of Poverty

SSA has exhibited high levels of poverty, much higher than other regions, including North Africa and the Middle East, the developing region with the lowest poverty rates. By the end of the “lost decade” of the 1980s and early 1990s, poverty rates in SSA averaged 44.6 per cent, measured in terms of the population living below the poverty line. Not only did SSA have the highest poverty rates, Africa was the only continent that saw rising poverty rates in the 1980s and 1990s.

From 1990 to the turn of the 21st Century, the average poverty rate in SSA had risen from 44.6 per cent to 46.4 per cent, while it declined from 27.9 per cent to 21.1 per cent for less developed countries as a group, over the same period. On average, Asia’s poverty ratios were higher than SSA’s at the beginning of the 1980s, but since then Asia has successfully reduced its poverty rates. SSA’s poverty rates have only begun to decline almost two decades later, since the end of the 1990s (figure 2.10).

High African poverty rates are associated with high levels of inequality. Compared to other developing regions, Africa consistently ranks second to Latin America in terms of highest level of income inequality (UNECA 1999, UNU/
However, the continental average hides wide diversities across countries, with the highest levels of inequality observed in Southern Africa (notably South Africa, Zimbabwe, Lesotho and Namibia) and the lowest inequality scores in North Africa (e.g., Egypt, Algeria).

The challenge of poverty reduction in Africa has been given much attention both in national policymaking circles and among development partners over the past decades. In fact, poverty has been declared the primary focus of policy intervention in national and international declarations and plans of actions such as PRSPs, MDGs and, recently, those envisioned in the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD).

Recent Economic Growth Insufficient for Africa to Achieve its Social Development Goals in the 21st Century

Generally, African countries have achieved higher growth rates in recent years, compared to the previous three decades, but the average growth rates still fall short of the threshold required to quicken poverty alleviation and achieve the MDGs. The recorded real per capita income growth rate (0.3 per cent during 1990-2002 and 3.0 per cent in 2003-2007) is insufficient for Africa to make significant progress towards achieving the MDGs.

Another disappointing feature of the recent growth recovery in Africa is that the strong growth rates have not been accompanied by tangible gains in job creation. “Jobless growth” is the outcome of the high concentration of economic activity in capital-intensive sectors such as oil and mining. The poor performance in employment creation raises serious concerns about the continent’s ability to reduce poverty because the creation of decent jobs constitutes the most viable means of raising living standards in African countries. Thus, poverty remains a critical challenge for the continent in the medium and long term.

According to the World Bank (2000), Africa, particularly SSA, entered the new millennium with many of the world’s poorest countries. One factor that distinguishes Africa from other developing regions is the low demographic transition in terms of reduced fertility. Besides putting heavy pressure on public service delivery, this lowers savings and investment rates, constraining growth and employment creation (World Bank, 2000).
While progress towards the MDGs is generally low for the continent, there are large variations both across countries and across MDG targets. With regard to targets, the continent has achieved generally good progress in universal primary education and in gender equity in primary and secondary education. In contrast, there is very slow progress in other goals. Most countries are substantially off-track regarding the health and environmental sustainability targets (see table 2.3).

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has added a new twist to the development crisis in Africa. With the highest number of people infected, some 30 million, and about 13 million already dead from the disease by 2006, there seems to be a development haemorrhage on the continent. In the fight against malaria, African countries committed themselves in 2000 to dramatically increasing the provision of insecticide-treated nets. Remarkable success in the provision of nets to children under five has been recorded in such countries as Eritrea and Malawi, reaching a coverage rate of 60 per cent and 36 per cent, respectively. With respect to tuberculosis, the situation worsened in SSA where the rate of prevalence increased from 337 per 100,000 people in 1990 to 492 per 100,000 people in 2004. In North Africa, tuberculosis is less of a problem, with only 52 cases out of 100,000 people in 2004. The HIV/AIDS pandemic and other diseases, however, remain a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.3: Status of MDG achievements in Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MDG1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator: People living on less than 1$ (PPP) a day (% of population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MDG2: Achieve primary education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator: Net primary enrolment rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator: Literacy rates 15-24 year olds (% of relevant age group)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MDG3: Promote gender equality and empower women</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator: Ratio of literate women to men of 15-24 age group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MDG4: Reduce child mortality</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Indicator: Under 5 mortality (per 1,000 births)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
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<tr>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MDG5: Improve maternal health</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Indicator: Proportion of deliveries attended by skilled health workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MDG6: Combat malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and other diseases</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator: Adult HIV/AIDS prevalence</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indicator: Tuberculosis prevalence (cases per 100,000 population (excluding HIV infected)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MDG7: Ensure environmental sustainability</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator: Proportion of land area covered by forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator: Access to an improved water source (% of population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator: Access to improved sanitation (% of population)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MDG8: Develop a global partnership for development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator: Share of ODA flows (% of donor GNI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * Data for 2002, ** Data for 2005, *** Data for 2006
threat to labour supply and labour productivity. Public investments in preventive and educational programmes to fight the spread of the disease can curb the trend of the epidemic, and at the same time create jobs for those who will be employed in those programmes (UNECA 2007).

References


World Bank. 2007b. World Development Indicators, CD-ROM. Washington DC.
It was not by coincidence that capacity building featured right from the early years of ECA as an avenue for implementing the Commission’s mandate to promote the economic and social development of its member States, foster intra-regional integration, and promote international cooperation for Africa’s development. At that time, with many African countries on the verge of political independence and concerned about their future socio-economic independence, the Commission saw capacity building and economic cooperation among the few independent African States and others about to emerge from colonial dependency, as one major way of helping a free Africa to pursue economic and social development and reverse the backwardness in human resources and institutions.

Capacity building has therefore permeated ECA policies, programmes, projects and activities at the regional, subregional and national levels for a long time and continues to do so as Africa’s challenges mutate with the dictates of development. A large number of the themes and titles of the activities of the various Divisions and Subregional Offices (SROs) of ECA reflect specific capacity-building needs, plans and programmes.

ECA capacity-building activities take two forms, namely, directly enhancing the skills of the beneficiaries of capacity-oriented programmes, including through technical assistance and training, and by developing policies, strategies and institutions to build capacity. The first, Building Capacity in all ECA Programmes, is vast and can only be selectively captured here. It integrates crosscutting capacity-building objectives into ECA day-
to-day activities in accordance with its mandate to serve its member States. For example, much of the work of the African Centre for Gender and Social Development (ACGSD) is capacity building, undertaken in cooperation with ECA statutory bodies such as the Committee on Women and Development (CWD). Indeed, the phrase “empowering women” translates in some romance languages as “building the capacity of women”.

Another current example is the Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP) model for substantive research and policy analysis that is being used by the Trade, Finance and Economic Development Division (TFED) to provide technical advice to member States in the areas of multilateral and bilateral trade negotiations, forecasting and trade globalization. Similarly, the Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD) indicators for good governance are currently shaping institutional capacity building and governance in African countries. Besides, capacity building, training workshops and other forms of human resources development programmes abound in ECA through its various Divisions. The Commission itself has training programmes in language competency, career development, ICT and other skills development for staff and outsiders, and it offers fellowships, sabbaticals and internships among other opportunities.

The second form of capacity building, Building Regional Institutions to Enhance Capacity, has more historical relevance and operational importance. The institutional capacity-building achievements of the Commission merit that the subject takes its proper place in this ECA Golden Jubilee commemorative publication.

Over the years, since its establishment, ECA has been at the forefront of institution building by directly contributing to the establishment of national and multinational institutions known as ECA-sponsored institutions, or indirectly by playing a leading role and participating actively in the development of institutions through negotiations, decisions, resolutions, agreements, treaties and committees that led to the establishment of the respective institutions.
The Commission provided the vital forum for negotiations that led to the establishment of the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) at a time when unity and reforms were seen by the independence era “founding fathers” as vital for the future development of Africa. It was also fully involved in promoting the creation of regional organizations and institutions at a time when such attempts were fraught with disagreements and resistance from colonial quarters and those who felt that the World Bank was enough and that a speedy continental progress and a well-shaped and united Africa would be inimical to their interests.

For example, following the Monrovia discussions on these issues and the endorsement in 1963 at Addis Ababa, of the two draft charters of the OAU and AfDB presented by the Monrovia Group, it was ECA that implemented the Bank’s charter by setting up the Committee of Nine that established AfDB, recommended the appointment of its first President and set the conditions and criteria for choosing its headquarters. In fact, the Bank was housed at the ECA secretariat until it secured its headquarters in Abidjan.1

ECA-sponsored Institutions

The stature and role of AfDB in Africa today cannot be overstated. Indeed, the Bank’s establishment gave a boost to the role of ECA in expanding independent Africa’s international cooperation. Its establishment set the stage for the emergence of a flurry of other African institutions in the banking, finance, industry, trade and economic development policy spheres in whose establishment and growth ECA was also a pioneer.

Notable among these other institutions in the financial and banking sector, which continues to have a big impact on the African continent today, is the Association of African Central Banks (AACB), headquartered in Dakar, for coordination of monetary and financial policies. AACB assists in the formulation of guidelines and fosters agreements among African countries to ensure price and financial stability on the continent. It also helps African countries in their relations with other international economic and financial institutions and in the project to develop a common currency and Central Bank.2

Other institutions of note in this sector include the African Centre for Monetary Studies (ACMS), also headquartered

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1 AfDB, Fortieth Anniversary Book

2 AACB Website, www.aacb.org
in Dakar, for monetary and financial studies and research; the West African Clearing House (WACH), headquartered in Freetown and the Central African Clearing House (CACH), Kinshasa, for trade banking services; and the Association of African Tax Administration (AATA), based in Addis Ababa, for coordination of tax policies and legislation.

The establishment by ECA of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) in those early years of Africa’s post-colonial formation helped to fill the critical capacity gap in the area of training and research in economic planning, management and implementation, which has led not just the Commission’s work but also directly benefited its member States. IDEP was established in 1962 and became operational in 1963.

ECA also worked with OAU to develop a number of important programmes in transport and communications, with the institutions so established becoming OAU technical agencies. One was the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) established in 1969 with headquarters in Dakar, for consultation, coordination and formulation of air transport policies in Africa. ECA worked not only with AFCAC but also with the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) and OAU to negotiate and implement the Yamoussoukro Declaration on a New African Air Transport Policy in the late 1980s and the 1990s. Another was the Union of African Railways (UAR) established at ECA initiative in 1973 to develop railways and rail transport in Africa mainly through interconnection, management and harmonization of the continent’s railway systems and networks, for which ECA provided much-needed assistance.

Certain initiatives such as the Pan African Postal Union (PAPU), Pan African News Agency (PANA) and Pan African Telecommunications Union (PATU) fall into this category, with the Regional African Satellite Communication Organization (RASCOM) projects and

Table 3.1: Number of IDEP Trainees during the Period 1963-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African Subregions and Others</th>
<th>Total number of trainees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Africa</td>
<td>525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Africa</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Africa</td>
<td>1242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Africa</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Africa</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (Austria and USA)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2513</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IDEP/ECA

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3 ECA at 35. ECA
**Mandate:** To train policymakers and development professionals in economic policy management; provide advisory services to African governments and organizations; promote original thinking and research on African policy; and to become a centre of excellence that debates African development and promotes the continent’s economic independence.

**Achievements:** Graduated over 2500 senior officials, from all over Africa, who successfully completed either the MA degree or a short-term training programme.


**Former Trainees:** Graduates now hold positions as senior policymakers, economic policy analysts, strategic planning experts, industrial development specialists and agricultural policy analysts in national, subregional, regional and international institutions/organizations.

**Long Tradition:** The Institute has long undertaken policy research and publication of reference journals, working papers and monographs on Africa’s development challenges, including on NEPAD and Future Policy Making. This also gives credibility to its advisory services and policy forums.

**Resource Centre:** IDEP offers an excellent working environment for researchers, and regularly hosts interns, scholars and experts from other academic institutions in the world through its Visiting Scholar Programme. Research outputs range from course papers to theses and graduate research papers. IDEP undertakes large joint research projects with African and non-African researchers. It works, networks and cooperates with leading econometric, finance and economic institutions and associations, including ECA Divisions and SROs and United Nations Specialized Agencies.

**Pan-African Library and Documentation Centre:** The Library and Documentation Centre is fully computerized, with over 500,000 documents, books, journals and other publications on African countries. It is an international repository, increasingly serving as a continental information and research centre.

**Funding:** This comes mainly through the United Nations, the assessed contributions of its member States, the host country’s support, internally generated revenue, and the support of donors.

**Bilingual:** The Institute teaches in English and French, with a permanent staff. The simultaneous interpretation and translation facilities with which lectures, seminars and all other activities and services are conducted and delivered, give it an edge over similar institutions.

Source: IDEP/ECA, 2008
others implemented under the first and second United Nations Transport and Communication Decade in Africa (UNTACDA I and II). As for the Eastern and Southern Mineral Resources Development Centre (ESAMRDC), and that for Central Africa (CAMRDC), the purpose of their establishment was research, to gather information and knowledge on the quantity and value of mineral wealth in Africa, to guide exploitation of these resources and maximize their contribution to the economies of the countries and regions concerned. ESAMRDC is now known as the Southern and Eastern African Mineral Centre (SEAMIC).

Establishment of technology development centres derived from the view that science and technological capacity-building would promote industrial and sustainable development in Africa and boost economic development. The African Regional Centre for Technology (ARCT) established in 1977 with headquarters in Dakar has, in addition to training in human resources development, promoted the development, adaptation, transfer and application of local and foreign technology in Africa. Its research and consultancy areas include food production, processing, preservation, storage and marketing. It has produced many technology handbooks and books.

The African Regional Centre for Engineering Design and Manufacturing (ARCEDEM), established in 1979 in Ibadan, Nigeria, has a similar orientation as ARCT, with focus on design of equipment, machine components and prototypes, engineering consultancy services, training, research and dissemination of engineering design and manufacturing information. ARCEDEM, like ARCT, currently designs machines for processing agricultural produce that are of much value to its local community, apart from being replicated in other communities in Africa. Furthermore, the Centre is well equipped for training, research and publishing in the area of engineering design.

Similarly, the African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research (AIHTTR) was established in 1979 with headquarters in Nairobi. AIHTTR has the objective of assisting member States to acquire and develop technical personnel for self-reliance, through agricultural engineering, food technology, technical teacher training, electro-mechanical engineering, electronics and energy resources, and industrial and basic science training. ECA also helped to create the African Regional Centre for Solar Energy Research (ARCSE), in Bujumbura, Burundi. What all these centres had in common was science and technology for sustainable and economic development.
Numerous and varied as these institutions and their functions were, they have a common raison d’être linked to capacity building. This is most easily seen by taking a comprehensive look at their capacity needs and interrelationships. Earlier, we saw how the banking, finance and the socio-economic development institutions and sectors aimed to support the independence and self-reliance of the emerging African States. The priority sectors at the time, agricultural and industrial development, were themselves dependent on transport, earth resources and technology, which justified the establishment of institutions that targeted those fields. Information technology and statistics were crosscutting priorities in this regard.

The impact and role of the cartography, aerial survey, meteorological applications and remote sensing institutions were also of great importance. Four institutions were established: the African Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing in Algiers (1989); the Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys (RECTAS), the Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing (RCSSMRS), and the Regional Remote Sensing Centre (CRTO).

The Climate for Development in Africa Programme (ClimDev-Africa) highlighted the importance of “effective integration of climate information and services into development planning”… and “ensuring

Established in 1975 as the Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing (RCSSMRS), RCMRD is a Centre of Excellence that provides Africa and beyond with quality geo-information, and allied ICT products, services and applications in environmental and resource management for development.

In this regard, the Centre develops and updates land resource and urban development data for the region; provides a regional early warning system for food security, environmental monitoring and disaster management through satellite technology; undertakes with national institutions spatial information projects for development planning at all levels; coordinates the fragmented regional data using geodetic GPS techniques and data processing methodologies; develops member States’ capacity in surveying and mapping, equipment maintenance for which it also provides advisory services; and undertakes, jointly with national and international institutions, research and training in geo-information application in land resource and urban mapping for sustainable development.

As for the Centre’s achievements to date, it has successfully built member States’ capacity to establish mapping agencies; prepared various map products for member States and clients; trained over 4000 African professionals and technicians in Remote Sensing, GIS, Surveying, and Mapping; upgraded all its information technology facilities, including internet connectivity; established strategic partnerships with such world leading geo-information institutions as NASA, USGS, ESA, ESRI, Digital Globe, GeoEye, SPOT Image, Leica Geosystems, ITC and Clark University; introduced Certificate and Diploma courses in Information Technology jointly with the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology; coordinated the unified African Reference Framework (AFREF), and leads the distribution of satellite imagery in Africa.

The Centre has published the AFRICA: Atlas of Our Changing Environment, which depicts environmental change in Africa via satellite and has established the SERVIR-Africa facility which provides African countries with real-time data in eight areas, namely, disasters, ecosystems, weather, climate, water, agriculture, human health, and energy, with the help of NASA and USAID.

It also manages the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters through which it prioritizes commercial near real-time satellite images of areas affected by a disaster for its member States, thereby providing value-added information for better management, assessment and monitoring of the disaster.

For urban development, RCMRD has prepared baseline maps for such African countries as the Sudan. In cooperation with FAO, it implemented the Africover East Africa project to standardize natural resource information in ten East African countries to facilitate early warning, food security, agriculture, disaster prevention and management, forest and rangeland monitoring, as well as environmental planning, watershed catchments management, biodiversity studies, and climate change modelling, among others. Similarly, it has developed predictive models for leadtime information on flooding and rift valley fever in partnership with NASA, USGS and IRI.

Source: RCMRD, 2008
the mainstreaming of climate considerations in policies and programmes aimed at achieving the MDGs”4. The daily impact of these institutions on the ground is seen in weather forecasts, farmers’ activities and food production as well as in drought and desertification monitoring, and pest control. Their activities are usually unheralded and uncelebrated, but they work in cooperation with local counterpart institutions and fulfil their vital role.

Common to these institutions is the fact that in striving to become centres of excellence, they have generated and disseminated information and knowledge through research and academic exchanges. Some have additional roles as service or regulatory bodies, for example, the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), the African Regional Industrial Property Organization (ARIPO) and the African Regional Organization for Standardization (ARSO).

Table 3.2: The functional categories of ECA-affiliated institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cartography, Mapping Remote Sensing</td>
<td>Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys (RECTAS) Ile-Ife, Nigeria; African Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing (AOCRS), Algiers; the Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing (RCSSMRS); African Centre for Meteorological Applications and Development (ACMAD), Niamey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and Industrial Technology</td>
<td>African Regional Centre for Engineering Design and Manufacturing (ARCEDEM), Ibadan, Nigeria; African Regional Centre for Technology (ARCT), Dakar; African Regional Organization for Standardization (ARSO) Nairobi; African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research (AIIHTTR), Nairobi; African Regional Industrial Property Organization (ARIPO), Harare; African Regional Centre for Solar Energy Research (ARCSE), Bujumbura.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic and Social Development</td>
<td>African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP); African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development (ACARTSOSD), Tripoli; Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI), Arusha, Tanzania; Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS), Accra; Demographic Training and Research Institute (IFORD), Yaounde, Cameroon; United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), Kampala.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Trade</td>
<td>Central African Clearing House (CACH); West African Clearing House (WACH); African Centre for Monetary Studies (ACMS); Association of African Central Banks (AACB), Dakar; Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (AATPO) Tangier, Morocco; Association of African Tax Administration AATA, Addis Ababa; Federation of African Chambers of Commerce (FACC), Addis Ababa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minerals and Transport</td>
<td>Eastern and Southern Africa Mineral Resources Development Centre (ESAMORDC), Dar-es-Salaam; Central Africa Mineral Resources Development Centre (CAMRDC), Brazzaville; Port Management Association of North Africa (PMAANA), Tunis; Port Management Association of West and Central Africa (PMAWACA), Lagos, Nigeria; Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa (PMAESA), Mombasa, Kenya.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ECA, 2008

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4 United Nations Joint Press Kit for Bali Climate Change Conference, 3-14 December 2007, “Climate Change and the Broad Mandate of ECA”.
The Need for Rationalization

Over the years, in response to changing and emerging priorities, ECA programmes have focused on the challenges of reducing poverty, achieving the MDGs, enhancing democratic and participatory governance, preventing conflicts, keeping/building peace and national reconciliation, managing energy resources, and targeting the environment and sustainable development. These new areas of focus required the establishment of new institutions, while strengthening, rationalizing, or expanding the roles of the existing ones.

The institutions that ECA helped to build in Africa were designed to serve the entire African region or subregions, in various development sectors. However, as their numbers grew, calls started being made for their rationalization. According to the Executive Secretary serving at the time of this exercise, the issue had been on the agenda of the Conference of Ministers since 1983 with recommendations mainly to:

(a) Consolidate institutions and activities in order to eliminate duplication, coordinate development efforts and promote efficient use of limited resources;
(b) Streamline institutional arrangements and statutes of the institutions to enhance decision making, management and control and resource mobilization; and
(c) Promote self-sustenance by establishing private sector support units in institutions to develop strategies and income-generation methods and opportunities for the institutions.

The rationalization and the harmonization of the activities of these institutions also implied that member States had to provide them with adequate funding to ensure their continued effectiveness. Member States also needed to review them regularly to ensure their continued relevance in view of the changing development challenges and needs, and in view of the new strategic directions of ECA that respond to these priorities. The recommendations derived from the results of studies conducted in the mid-1990s were followed by the resolve of ECA to re-evaluate the capacity of these institutions in light of the prevailing circumstances and requests from member States and partners.

The next action was to group these institutions into three broad categories based on relevance to Africa’s development priorities and the newly defined strategic directions and programmes of ECA, their current operational capacity and effectiveness, and regular financial support from member States. The categorization done was use-
ful in enhancing the institutional relationships with ECA in light of the reforms undertaken at the Commission, which were aimed at enhancing its capacity to serve its member States.

For the first category of institutions, ECA remained a member of their governing bodies, continued to chair meetings by mandate as before, or continued to assist with expertise, self-financing possibilities and advocacy with partners in and outside the UN system. For the second category of institutions, those with services so useful to member States that they still wished to maintain and support them, ECA would continue to serve on their governing boards and provide technical assistance, but the ECA Executive Secretary would not chair their governing boards. For the third category of institutions, those whose services were in reduced demand and were poorly supported by member States, they would be closed down or transformed into national centres, but would continue to serve other countries by arrangement.

The rationalization identified those institutions that would partner more with ECA and emphasized the ownership and financial sponsorship of member States. The designation of the rationalized institutions changed from “ECA-sponsored Institutions” to “Regional Development Institutions”. Very few have met the criteria for having their governing boards chaired by ECA.

The geographical spread of these institutions across the continent and, particularly, their spread across the socio-economic subject areas of regional cooperation, statistics and data exchange, skills training and capacity building, and gender and development buttressed political independence with economic autonomy and growth. ECA strategy became one of effectively dealing with the continent’s socio-economic and legal problems in a specialized way, but through joint research actions and exchanges among related institutions. Through the intergovernmental meetings that they organize, these institutions have also helped to facilitate cooperation among African States.

ECA Subregional Offices (SROs)

The establishment of the SROs came at about the same time as that of the first group of ECA-sponsored institutions. Thus, on the basis of its resolution 23(III) of 15 February 1961 and resolution 64(IV) of 3 March 1962, the Commission had established four subregional
offices in Africa by 1962 and the fifth one, for Southern Africa, in 1966, in order to decentralize its activities, to be closer to member States and assist them to pursue their national and subregional development and integration objectives and plans.

These field offices have served as ECA main mechanisms for promoting, negotiating, establishing and monitoring subregional cooperation and integration arrangements in Africa. They were established in each of the five subregions into which Africa was divided for this purpose: one for West Africa (in Niamey), one for Eastern and Southern Africa (in Lusaka), one for Central Africa (in Yaoundé, Cameroon), one for the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (in Gisenyi, Rwanda, later moved to Kigali) and one for North Africa (in Tangiers, Morocco later moved to Rabat).

These centres have taken various names, from Subregional Offices, to Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs), to Subregional Development Centres (SRDCs) and currently back to ECA Subregional Offices (SROs). According to ECA resolution 311(XIII), the policy organs of the MULPOCs/SROs are their Council of Ministers or Plenipotentiaries and an Inter-governmental Committee of Experts (ICE) drawn from the individual member States of the subregions.

Positioned between the subregions and ECA Headquarters, SROs implement actions originating either from their member States on request, usually in the form of capacity-building or technical/advisory services requests, or activities originating from the Divisions of ECA at Addis Ababa Headquarters.

By facilitating relations with and among subregional economic groupings, sectoral intergovernmental institutions, the private sector and civil society, the SROs have helped to lay the foundations for regional integration. By also facilitating trans-border socio-economic cooperation and transformation, the SROs facilitate joint implementation of ECA programmes within and sometimes among subregions. This role was meant to be consultative and advisory initially but the changes in nomenclature over time indicate the attempts to fine-tune and upgrade this function.

Earlier, the United Nations Multinational Interdisciplinary Development Advisory Teams (UNDATs) established by General Assembly resolution 13 of December 1969 requested the Secretary-General and the heads of United Nations bodies “to intensify their efforts to meet more satisfactorily the requirements of member States in the field of development planning, plan implementation, public administration and management, especially by or-
ganizing, wherever possible and appropriate, continuing advisory services in these fields”.

The UNDATs, which had existed side-by-side with some ECA subregional offices, in Niamey and Yaounde (but not in Lusaka), were transformed by 1973, to integrate their activities with those of the SROs.

The SROs remain as the Commission’s tools for advisory services to member States, regional economic communities (RECs) and other stakeholders in development of the subregions. They have acted as facilitators of economic cooperation, integration and development; advocates for gender issues; collectors and disseminators of information for the use of member States and ECA; and facilitators of the integration activities of other UN agencies in their respective subregions.

The relevance of SROs has never been in question, but their capacity has had to grow and expand to respond effectively to the calls for additional and expanded services. Thus, the ECA Conference of Ministers in resolution 810 (XXXI) of 1996 called on the ECA Executive Secretary “to take necessary steps to strengthen the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres...”

Similar calls had been made by the Ministerial resolutions in 1987, 1990 and 1991 and by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), for a new and stronger role for SROs in speeding up subregional economic integration as first building blocks for full regional integration.

By the mid-1990s, as year 2000 and the new Millennium approached, an in-house task force suggested review of the SRO mandate, geographic coverage, location of the headquarters, and modes of operation. ECA staff massively responded to the executive directives to redraft the work programme of the SROs, provide each of the Offices with an average of 10 staff members and to redeploy 25 per cent of ECA staff to them. This capacity enhancement was endorsed by the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) mandated by the ECA Conference of Ministers to supervise SRO activities and their medium-term plans of action, programmes of work, and strategic orientations for serving their respective subregions.

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Now and in the Future

Institution-building is an unending exercise that responds to new challenges. Questions inevitably have to be asked as to the type of institutions Africa needs, now and in the future, to respond effectively to its development challenges. In its restructuring and new directions, ECA established policy centres to advance the development agenda and respond to Africa’s emerging challenges. Some of them are:

(a) Information Technology Centre for Africa (ITCA)
(b) African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC)
(c) African Centre for Statistics (ACS)
(d) African Centre for Gender and Social Development (ACGSD)
(e) African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC)
(f) Science with Africa Centre.
The role of ECA in promoting regional integration was emphasized at the inaugural session of the Commission by the then UN Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjold, who, with remarkable foresight, stated that history was producing new States whose geographical boundaries were not likely to serve their economic growth efficiently. He urged African States to pursue economic integration, which he felt could be one of the major objectives ECA.¹

On the same occasion, Africa’s own founding fathers also felt the same way, with their views clearly expressed in the words of His Imperial Majesty, Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia, who said:

“The economies of the African States have too long existed as separate, self-contained, isolated entities. African countries have for too long been forced to nurse their own economies and puzzle out their complicated problems by themselves, or else have them handled haphazardly for them by others. We are all only too well acquainted with the difficulties and barriers that the African peoples have had to overcome in coming together to deliberate on matters of common interest. But it is impossible to believe that individual countries, working alone and isolated from their neighbours, can ever achieve their objectives, and the African peoples must therefore work and cooperate together if the economic development of this continent is to be furthered”.²

For 50 years, ECA has worked to honour the regional cooperation and integration obligations inherent in these words, focusing much of its effort on landmark activities

¹ ECA at 25, pg. 44
² Inaugural Meeting of the Commission, 29 December 1958.
that include the establishment and transformation of the OAU, the building of institutions, the adoption of the LPA, the establishment of AEC, NEPAD, and AU, the building of the RECs and the development of physical infrastructure.

**African Strategy for Development**

Africa has pursued regional integration as its core strategy for development ever since the West Indian born George Padmore mooted the idea of Pan-Africanism at the dawn of the twentieth century as “a vision, which stretches beyond the limited frontiers of the nation-state. This perspective embraced the federation of regional self-governing countries and their ultimate amalgamation into a United States of Africa.”

In July 1900, African people from all over the world met for the first time in Westminster Hall, London, to discuss how to collectively and effectively advocate for racial equality and self-determination for black people across the globe. The First Pan-African Congress was subsequently held in February 1919, organized by the African American thinker and journalist, W.E.B. Dubois, in Paris. By the time of the Seventh Pan-African Congress in Accra in 1958, the agenda included consideration of how to promote economic cooperation among African States based on exchanges of technical, scientific, cultural and educational information. Similarly, the Pan-African Conference in Leopoldville, Congo in August 1960 considered, among other things, the issues of trade agreements among African States and an African strategy towards accessing the European common market.

Regional cooperation and integration offers tremendous opportunities for economic growth. It would enable African countries to overcome the constraints of small national markets and increase intra-African trade by bringing economies of scale in production. Deriving these benefits requires the right policies, including harmony in macroeconomic policies as well as existence of physical infrastructure to link the national economic spaces and allow for free movement of goods, services, capital and people, facilitated by appropriate institutions.

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1 Siteke G. Mwale, Historical Notes on the Creation of PTA/COMESA (2000).
Supporting and Promoting Regional Cooperation and Integration

Strengthening Institutions for Regional Cooperation

As part of its role in building capacity for Africa’s development, ECA was instrumental in establishing various institutions for regional integration in Africa, preparing the relevant treaties, protocols and programmes. The key ones are summarized below.

Organization of African Unity (OAU) - 1963
The earlier preoccupation with regional cooperation and integration was formally articulated in the Addis Ababa Charter adopted by the International Conference of African Independent States establishing the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on 25 May 1963 as the vehicle for achieving an integrated Africa. The roles of ECA and the OAU in Africa’s development had been defined even earlier, in 1962, when the OAU Charter was being drawn up and ECA committed itself to giving full support to the OAU Secretariat. Since then, the two institutions have had complementary roles, ECA providing the policy framework based on social, economic and technical research, and the OAU providing the political vision and guidance.

As the only intergovernmental organization in Africa at the time of the establishment of the OAU, ECA provided the forum and relevant working documents for the abovementioned International Conference of African Independent States and, thereafter, continued to provide support to the nascent OAU, especially in preparing technical documents for various meetings. Most decisions of the OAU Assembly often “… called on OAU, in close collaboration with ECA,” to implement the actions required. Thus, such landmark African programmes and strategies as the LPA, the Abuja Treaty, the Cairo Agenda, the Constitutive Act and NEPAD, that were adopted under the auspices of the OAU, were in large part formulated by ECA. ECA contributed to the OAU in institutional capacity building, helping to establish five specialized agencies in the transport and communications area: AFCAC, UAR, PATU, PANA and PAPU.

In order to strengthen the partnership between ECA and the OAU, the Assembly established the Joint OAU/ECA/ADB Secretariat to undertake regional assignments as necessary. This provided a solid framework for further deepening the partnership that came to be crystallized through NEPAD, the various aspects of which the three institutions are jointly implementing.
The founding fathers of OAU
In the 1980s, Africa faced many challenges, including the negative impact of the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) imposed by the Bretton Woods Institutions, marginalization in the global market place, and massive external debt. To address these and other challenges, African leaders took a number of measures aimed at transforming the OAU into the African Union (AU) and at quickening the pace of political, economic and social development in Africa as envisaged in the Abuja Treaty.

In transforming the OAU into the AU in 2002, African countries clearly acknowledged the organization’s achievements since its inception in 1963, in propelling Africa to greater heights in the 21st century and focusing on the continent’s political and economic integration objectives. Regional integration has been the Union’s focus, and the means of preparing the continent to face the challenges of regionalism and globalization. Here again, the contribution of ECA has been substantial and includes preparation of the relevant technical inputs that shaped the Constitutive Act.

Furthermore, ECA organized ADF-III on “Defining Priorities for Regional Integration” in 2002, on the eve of the launching of the AU, as a platform for discussions on achieving integration. The Commission’s current work programme is formed around the vision of the AU and its NEPAD programme. With effect from 2008, the annual ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development started being jointly organized with AUC in order to mainstream ECA activities into the AU agenda.

Regional Economic Communities (RECs)

The Constitutive Act of the African Union recognizes RECs as the pillars on which the African Economic Community would be built. The creation of RECs in Africa is not new. The first REC in Africa, the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), began in 1910. The Southern Rhodesia Customs Union emerged in 1949 between South Africa and the country now known as Zimbabwe. The Ghana–Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) Trade Agreement started in 1962, as did the African Common Market linking Algeria, the United Arab Republic (Egypt), Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and Morocco. Also formed in 1962 was the Equatorial Customs Union, the precursor of the Customs Union of Central African States, which had as members Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, and Gabon. The East African Community, comprising Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, began in 1967 as perhaps the most far-reaching of early integration attempts in Africa.
Most of the earlier regional blocs no longer exist in their original forms. However, with the assistance of ECA, and since the passing of the Abuja Treaty, new groups have been formed, reflecting African countries’ continued belief in economic cooperation and integration. ECA was directly involved in the establishment of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975, the Preferential Trade Area of East and Southern Africa (PTA) now COMESA in 1982, and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in 1983, by preparing their respective treaties and protocols.

Africa’s current integration landscape contains an array of RECs, including eight considered by the AU as the building blocks of the African Economic Community. There are other more geographically limited intergovernmental organizations that are subsets of the above. Table 4.1 summarizes the composition of these RECs.

ECA supports the RECs in many ways, including through institutional capacity building and technical assistance. The SROs are the main vehicles for providing technical assistance on various issues specific to each subregion. Support to sectoral activities is based on the priorities of each subregion and covers food security, infrastructure, minerals, industry and environment, among others.

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Specified objective</th>
<th>Current status</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arab Maghreb Union (UMA)</td>
<td>Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia</td>
<td>Full economic union</td>
<td>Free trade area not achieved, but conventions in force for investments, payments and transport</td>
<td>Integration has been moving slowly since 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC)</td>
<td>Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon</td>
<td>Full economic union</td>
<td>Monetary and customs unions achieved, and competition and business laws harmonized Macroeconomic policy convergence in place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)</td>
<td>Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe</td>
<td>Common market</td>
<td>Free trade area among nine members achieved in October 2000 Customs union expected by December 2004 Criteria set for macroeconomic policy convergence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)</td>
<td>Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Gabon, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia</td>
<td>Free trade area and integration in some sectors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East African Community (EAC)</td>
<td>Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda</td>
<td>Full economic union</td>
<td>Significant progress on free trade area Customs union expected by 2008</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)</td>
<td>Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, São Tomé and Príncipe, Rwanda</td>
<td>Full economic union</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Community of Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL)</td>
<td>Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda</td>
<td>Full economic union</td>
<td>Preferential trade arrangements signed Integration at a standstill since 1994</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Formulation of Regional Policies and Frameworks

Recognizing the valuable technical capacity of ECA, African governments have always relied on ECA to formulate the various regional policies and frameworks for concerted development of Africa. These include the following:

Lagos Plan of Action and Final Act of Lagos (LPA and FAL) - 1980

The tenth ordinary session of the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Addis Ababa in May 1973 adopted the African Declaration on Cooperation, Development and Economic Independence, which underlined the importance attached by African countries to collective self-reliance and independence and provided policy guidelines for regional, subregional and sectoral cooperation.

Subsequently, at the request of the United Nations General Assembly, ECA, in 1976, prepared the report *Preliminary Assessment of the Long-term Development Trends and Prospects in Africa*, which showed substantial declines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Specified objective</th>
<th>Current status</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
<td>Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea,</td>
<td>Full economic union</td>
<td>Tariffs removed on unprocessed goods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ECOWAS)</td>
<td>Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone,</td>
<td></td>
<td>Full elimination of tariffs on industrial goods not yet achieved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Togo</td>
<td></td>
<td>Second monetary zone in progress</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peace and security mechanism in place</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Macroeconomic policy convergence in place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)</td>
<td>Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Réunion, Seychelles</td>
<td>Sustainable development through cooperation on diplomacy</td>
<td>Vibrant trade programme elaborated Virtual University of Indian Ocean created.</td>
<td>Political issues have slowed progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>environment, and trade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-Governmental Authority on Development</td>
<td>Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda</td>
<td>Full economic union</td>
<td>Multilateral programmes elaborated in key priority areas (agriculture and</td>
<td>Intra-state and interstate conflicts have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IGAD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>environment, political and humanitarian affairs, and regional economic</td>
<td>slowed progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>cooperation, including physical infrastructure projects).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mano River Union (MRU)</td>
<td>Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Multisectoral integration</td>
<td>Some training institutions created Programme elaborated in some sectors</td>
<td>Political issues have slowed progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern African Customs Union (SACU)</td>
<td>Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland</td>
<td>Customs union</td>
<td>Customs union achieved, as well as monetary agreement among four members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>except Botswana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern African Development Community (SADC)</td>
<td>Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi,</td>
<td>Full economic union</td>
<td>Free trade area launched in September 2000 Power pool in place. Peace and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland,</td>
<td></td>
<td>security mechanism in place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West African Economic and Monetary Union</td>
<td>Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger,</td>
<td>Full economic union</td>
<td>Customs union achieved. Business laws harmonized</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(UEMOA)</td>
<td>Senegal, Togo</td>
<td></td>
<td>Macroeconomic policy convergence in place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in the growth of African economies. The Commission therefore embarked on what ECA Executive Secretary, Adebayo Adeleji, termed “the search for alternative development models.” The process took the centre stage in ECA activities for more than ten years from the mid-1970s and gave rise to many proposals.

The first strategy developed in this regard was *The Revised Framework of Principles for the Implementation of the New International Economic Order in Africa*. It was developed specifically as an input into the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade of the 1980s and was predicated on four key objectives: promotion of self-reliance; self-sustainable growth; eradication of unemployment and poverty; and fair and just distribution of income and benefits of economic development among the people. *The Revised Framework* was submitted to, and endorsed by, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU in June 1977.

Working in cooperation with the OAU, ECA refined the *Revised Framework*, which was subsequently submitted to the July 1979 OAU Extraordinary Summit as the *Development Strategy for Africa for the Third United Nations Development Decade*. It adopted as the *Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa* by the Assembly which also adopted the accompanying *Monrovia Declaration of Commitment* providing guidelines to member States as well as concrete measures to be taken at the national, subregional and continental levels for the creation of a “New Economic Order” for Africa based on the principles of self-sufficiency and economic and social development.

Accordingly, the Assembly directed the Secretary-General of the OAU, in cooperation with the Executive Secretary of ECA, to develop a plan of action for the implementation of the *Strategy* and make the necessary arrangements for the proposed extraordinary session. Thus, the ECA Conference of Ministers prepared the draft plan of action at its meeting in Addis Ababa in early April 1980. It was adopted by the Second Extraordinary Session of the OAU Assembly convened in Lagos, Nigeria, later in April 1980, as the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and the Final Act of Lagos (FAL).

Both the LPA and the FAL laid down the principles, objectives, stages, measures and priorities for achieving individual autonomy and collective self-sufficiency as well as for establishing the AEC, to ensure the economic,

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1 Adebayo Adeleji, *The ECA: Forging a Future for Africa in Unity and Diversity in Development Ideas. Perspectives from Regional Commissions.* UN Intellectual History Project Series.

2 E/CN.14/ECO/90/Rev3
cultural and social integration of Africa. With the LPA and the FAL, Africa adopted a development pattern based on the principle of individual autonomy and collective self-sufficiency. The Revised Framework thus laid the intellectual foundation for these important regional programmes aimed at transforming the structure of African economies.

The LPA was predicated on self-reliance, self-sustained development and economic cooperation and integration. It aimed to address structural problems in African economies arising from structural weaknesses, limited human resources and a constraining external economic environment. It focused on the key sectors of food and agriculture, industry, science and technology, natural resources, trade and finance, transport and communications, human resources development and technical cooperation.

Accordingly, the LPA sought to promote three basic objectives: developing the domestic market and reducing reliance on foreign markets; developing indigenous factor inputs; and fostering improved regional integration in order to create the necessary economies of scale for the first two objectives. These objectives were underpinned by a desire for value-added and productivity increase, for overcoming the foreign exchange constraints and balance-of-payments problems that African countries faced, and for providing the skills and knowledge for the production and management required for transforming African economies.

The main context of the LPA includes:
(a) Strengthening of subregional and regional cooperation;
(b) Promotion of economic and technical cooperation with developing countries;
(c) Strengthening of intra-regional cooperation, particularly intra-regional trade;
(d) Promotion of sustainable economic development of member States; and
(e) Integration of the economies of member States while preserving the social and cultural values of each.

The LPA and the accompanying FAL clearly specified the commitment of Africa’s leaders to economic integration of the continent, an idea that ECA had been promoting for years. In addition to calling for the expansion of intra-African trade, these documents set out the vision for the creation of an African Common Market to be followed by an African Economic Community, the building blocks of which were to be the five main subregional economic communities. In addition to the usual benefits of integration, a key consideration for African countries was to use the economic community to overcome the limitations of their small and fragmented economies, with emphasis on improving transport and communications infrastructure as a key requirement for the continent’s industrialization.

Even though the LPA represented a clear expression of Africa’s vision as well as ownership of its long-term development aspirations, the World Bank, at about the same time, launched and aggressively promoted, its own publication, the *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: an Agenda for Action*. The Agenda pointed to and conveyed a distinctly separate political message when it was issued barely one year after the adoption of the LPA, a message that was markedly different from the African position. As a result, African academics and governments alike rejected claims by the World Bank that this publication built on the intentions of the LPA.

In direct contrast to the LPA’s message of self-reliance and self-sustaining development, the World Bank’s *Agenda* emphasized the benefits of external trade, including the use of agricultural exports as a motor for economic development. Moreover, it saw Africa’s trade and
exchange rate policies as being responsible for the poor performance of this sector and inimical to its future development. Irrespective of the motives of the Agenda, it was seen by many in Africa as an attempt by Western interests working through the World Bank to keep Africa in its colonial role as supplier of raw materials and natural resources for the maintenance of their industrial power. In reaction, the ECA Conference of Ministers described the “Agenda” as a fundamental contradiction to the political, economic and social aspirations of Africa.

In preparation for the implementation of its proposal, which was later adopted as the LPA and FAL, ECA transformed its subregional offices unto the MULPOCs in 1977-1978 as its main instruments for operational activities. Furthermore, ECA proposed, and the UNGA endorsed, a special programme for development of transport and communications in Africa, UNTACDA, for the decade 1978-1988.


With the deepening of the economic crisis in the early 1980s, a great deal of attention was placed within the continent on economic recovery, to allow for attainment of the objectives of the LPA. Typically, ECA led these efforts through research by the secretariat and policy direction by its Conference of Ministers. As early as 1981, ECA submitted a document, “Africa’s Rapidly Escalating Crisis: Proposals for a Short-term Intermediate Programme for Survival”, to its Conference of Ministers for consideration.

The meeting for the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of ECA in 1983 also deliberated on the crisis and the ECA Conference of Ministers in 1984 adopted a Special Memorandum on Africa’s Economic and Social Crisis. In the same year, African Ministers of Finance adopted the “Declaration on Africa’s External Indebtedness” in which they proposed measures to tackle the continent’s debt problem. Both documents were submitted to ECOSOC that same year, leading it to adopt a resolution on the critical economic situation in Africa.
ECA maintained its efforts to promote a collective response to Africa’s economic crisis and the Commission prepared a second *Special Memorandum*, which stressed the need to tackle the root causes of the crisis to prevent it from becoming a permanent impediment to the transformation of Africa into a viable economic community capable of self-reliant and self-sustained growth and development. In consideration of the second *Memorandum*, the 1985 session of the ECA Conference of Ministers proposed a common platform for action, which, after being considered by the OAU Permanent Steering Committee on Economic Matters and its Council of Ministers, was adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government as Africa’s Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER).

APPER was based on the LPA and focused on promoting activities and policies to be implemented from 1986 to 1990 to address the economic crisis. It stressed agricultural transformation as a means to industrial progress and improved economic infrastructure, and proposed ways of developing human resources and responding to the menace of drought and desertification in Africa. Realizing the important influence of the external economic environment and the need for partnership with the international community, the OAU Summit requested a special session of the UN General Assembly on Africa’s economic crisis.

The ECA and OAU secretariats worked together closely to prepare the African submission to the special session of UNGA. In addition to containing key elements of APPER, it also included an estimate of financial resources required for its implementation. The estimated need was $US128 billion, of which African countries were expected to contribute $82.5 billion and external partners $45.6 billion. The African submission also called for debt relief for the African countries concerned, but this was rejected outright. Nevertheless,
the African argument was later to be acknowledged by the international community and the Bretton Woods institutions. This acknowledgement bore fruit with the launching and implementation of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative (HIPC) in the mid-1990s.

The 1985 Special Session of UNGA adopted the UN Programme of Action for Africa’s Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAAERD), which was mainly based on the African submission with a number of key differences reflecting the difficult negotiations that had taken place on the matter. However, UNPAAERD did not endorse APPER outright; there was no commitment for specific support from the international community nor was any commitment made to respond to Africa’s external debt problem. This, however, was not surprising, considering what was taking place elsewhere with regard to the economic crisis facing African countries.

Under the leadership of ECA, an inter-agency committee was set up to follow up on the implementation of UNPAAERD. Thus, a series of meetings was organized to focus on some specific aspects in Abuja (1987), Khartoum (1988) and Arusha (1990). Subsequently, the OAU also organized a follow-up conference on APPER in Cairo in 1995, and drew up the Cairo Agenda, to which ECA actively contributed.


The first follow-up conference on APPER and UNPAAERD was held in Abuja, from 15 to 19 June 1987 to review and deepen understanding of the principles and policy issues involved in Africa’s recovery process and prospects for long-term development. The outcome of the conference was encapsulated in the *Abuja Statement on Economic Recovery and Long-Term Development in Africa*. It identified the emerging trends, opportunities and constraints and drew concrete and practical proposals for generating sustained recovery and growth and economic structural transformation. The requisite actions for successful implementation were identified at the national, regional and international levels.

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The Khartoum Declaration: Towards A Human-focused Approach to Socio-economic Recovery and Development in Africa

In 1988, ECA cooperated with many UN agencies and organized the International Conference on the Human Dimension of Africa’s Economic Recovery and Development, in Khartoum, the Sudan as part of the follow-up to the implementation of APPER and UNPAAERD. Its objectives were to critically assess the central role of the human dimension both as a means to and an objective of development, and to propose practical measures to strengthen human capacities and enhance the well-being of Africans.

The outcome of the conference was The Khartoum Declaration: Towards A Human-focused Approach to Socio-Economic Recovery and Development in Africa, which “affirms and asserts that the human dimension is the *sine qua non* of economic recovery … there can be no real structural adjustment or economic recovery in the absence of the human imperative.”

It, therefore, called for concerted actions at the national, subregional, regional and international levels to: incorporate the human factor in the recovery and structural adjustment programmes; pay special attention to the social sector and vulnerable groups; ensure human resources development and utilization in the long-term; and increase the role of regional, international and non-governmental organizations.


The implementation of SAPs became widespread across Africa in the 1980s. From 1980 to 1988, for instance, up to 33 of 50 independent African countries concluded a Stand-by Arrangement Facility with the IMF while...

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another 12 agreed on an Extended Fund Facility from the same institution. Another 15 had Structural Adjustment Loans from the World Bank. In effect, most African countries adopted SAPs for reasons related to the adverse circumstances of the time, such as the debt crisis and the crisis with funds for new development and services to the people.

SAPs were imposed as conditionalities by the World Bank and the IMF and eventually caused a storm of debate and criticism related to their theoretical inappropriateness and the bitter socio-economic results achieved after implementation. ECA was very much in the lead in making these criticisms. It was felt that SAPs were inappropriate, incomplete, unsatisfactory, lacking a human face, inadequate, misplaced and institutionally weak. Above all, there was dissatisfaction within Africa that SAPs had shut out Africa’s own initiatives such as the LPA and APPER and had even rendered a positive, if somewhat weak, framework such as UNPAAERD irrelevant. Thus, in addition to hindering implementation of Africa’s own programmes, SAPs were also perceived as undermining the continent’s long-term growth.

As the dissatisfaction with the impact and outcome of SAPs grew, African countries began to insist on a re-examination of these policy prescriptions. These calls were made at various forums, including the annual meetings of the ECA Conference of Ministers, the 1987 Abuja International Conference, and the 1988 Khartoum International Conference. The process of re-examination also received a boost from UNGA during its mid-term review of UNPAAERD, when it called on African countries to “increase their efforts in the search for a viable conceptual and practical framework for economic structural adjustment programmes in keeping with (their) long-term development objectives and strategies”.

In line with its mandate and the trust that African countries reposed in its tradition of independent thinking, ECA undertook a critical and in-depth examination of stabilization and structural adjustment policies in Africa, including the articulation of a viable alternative. The Commission’s endeavour in this regard was guided by a clearly defined process of wide-ranging consultations, including the participation of numerous concerned actors and partners. It was also underpinned by clearly specified principles closely linked to earlier African initiatives for economic recovery and long-term growth.

The resulting African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes (AAF-SAP) was adopted by a joint meeting of the African Ministers of Economic Planning and Development and Ministers of Finance, who issued
AAF-SAP Diagnosis - Still relevant and valid 20 years on

The structure of the African economy defines the essential features of Africa’s central problem of underdevelopment. The major problems of mass poverty, food shortage, low productivity, weak productive base and backward technology that plague Africa are basic bottlenecks that arise from the structures of production, consumption, technology, employment and socio-political organization. It is therefore not possible to seek solutions to such deep-rooted problems without a structural analysis of the political economy of Africa.

The natural resource base on which the sustainability of Africa’s development critically depends has been considerably and consistently eroded by natural and man-made factors. Since the relationships between the economy and the environment in Africa are more direct than in the developed countries - where technology can supplement natural resources - this problem emerges not only as an adverse physical aspect of development but, most importantly, as a macro-economic problem warranting urgent policy attention. Agriculture, on which most African countries depend primarily for employment, income, foreign exchange earnings and government revenue, is characterized by traditional production techniques and generally low level of productivity. In addition, attempts at agricultural transformation have been concentrated mainly on the export sub-sector while the development of the food and the raw materials sub-sectors has been generally neglected.

Part of the failure of the African economies to transform and expand is due to the lack of institutional capability…the management of the economy in Africa has suffered greatly both on account of lack of relevant institutions and poor institution-building and development and as a result of such basic problems as poor accountability and policy discontinuity.

AAF-SAP Prescriptions and Policy Directions - Better late than never

Unless there is an immediate amelioration in the conditions of the vast majority of the African population, there is a real danger of systemic breakdown in the socio-economic fabric and the supporting natural environment. (Thus) the urgency of alleviating mass poverty and of increasing the welfare of the African people is rooted not simply in the humanistic or altruistic aspects of development. It is predicated, above all, on the rational proposition that development has to be engineered and sustained by the people themselves through their full and active participation. (This) ultimate objective of alleviating mass poverty and raising the living standards of the African people will only be attainable if pursued in tandem with the objective of establishing self-sustained development. This encompasses three inter-locking sub-goals; namely, (i) maintenance of sustained economic growth; (ii) transformation of the African economic and social structures; and (iii) maintenance of a sustaining resource base. To achieve these goals will call for wide-ranging changes in the democratization of society within the social and economic framework as well as in development strategies and policies. The political systems will need to evolve to allow for full democracy and participation by all sections of the society.

The structure of Africa’s political economy demonstrates convincingly why policy reforms aimed merely at improvements in financial balances and price structures are unlikely to succeed in bringing about economic transformation and sustained development. One principal corollary of this structural reality of the African economy is that, left to itself, it has a built-in tendency to generate crises from within and to assimilate others from abroad. Purposeful and positive actions are, therefore, needed to redress the structural bottlenecks and imbalances as well as to develop the capacity to adjust to internal and external shocks.

Regional Integration: ...no breakthrough in regional integration can be achieved if the infrastructure to sustain the regional production structures and markets are not adequately integrated. Integrated physical and institutional infrastructures thus provide the facilitating environment for regional co-operation. Hence, Africa has to aim at establishing an integrated infrastructural base and this could be done within the existing subregional context. Of particular importance in this regard are the transport, energy and the institutional infrastructure for research, especially in agriculture.
Supporting and Promoting Regional Cooperation and Integration

a joint statement and a separate resolution adopting AAF-SAP. It re-stated some of the major criticisms leveled against the Washington Consensus policies and provided empirical evidence of their negative impact on African countries. The core principle of AAF-SAP was “adjustment with transformation”, underscoring the firm belief that the difficulties facing African countries had structural causes and could be best tackled through a policy framework that addressed root causes. More than anything, AAF-SAP reflected the alarm that African economists, especially those working in ECA, felt about the impact of implementing Washington Consensus policies in Africa.

Africa’s economic performance in the 1980s and 1990s, while implementing the Washington Consensus policies, was worse than its performance in the 1960s and 1970s. In addition to the economic crisis, the 1980s was also a decade in which Africa was ravaged by HIV and AIDS, famine and conflict. SAPs contributed to Africa’s poor economic performance not only because they did not work satisfactorily, but also because they made African economies less resilient and more vulnerable to internal and external shocks.

A look at what AAF-SAP urged the African countries to recognize and implement almost two decades ago shows

**Strengthening Scientific and Technological Base:**
The medium- and long-term perspectives of structural transformation require an adequate scientific and technological base essential for transforming national raw materials in the form of agricultural products, minerals, forestry and aquatic resources into consumable goods and services both for local and export markets.

**Food self-sufficiency:** In this regard, policy emphasis will have to be put on achieving a proper balance between the food sub-sector and the production of agricultural export commodities. This will have to necessarily reverse the present trends of adopting policies that tend, especially in terms of price incentives, to create a bias against the food sub-sector and to favour the production of export commodities.

Land reforms for better access and entitlement to land for productive use; enhancement of the role of women as agents of change and the modernization of the food production sector.

Devoting at least 20-25 per cent of the total of public investment to agriculture. Sectoral allocation of credit using credit guidelines that would favour the food sub-sector and the manufacture of essential goods;

Creation of adequately funded “supervised food production credit systems” in rural areas with easy access by farmers in terms of limited collaterals etc; Strengthening agricultural research focused on production; creation of extension services and systems for the diffusion, application and operationalization of research.

Creation of an enabling environment for sustainable development: This policy direction includes a number of important factors among which are broad participation in decision-making, consensus building, maintenance of equity and justice, elimination of civil strife and instability, facilitation of access to opportunities for all, and creating a favourable investment climate…. the enabling environment should incorporate the issue of encouraging entrepreneurship and the effective contribution of the private sector and grassroot initiatives to the development process through consistent policies and appropriate incentives.
how prophetic the message was. A sample of the power and continued relevance of its message is illustrated in box 4.2.

**African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (1990)**

The third in the series of international conferences organized by ECA and UN agencies as a follow-up to UNPAAERD was held in Arusha, Tanzania, in February 1990. Called the International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa, it was convened under the theme “Putting the People First.” The objective of the conference was to “search for a collective understanding of the role of popular participation in the development and transformation of the region….and to formulate policy recommendations for national governments, popular organizations and the international community in order to strengthen participatory processes and patterns of development.”

The outcome of the Conference is formulated as the “African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation”.

Unlike the first two follow-up conferences on APPER and UNPAAERD, the Arusha Conference targeted AAF-SAP and may be considered as having laid the foundation for what is now referred to as “governance” in Africa. It cogently set out the political, economic and social conditions that establish an enabling environment for people and their organizations to fully and freely take active part in decision making on development issues. It further outlined the respective roles of African governments and people’s organizations, supported by the international community, in asserting and promoting the role of popular participation in Africa’s development. Issues of good governance took centre stage in the subsequent regional initiatives at the turn of the 20th Century. ECA was once again at the vanguard of developing the framework for good governance – social, political, economic, financial and corporate.

**Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) – 1991**

As part of the requirement of the LPA, a Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) was drawn up by ECA, the OAU, AfDB and other pan-African institutions and was adopted by the OAU Summit in Abuja, in 1991. Forty-nine of 51 States signed the Treaty, committing the continent to the path
of economic integration; it entered into force on 12 May 1994.

The Treaty lays down a timetable for the full economic integration of the continent. Africa would become an economic union by 2027, with a common currency, full mobility of the factors of production and free trade among the 53 countries that make up the continent. To achieve this vision, the Treaty suggests that the process of integration be carried out over a period of 34 years (1994-2027), in six different stages as shown in Box 4.3:

Box 4.3: Six Stages to AEC

Stage 1: 1994-1999 - Strengthening or Establishing RECs
Stage 2: 1999-2007 – Stabilization of existing tariff and non-tariff barriers, customs duties and internal taxes; Strengthening sectoral integration; coordination and harmonization of the activities of RECs
Stage 3: 2007-2016 - Creation of free trade areas and customs unions at the level of the RECs and adoption of common external tariffs
Stage 4: 2017-2018 - Coordination and harmonization of tariff and non-tariff barriers among RECs; Establishment of an African Customs Union, with a common external tariff

Source: Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (Articles 6 and 88), Abuja, June 1991, Economic Development and Cooperation Department (EDECO), OAU.

Re-launching Africa’s Economic and Social Development: The Cairo Agenda for Action - 1995

In its role as a member of the Joint OAU/AFDB/ECA Secretariat, ECA actively participated in drawing up the Cairo Agenda, which was adopted at an Extraordinary Session of the Council of Ministers of the OAU in Cairo in March 1995 and later endorsed by the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa in June 1995. The Cairo Agenda was designed to address the deteriorating economic and social situation in Africa and to ensure that Africa took the required steps to reverse its economic decline and the marked tendency towards marginalization, in order to remain a credible partner in world affairs.

In preparing the agenda, the Joint Secretariat was guided by the principles of the Khartoum Declaration (1988), the Arusha Charter for Popular Participation (1990) and AAF-SAP. It was an actionable programme, with well-defined areas of responsibility for African countries and their international development partners. It was divided into three major sections: what Africa can and must do for itself; what Africa requires from its development
partners; and a follow-up mechanism to ensure its implementation.

What Africa could do for itself consisted of specific actions in six areas: democracy, governance, peace, security, stability and sustainable development; food security; capacity building and human resource development; structural transformation of the African economies (industrialization, mineral resources and energy, transport and communications, trade, environment); effective mobilization of resources; and regional economic cooperation and integration. From the international community, Africa expected action in three areas: understanding, appreciation and support of Africa’s development efforts; trade and development; and assistance with Africa’s external debt. The follow-up mechanism defined actions at the national, regional and continental levels. The Joint Secretariat was entrusted with monitoring and reporting on progress in the implementation of the actions.

The actions defined in the Cairo Agenda covered all key economic sectors and were consistent with the LPA. To address the challenges, the OAU had to transform into the African Union by early 2000 and formulate its NEPAD programme.

The Compact for African Recovery - 2000

The Compact represented an important component of ECA response to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. It was designed as a basis for operationalizing the MDGs in Africa by mobilizing the support of the developed countries in investing the necessary resources through aid, debt relief and market access to give African economies the jump-start they needed. In turn, Africa was expected to honour its part of the bargain by undertaking the necessary political and economic reforms towards fulfilling the objectives of the Millennium Declaration whose aim is to build a framework of common and concerted action to reduce poverty in Africa, foster integration and invite a more equal and targeted partnership for development cooperation.

The key feature of the Compact was its provision of a framework for drawing up a comprehensive response to Africa’s development challenges, exploiting the full scope of what already existed and providing an African vision for enhanced partnerships, stimulating a transformation in aid relationships, including fostering public-private partnerships. Drawing upon the extensive research into many components of Africa’s development challenges, it was based on the following principles:
• African ownership of visions and goals for national development;
• Stable long-term resource flows to Africa and predictable donor support;
• Transformed partnerships based on mutual accountability; and
• Recognition of Africa’s diversity.

The African Ministers of Finance meeting in November 2000 endorsed the proposal and encouraged ECA to consult widely in moving it to implementation. In the process of this consultation, it emerged that Presidents Mbeki of South Africa, Obasanjo of Nigeria and Bouteflika of Algeria were developing an initiative known as the Millennium Partnership for African Recovery Programme (MAP). At about the same time, President Wade of Senegal also announced another initiative called the OMEGA Plan, with roughly the same vision as MAP. Both were inspired by the need to launch Africa on the path of sustained growth and development at the dawn of the new millennium. Both were based on the premise that Africa must assume primary responsibility for that effort. Thus, at the Extraordinary summit of the OAU in Sirte, Libya, in March 2001, the Heads of State and Government agreed that the MAP and OMEGA Plan be merged.

The ECA Joint Conference of African Ministers of Finance and Ministers of Economic Development and Planning, meeting in May 2001 in Algiers, in considering the Compact, were convinced that the goals contained in the vision of the MAP and OMEGA Plan could indeed be achieved, and that the Compact provided an appropriate framework for mobilizing the necessary partnership for its implementation. After protracted discussions, the Ministers arrived at one combined framework, called the New African Initiative (NAI). This was submitted to and adopted by the OAU Assembly at its Summit in July 2001, in Lusaka. NAI was later renamed NEPAD in a meeting of the OAU Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee, which had been set up in Lusaka to supervise its implementation.

New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) - 2001

“We, the Ministers of Finance and Ministers of Economic Development and Planning for Africa – after meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, 19-20 October 2002, at our Joint Conference
under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa – have reached consensus on many issues of critical importance in accelerating Africa’s progress and development and in meeting the challenges of implementing the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)…We also concur that now is the time to move from vision to action. One possibility for demonstrating NEPAD’s potential … is to move quickly on the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)…we urge African countries to participate in the APR mechanism”.

Thus, NEPAD, the current AU framework and programme of action, was launched at the 37th OAU Summit held in July 2001, in Lusaka, as NAI. It evolved out of the merger between the OMEGA and MAP Plans, both of which were underpinned by the Compact for Africa’s Development, an ECA initiative.

The objectives of NEPAD also bear a strong symbiotic relationship to the MDGs that provide the global guidelines for development in the 21st century. NEPAD is a vision of renewal from which is derived a programme and comprehensive, collective plan of action that addresses key development challenges and sets out long-term objectives, targets, specific actions and responsibilities, partnerships, integration and governance requirements, and timeframes for action in some cases. The objective of this socio-economic AU programme was to overcome the challenges of under-development and eradicate poverty in Africa through maintenance of sustainable peace and

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10 ECA Conference of Ministers, Johannesburg, South Africa, October 2002.
security, and promotion of sustainable economic growth and development. Furthermore, the programme sought to enhance Africa’s participation in global, political and economic affairs.

The first AU Summit in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa, endorsed the NEPAD Initial Action Plan. The Plan set out priority areas drawn mainly from the programmes of the RECs. Although it is not involved directly in programme implementation, NEPAD plays the role of coordination, advocacy, promotion, and mobilization of financial and political support for implementation of programmes under its umbrella.

The main priority areas of the programme are:
- Peace, security, democracy and political governance
- Infrastructure
- Human resources development, including a reversal of the trend towards the brain drain
- Agriculture
- Initiative on the environment
- Culture
- Science and technology
- Resource mobilization
- Capital flow
- Initiative on market access

In its continued contribution to NEPAD, ECA made significant inputs to five major areas of activity relevant to the growth of NEPAD, as summarized below:

**The African Peer Review Mechanism**

The African Heads of State and Government adopted the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) as a key element of the good governance component of NEPAD, by which African leaders would formally hold one other accountable for achievement of NEPAD goals. The APRM is one of the distinguishing features of NEPAD, confirming its usefulness as an African-led framework and its credibility as a pledge committing subscribing African leaders to systematic peer learning and self-monitoring. The desirability and feasibility of such a mechanism was first discussed at the second meeting of the Big Table, which took place in Amsterdam in October 2001, based on intensive technical work and supporting documentation undertaken by ECA.

In this context, the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) requested ECA to develop guidelines relating to economic and corporate governance, including the APRM. The resulting ECA report, was approved by the HSGIC at its second meeting in Abuja on 26 March 2002, and later became
a major part of APRM. However, it was then decided that a unitary APR mechanism should be developed to incorporate political governance issues, and ECA also assisted the NEPAD Steering Committee in that regard.

At their third meeting held in Rome on 11 June 2002, the HSGIC agreed that the Secretariat of the APR mechanism would be located at ECA. However, at their fourth meeting held in Durban during the AU Summit in July 2002, the HSGIC reversed that decision, and concluded that the role of ECA in the APR process would be limited to provision of technical analyses only. Subsequent to that Durban decision, the Chairman of the NEPAD Steering Committee wrote to the Executive Secretary of ECA, in July 2002, requesting the Commission to take the responsibility for conducting the professional investigations into economic governance and other areas to be agreed. Pursuant to this, ECA set out its position and role vis-à-vis the APR process, and offered views on the content.

The Partnership Principle of Mutual Accountability

Through various engagements with NEPAD, Africa’s partners have committed themselves to enhancing the quality and quantity of their support to the continent, in line with the Monterrey Consensus and other initiatives such as the G-8 Africa Action Plan. Mindful of the prior work by ECA on the institutional arrangements for joint reviews of development effectiveness and its consultations with OECD on this topic, the Heads of State and Government of the NEPAD Implementation Committee, at their meeting in Maputo in November 2002, requested ECA and OECD to conclude their work on the institutional framework for this review.

The G-8 acknowledged and accepted NEPAD as the framework for enhanced, Africa-led development. At the time that the G-8 countries were preparing for the 2002 Kananaskis Summit in Canada, G-8 Special Representatives for Africa made a trip to Africa to assess how NEPAD was to be supported. Their first stop was at ECA for a comprehensive briefing on NEPAD goals, especially the means to enhanced partnership. This contributed to their recommendation to the G-8 that NEPAD be endorsed as the basis for the G-8 Africa Action Plan for providing technical and financial assistance, since all earlier initiatives had failed the African people.

Drawing on the outcomes of the third Big Table (Addis Ababa, January 2003) which discussed the technical and political considerations associated with such a framework, ECA prepared a paper entitled “Towards an Institutional Mechanism for Mutual Review of
Development Effectiveness Between Africa and Its Partners” with interim recommendations and proposals. Based on the paper and the work that ECA had done jointly with OECD on the framework for mutual review of development effectiveness, the ECA Executive Secretary made a presentation to the Heads of State of the NEPAD Implementation Committee at their meeting in Abuja on 9 March 2003. The ongoing joint work by ECA and OECD on the “Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness in the Context of NEPAD” derives its mandate from this meeting. The first Mutual Review report was tabled before the ECA Conference of Ministers in May 2005.

The PRSP African Learning Group (PRSP-LG)
The PRSP-LG was established by ECA, at the request of member States, as a forum for candid dialogue among African countries on how the PRSP process is unfolding on the continent, to identify PRSP design and implementation challenges, and to ensure the relevance of the PRSP process to the continent’s development. The PRSP-LG also fosters the mutual accountability principle underlying NEPAD. The NEPAD document endorses the ECA-convened PRSP-LG, which has been able to inject African perspectives into the workings of the PRSP process. ECA has undertaken 24 country studies on the PRSP process, the findings and recommendations of which, along with the outcomes of the PRSP-LG meetings, have had significant impact on World Bank and IMF practices in African and other developing countries.

Coordination of UN Support to NEPAD
Following the adoption of the NEPAD Action Plan by the AU Summit in July 2002, and the independent evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), UNGA endorsed NEPAD as the strategic framework for cooperation, and urged the entire UN system to align its activities with the priorities of NEPAD and foster a coherent response at the regional, subregional and national levels.

At the regional level, under the leadership of ECA, the Regional Consultations of UN agencies working in Africa established thematic clusters that correspond broadly with the priorities of AU/NEPAD in order to provide a common platform for greater interaction with AU/NEPAD sectoral priorities. The overall purpose of the regional consultations is to promote synergies and coordination among the agencies and organizations of the UN system so as to improve the UN collective response in addressing the priority needs of Africa.
ECA Support to NEPAD through its Regular Work Programmes

By virtue of its mandate as the regional arm of the UN Secretariat in Africa, ECA supports the economic and social development of Africa’s 53 member States and is an integral part of the intellectual and institutional leadership for Africa’s development. All divisional work programmes and the activities carried out through the five SROs have been re-formulated and re-targeted to support the achievement of NEPAD objectives and the complementary MDGs.

In brief, NEPAD is now accepted as Africa’s principal agenda for development, providing a comprehensive and integrated strategic framework for the socio-economic development of the continent. It is expected to be pursued as an integral component of the vision to establish AU and regional integration. ECA has fully contributed to all stages of NEPAD, from inception to implementation.
When ECA was established, African economies were characterized by an exploitative system that inhibited the economic transformation of the region. The entire production system and supporting infrastructure had been set up solely for the production and export of Africa’s minerals, agricultural products and other raw materials to the former colonial countries. The situation made the Commission to focus its first work programme for 1959-1960 on trade and agriculture, followed in 1960-1961 by transport development and industrialization. These key sectors, which formed the core of the Lagos Plan of Action, the Cairo Agenda and NEPAD, still remain today and constitute major challenges to regional integration and sustained economic development in Africa.

Trade

Trade, for long the driver of regional integration strategies in Africa, became one of the priority areas of work of ECA in 1959-1960 as a means of linking and producing mutual economic benefit for the fragmented and generally small economies of African countries at independence. The Commission began with a study on the significance of the nascent European Common Market to Africa’s trade and the international stabilization of commodity prices. It established a Standing Committee on Trade in 1962 to deal with trade issues of special interest to Africa such as current developments in African trade; European integration and trade with Africa, and African trade with centrally planned economies. The Committee recommended the establishment of an African common
market, a recommendation still being pursued today by African countries.

For the first meeting of UNCTAD (Geneva, 1964), ECA prepared reports on intra-African trade, the place of trade in African development plans, and projections of African trade. It subsequently assisted a number of countries in transposing their tariffs to the Brussels Tariff Nomenclature and organized training courses on trade, commercial policy and customs administration. The Commission also set up a regional trade promotion centre within its Secretariat to cooperate with other UN agencies engaged in trade promotion to coordinate the programmes of the African region.

Finally, a joint ECA/OAU Working Party on Trade was established in 1966 to review trade and customs activities and to coordinate Africa’s programme at UNCTAD mainly to strengthen the position of its less developed countries and the establishment of export-oriented industries in Africa.

Intra-African Trade

Deeper integration in Africa is expected to strengthen intra-African trade. Yet despite the trade liberation schemes of the RECs, intra-African trade remains low, accounting for about 10 per cent of the value of total exports, compared to trade within the European Union, which accounts for 60 per cent of total exports. Intra-community trade within the South American Common Market (MERCOSUR) is about 20 per cent of their total exports.

![Intra-African Trade](source: ECA, Data compiled from UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics, 2007)
Factors responsible for the poor intra-regional trade in Africa include production and export of the same types of products; choices made during implementation of cooperation agreements, most of which hinder intra-regional trade; lack of infrastructure; high non-tariff barriers; export-related payment and currency interconvertibility problems and such institutional weaknesses as legal and regulatory provisions for trade promotion, including differences in legislation, trade laws and administrative and contractual procedures.

As part of its trade promotion activities, ECA set up the African Trade Centre in 1970 “to give practical assistance to member countries in trade development on a regional level and to coordinate the efforts of the different agencies of the United Nations in this field of endeavour.” It provided advisory services in four areas: trade promotion; training and international relations; trade information and documentation; and market research. The Centre published the first issue of the quarterly, African Trade, as an information medium for promoting trade among African countries at a time when intra-African trade averaged about 5 per cent of Africa’s total external trade. The publication covered a wide-range of trade-related subjects, including country trade profiles, marketing data, trade negotiations and trade agreements, economic cooperation among developing countries, export credit for promoting exports from African countries, multilateral trade negotiations and African countries, the Lagos Plan of Action on trade and finance, and progress in infrastructure development and other trade facilitation measures. The bulletin also served as a forum for exchange of information on trade opportunities in African countries, including lists of import and export items.

The serious constraints posed by lack of market information on intra-Africa trade made ECA to establish the Flash - Trade Opportunities, a publication containing detailed information and contacts on trade products in many African countries. It was a supplement to the Directory of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture and Mines first published in 1979 and subsequently updated in 1983, 1988, 1993 and 1995.

Furthermore, ECA actively supported the organization of All Africa Trade Fairs under the auspices of the OAU, organizing symposia on intra-African trade as part of the trade fairs. The first such trade fair was held in Nairobi in 1972, followed by many others, including the seventh, held in Lagos in 1996. ECA also helped to establish the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (ATPO) in 1974, “to foster contact and regular flow of

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1 Resolution 199(IX), ECA Conference of Ministers, 1969.
information and communication among African countries on trade matters and to assist in the harmonization of the commercial policies of African countries in order to promote intra-African trade.2

As part of its institution-building activities, ECA assisted in the establishment of the Federation of African Chambers of Commerce by drafting the constitution, rules and procedures of the organs of the Federation and convening the inaugural meeting in 1984, as well as acting as the interim secretariat until the relocation of the Chambers to its headquarters in Cairo, Egypt3.

In the 1980s, ECA focused on the establishment of regional trade institutions, developed the treaty and nurtured the establishment of the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Preferential Trade Area for North Africa, aware that the RECs constituted an important instrument for promoting intra-African trade and for achieving other regional integration objectives. ECA also helped to develop capacities in trade promotion and export marketing through a number of courses, workshops, seminars and symposia at the national, subregional and regional levels and through study tours to other developing regions of the world and to Europe.

The 1990s were dominated by efforts to rescue Africa’s development from the crisis of the 1980s that crippled Africa’s trade position in the world, in response to which ECA increased its trade promotion activities, drawing up an Eight-Year Intra-African Trade Development Action Plan4, which outlined actions to promote intra-African cooperation in trade and investments.

From the end of the 1990s, the work of ECA focused on facilitation measures, including removing physical impediments and tariff and non-tariff barriers, as well as strengthening the institutional framework for greater harmonization of policies for regional integration. During this period, attention began to shift towards strengthening Africa’s role in the world economy through existing regional cooperation arrangements and harmonization of the WTO-led trade liberalization programme and Africa’s economic integration agenda. Several studies and policy briefs on emerging issues in the new global trading arrangements were prepared to support African trade negotiators at WTO. The studies also prepared African countries for compliance with WTO provisions.

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1 ECA, African Trade, Vol. 1, No. 1, May 1976, pg. 9
2 ECA, African Trade, Vol. 10, No. 1, June 1985, pg.3
3 ECA Doc. E/ECA/TRADE/95/28 Annex 3
while pursuing their regional integration objectives and adjusting the integration process to WTO provisions.

These and other efforts helped to progressively dismantle barriers through the creation of free trade areas, customs unions and trade facilitation measures such as the simplification of customs procedures in the context of the African RECs. The impact is visible in other areas, including quicker customs clearance of goods in many countries. Physical connectivity has improved in many areas. The Yamoussoukro Decision on the Liberalization of Access to Air Transport Markets in Africa, laid the foundation for easing traffic rights and opening air spaces for more competition, increased choice for air travellers and strengthened the African airline industry in general. All these initiatives were made possible by Africa’s relentless efforts, supported by ECA and other partners, to gradually integrate its economies. Nevertheless, a number of challenges still remain with regards to the ultimate goal of establishing the African Economic Community.

International Trade Negotiations

Trade, a requirement for Africa’s development and integration into the world economy, is considered a greater force than aid in reducing poverty. Yet, Africa has seen its share of world trade dwindle in recent years.

Consequently, ECA has been striving to make trade negotiations cover much more than just trade liberalization by supporting African countries within the framework of the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) (1964-1969) and within UNCTAD (1972-2007).
The Commission responded to the training need of developing countries in multinational trade negotiations (MTNs) and, thus, following the African Regional Project on Multilateral Trade Negotiations established in 1975, and assisted African countries in preparing for and participating in the Tokyo Round (1978) through advisory missions, seminars and preparation of common positions on various issues. Similarly, following UNCTAD IV (Nairobi, 1976), ECA and the OAU organized a meeting of African countries which assessed the outcome of the conference and drew up strategies for collaborative work with other developing (G77) countries in preparation for follow-up sessions of UNCTAD.

Following the signing of the Final Act of the Uruguay Round Agreements and the establishment of WTO Accelerated Globalization and Liberalization of the World Economy, which created opportunities and challenges, African countries, with the support of ECA, adopted “The Implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreements by African Countries: A Framework for Action” to enable them respond to the challenge of implementing the agreements. Upon realizing that African countries had come out on the short end of the Uruguay Round, leading to their marginalization, ECA rallied them to address the concerns that emerged from the Round, including how to adequately deal with the issues concerning trade in agriculture and services. The Commission continued its role in this area, leading into the Doha Round. It provided intellectual direction in addressing Africa’s development needs.

In early 2001, ECA called on the international community to facilitate “a development round” during the next round of trade negotiations. Aptly, the Doha Round became known as a development round which includes the question of adapting obligations to the conditions and capacities of the poorer members of the WTO. ECA strongly advocated the view that inclusive globalization would be unachievable unless trade negotiations agreed on tighter discipline on subsidies, including the removal of agricultural export subsidies and production incentives; export credit and associated measures in developed countries; and anti-dumping and countervailing duties.

As African countries forged ahead in the Doha Round hoping to increase their trade opportunities, ECA opened a new front to ensure that these results are achieved. It urged African countries not only to fight for market access, but also to seek redress on the supply side. Thus,

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the Commission has pushed for mainstreaming trade into national development policies in recent years.

As a result of all these efforts, global trade negotiators now take Africa more seriously. ECA has been instrumental in Africa’s transformation from a passive observer to an active negotiator that can now build coalitions with other developing countries and defend its rights and interests in these talks. Additionally, ECA established, in 2003, the African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) to improve Africa’s participation in negotiating framework processes in WTO and trade negotiations between EU and ACP countries.

Agriculture, Food Security and Sustainable Development

Trade and agriculture in Africa are intrinsically linked. The agriculture sector, apart from being the source of food in the continent, has also played the role of supplier of commodities for trade and industry since before independence. It has continued to play this role in Africa to this day. The importance of agriculture in Africa, especially for sustainable economic development, therefore, cannot be overemphasized. The sector, and its

Box 5.1: African Trade Policy Centre

ECA, with financial support from the Government of Canada, the Government of Denmark and UNDP, established the African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) in June 2003 specifically in response to the concerns expressed by African countries about constraints in participating effectively in international trade negotiations and difficulties in integrating trade into national development plans.

ATPC undertakes technical research; manages and disseminates knowledge and information on trade; provides specialized trade-related training; provides responsive trade policy advisory services and technical support; builds consensus on key positions among African countries and stakeholders; and develops linkages and partnerships with other institutions working on trade issues in Africa. In undertaking these activities, ATPC draws on the extensive knowledge and expertise available at ECA.

An external evaluation of ATPC in 2007 confirmed that the Centre has enhanced Africa’s capacity in global technical trade proposals and generated consensus on trade negotiating positions, increased integration of trade into national development policies; and increased coordinated and harmonized relations between African countries and regional groupings.

ATPC has trained over 1,000 stakeholder representatives and provided training programmes and advisory services on trade negotiations, CGE modeling, and the utilization of the latest econometric tools, to 12 African countries, RECs and other trade-related organizations such as the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) and the Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU). Furthermore, ATPC organized retreats for Geneva- and Brussels-based African ambassadors on WTO negotiations and the Economic Partnership Agreements.

ATPC helps to broaden the knowledge base of its stakeholders on trade issues through its publications, including its numerous Work-in-Progress (WIP) papers, ATPC Briefing Papers, and ATPC Newsletter. The Centre works closely with several African research institutions.
interconnection with many other sectors and sub-sectors such as land resources, water, labour, forestry, climate and mineral resources development, has never escaped the attention of ECA.

At the time the Commission was established, Africa was mostly rural with about 90 per cent of its population engaged in agriculture, the largest economic activity on the continent. The agricultural sector, which depended mostly on rains and human labour, was characterized by low productivity of labour relative to the non-agricultural sector, and a growth rate of food production that could not keep pace with population growth, especially from 1955 onwards. Under colonialism, the economy—agriculture in particular—was exploited for the benefit of the respective colonial powers. Agricultural development policies were determined by the needs of the colonial powers—a pattern that continued during the period immediately following independence. Agriculture remained the major source of employment, food, industrial raw materials and foreign exchange for the majority of African countries. However, the growth rate in the sector later slowed down, leading to a reduction in its contribution to total output.

Consequently, ECA focused much of its effort on resolving the challenges of food and agriculture in Africa, in close cooperation with FAO, culminating in the establishment in 1959 of the Joint ECA/FAO Agriculture Division (JEFAD). Over time, the focus moved from conducting background studies and the establishment of such intergovernmental organizations as the West Africa Rice Development Association and the Association for the Advancement of Agricultural Sciences in Africa, to the formulation of policies, programmes and investment priorities. Hence, in view of the deteriorating food situation in Africa and the consequent Freetown Declaration of 1976, a Regional Food Plan for Africa (AFPLAN) was prepared jointly by FAO and ECA and adopted by the FAO Regional Conference of Ministers of Agriculture in Arusha in 1978. This was subsequently endorsed in 1979 by the fifth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers in Rabat.

The major objective of AFPLAN was to achieve relative food self-sufficiency on the continent through the analysis of the food situation and prospects, prescription of policies and programmes and identification of investment needs and priority projects at the national level. At the intergovernmental level, African countries were to undertake joint ventures to increase food production and intra-subregional and regional trade.

The Lagos Plan of Action further encapsulated the objectives and strategies of AFPLAN by focusing on the short-run priority measures that had to be taken during
Developing Regional Sectoral Programmes

a five-year period (1980-1985). Other major activities of JEFAD under AFPLAN included projects on livestock development, reduction of food waste and losses, improvement of agricultural marketing institutions, and promotion of intra-subregional cooperation and trade in agricultural products.

JEFAD was discontinued in the mid-1990s following the change in institutional focus to an integrated approach to development, where agricultural development was considered part of the nexus of sustainable development comprising food security, population and environment.

Sustainable Development Approach

One of the most complex areas of ECA activity is the nexus of population, environment, social development and agriculture. The approach of ECA to these issues is holistic, as they are all inter-related and geared to the long term, and their successful implementation cuts across a number of governmental functions. To date, the Commission has focused its work on capacity building to allow member States to design institutional arrangements and implement national policies and programmes that address these issues. It has also focused on analyses, research and publications to help raise awareness about the issues at stake and how to deal with them.

In monitoring the implementation of key regional and international agreements on sustainable development under the United Nations, the Commission forged partnerships with the relevant United Nations agencies: UNFPA and AU regarding the International Conference on Population and Development; UN-Habitat to review implementation of the agreements from Habitat II; and AU and UN-Habitat to organize the first African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development, which recommended establishment of a regular Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development in Africa. In addition, ECA helped Africa prepare for the World Summit on Sustainable Development and for the 2004 and 2005 sessions of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development. A new publication, Sustainable Development Report on Africa, is tracking the issue in the 53 countries of Africa.

The Commission has followed up its work on promoting a green revolution in Africa with focus on land resources, highlighting significant soil erosion issues facing Africa. In essence, the work of ECA on food security points to areas of concern, but also to great opportunities. This perspective is reflected in the work of NEPAD on agriculture, with active support from ECA.
ECA has carried out similar work on natural resources, highlighting the perils of pollution caused by mining and poor development of water resources, as well as great opportunities of sustainable exploitation of natural resources. The Commission is one of the few UN groups concerned with mining, an economic activity that generates a great deal of employment in Africa. ECA helped design the Yaounde Vision on Artisanal and Small-scale Mining, and the conceptualization of the Africa Mining Partnership as an umbrella ministerial forum to implement the NEPAD chapter on mining, one that incorporates the Yaounde Vision and other mining considerations.

The Commission has had prominent success in its work on water. In cooperation with AfDB and the OAU and a wide range of stakeholders, it helped formulate the African Water Vision 2025 in preparation for the World Water Forum. The Vision and Forum served as a major policy framework and formed the basis of the NEPAD water components, helped set the water MDG, and contributed to subregional visions and programmes. The African Ministers Council on Water (AMCOW) was formed and is an integral part of the AU, and an African Water Facility was established within AfDB, which has raised $60 million towards a five-year goal of $600 million.

To support these actions, ECA, as the Secretariat of UN-Water/Africa, set up an African Water Information Clearing House, launched a biennial African Water Development Report, piloted the African Water Journal, and provided technical support at the national, subregional and regional levels. As a result of all these actions, ECA is recognized as a leader in this field and its work has provided a model for coordinating United Nations activities based upon a clear division of responsibilities.

To summarize the work of ECA on sustainable development, it is important to realize that this is a vast area of very complex issues that take up a considerable amount of resources for cooperation at the regional level, leaving services at other levels rather thin. ECA has worked on a large number of nexus and sustainability issues, often in active partnership with other institutions. While there has been some progress in the area of sustainability, for example on water, ECA will continue its work to ensure that even more success is achieved.

NEPAD Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP)

ECA provided substantive technical support for the preparation and implementation of the NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP).
Programme (CAADP). Since its adoption by the Summit of the African Union in 2003, ECA has provided effective support and inputs to all its major follow-up activities, including subregional and continental implementation planning meetings; AU Summit on Agriculture and Water held in Sirte, Lybia, in February 2004; AU/NEPAD Africa Fertilizer Summit held in Abuja, Nigeria, in June 2006; AU/NEPAD Food Security Summit held in Abuja in December 2006; and regular partnership forums to mobilize resources for CAADP implementation.

Throughout this process, ECA has consistently and successfully advocated for a regional cooperation/integration approach to the development and structural transformation of African agriculture. Under this approach, and within a framework of broader and deeper regional integration, efforts and investments would be made for CAADP implementation, based on the systematic development of the value chains of selected food and agricultural commodities of strategic importance to the continent.

In partnership with FAO and UNIDO, ECA undertook a follow-up programme of analytical and advisory work to support the development of the value chains of strategic commodities within a context of regional integration, as well as the sustainable development of the fast-growing biofuel sector.

Moreover, ECA played the lead technical role in the AU-ECA-ADB joint initiative on land policy. This has successfully provided technical support and mobilized resources to develop and build consensus on a continental framework and guidelines in the area; develop key benchmarks and indicators of land reform for monitoring progress on land governance; improve institutions and modernize systems of land governance to ensure efficient, transparent and affordable delivery of land administration services; and establish a virtual African land policy facility to harness and manage knowledge in support of effective land policies and integrated land management.

Box 5.2: ECA’s role in River Basin development and management

Transboundary waters management is one of the important functions of ECA. Knowledge is generated through research and studies requested by Governments of riparian countries; land and water resources assessments and institutional studies for integrated water resources management were conducted on the Congo, Nile, Lake Chad and the Zambezi river/lake basins, amongst others. The generated knowledge is managed through Web-based portals such as the African Water Information Clearing House. Advocacy and consensus building is achieved through regional and sub-regional consultative conferences, which discuss the findings of analytical studies as well as publications and build consensus and common positions around key issues of relevance to Africa. Advisory services are provided to African constituencies to address water resources management issues at the national, sub-regional and basin levels. Other principal ECA activities are regional integration, linkage, and fostering dialogue and cooperation among the various countries, the other United Nations agencies involved in water management in Africa, and development partners.
To face up to the challenges posed by climate change, ECA established the African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) to assist African countries in mainstreaming climate change concerns into their development policies and frameworks. Through its analytical, advocacy, capacity-building, technical assistance, knowledge sharing and peer learning efforts, this Centre will help deliver on the policy component of ClimDev-Africa, the continental climate change and development programme initiated jointly by ECA, AUC, AfDB and GCOS (Global Climate Observing System). The goal of the ACPC and ClimDev-Africa is to strengthen the capacity and improve the effectiveness of African countries with regard to climate data and observations, information services, risk management practices and policies in priority climate-sensitive sectors, most notably agriculture.

Accordingly, ECA established a separate Division in its secretariat in 1968 responsible for the transport sector – roads, maritime, ports, inland water, air and rail – as well as the communications sector – telecommunications, broadcasting and postal services. It also launched the Trans-African Highway programme and established the Trans-African Highway Bureau to serve as the secretariat for the coordinating committees of the Trans-African Highways and assist in the establishment of Trans-African Highway Authorities.

In the area of telecommunications, ECA conducted joint studies with ITU on the most economical ways and means of linking African countries, and was instrumental in the development of the regional telecommunications programmes: the Pan-African Telecommunications Networks (PANAFTEL) in the 1960s, and the Regional African Satellite Communication (RASCOM) in the 1980s.

Transport and Communications

Transport and communications are two other areas in which ECA has made a significant contribution in support of Africa’s regional cooperation and integration over the years. The transport and communications systems that existed in African countries at independence were designed by the colonial authorities primarily to serve their export and import needs. The serious handicap that this constituted to Africa’s development, especially for the landlocked countries, led ECA to conduct a thorough study and assessment of the situation and the associated technical and economic problems with a view to financing transport facilities across the continent.
Trans African Highways

- TAH-1 Cairo-Dakar Highway
- TAH-2 Algiers-Lagos Highway
- TAH-3 Tripoli-Windhoek Highway
- TAH-4 Cairo-Gaborone Highway
- TAH-5 Dakar-N'djamena Highway
- TAH-6 N'djamena-Djibouti Highway
- TAH-7 Dakar-Lagos Highway
- TAH-8 Lagos-Mombassa Highway
- TAH-9 Beira-Lobito Highway

Others

- Primary Roads
Box 5.3: Objectives of UNTACDA II

- Implementation of phased and balanced programme of development and management of transport and communications infrastructure, taking into account the needs and requirements of island and landlocked countries.
- Rehabilitation, upgrading and maintenance of the most critical elements of the existing infrastructure and equipment so as to improve their efficiency, capacity and utilization, as well as prolong their economic life.
- Improvement of human resources planning, development and utilization in order to enhance the quality and availability of personnel at all levels for efficient management and operations of transport and communications systems.
- Improvement of operational efficiency, service quality and availability in transport and communications by implementing appropriate policies and administrative measures that will increase their effectiveness, productivity and profitability, while at the same time ensuring social and economic development.
- Establishment of information systems on transport and communications as a basis for analysis and better planning and management of investments.
- Development of manufacturing capabilities in order to cope with the rapid changes in technology and conditions in the transport and communications market and to reduce cost and requirement for foreign exchange by local manufacture of some spare parts, components and equipment.
- Improvement of transport safety and security as well as strengthening transport-related environmental protection measures.
- Improvement of transport and communications in rural areas where the majority of the people live and the largest percentage of economic production takes place.
- Improvement of urban transport to meet the needs of the rapidly growing urban population.
- Establishment and strengthening of interregional liaisons in the field of transport and communications.

ECA played an active role in the establishment of many institutions to support development of various sub-sectors in transport and communications, such as the African Civil Aviation Commission – AFCAC (1969) and the Union of African Railways – UAR (1972). It also worked jointly with the OAU, UPU and ITU to establish regional postal and telecommunications organizations such as the Pan-African Postal Union - PAPU (1980) and the Pan-African Telecommunications Union – PATU (1973). All four institutions became specialized agencies of the OAU.

The momentum for developing an integrated transport and communication system in Africa increased in the mid-1970s as it became evident that the status quo continued to impede development. At the insistence of the ECA Conference of Ministers, the first United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, 1978-1988 (UNTACDA) was launched with ECA as the lead agency. UNTACDA was proclaimed in order to mobilize active global support for technical and financial resources to develop transport and communications in Africa in an integrated manner. Thus, a regional strategy was developed covering all sectors of transport and communications. At the end of the UNTACDA programme, ECA undertook a comprehensive evaluation of the status of transport...
and communications in Africa and convinced African countries to pursue the programme under a second Decade proclaimed by the United Nations covering the period 1991-2000 (UNTACDA II).

The two Decade programmes achieved some success, but were not sufficient to bring Africa’s transport and communications systems to the level required for Africa’s development. While the goals and strategies for the physical integration of Africa were clear, their implementation fell short of targets for various reasons, most notably lack of funding for such an enormous undertaking. However, the transport policy component, which was developed by the World Bank with the cooperation of ECA in 1989 as a complement to UNTACDA II, has continued to contribute to transport development under the Sub-Saharan African Transport Policy Programme (SSATP).

At the end of the Decade programme, ECA and other UN agencies drew up a successor arrangement to UNTACDA with a Plan of Action whose vision was to: “Develop integrated transport and communication systems to provide the continent with safe, reliable, efficient and affordable infrastructure and services so as to promote regional integration, address the needs of the poor, reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS, empower women, underpin economic growth and enhance Africa’s position in the global markets.” It identified the following areas for action: policy reforms and private sector participation; capacity-building and human resources and institutional development; infrastructure and poverty alleviation; transport database; integration of markets; facilitation; safety and security; new technologies; environmental issues; and financing.

The critical role of the physical integration of Africa is duly recognized in NEPAD, with transport, communications, energy and water as its key elements. While the responsibility for leading the infrastructure component of NEPAD has now been invested in AfDB, ECA continues to play a major role in developing the vision for infrastructure development at continental and subregional levels. At the continental level, ECA chairs SSATP, which encourages African countries to adopt sound transport policies and strategies as well as institutional and financial reforms that have led to the establishment of road funds, the transformation of road management arrangements, and the adoption of clear rural transport policies. In addition, ECA plays an active role in monitoring the Yamoussoukro Decision Concerning the Liberalization of Access to Air Transport Markets in Africa and in supervising the NEPAD infrastructure programme.

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The Decade programmes were also designed to improve services such as transit facilitation, customs and transit documentation, border-crossing facilities, and other transit regimes to ease trade among African countries and with the rest of the world.

Box 5.4: Implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision

- A number of States have taken urgent measures towards implementing the Decision in its entirety. Indeed, some States now apply the agreements on the liberalization of traffic rights on a bilateral basis.
- New routes have come into use.
- Frequency between African States has been enhanced, thus streamlining the movement of people and goods.
- Users can now count on more frequent services and a broader choice of tariffs.
- Traffic and movement of aircraft have increased on some routes; for example ET, KQ, Royal Air Maroc, have more flights in West African countries.
- Revenues earned by airport authorities, airlines and air transport agencies are improving.
- The private sector has begun to invest in Africa’s air transport sector by participating in the capital of new airlines (for ex KQ, Air Burkina, Air Senegal); or in the management of airports.
- Cooperation arrangements between airlines are emerging in some of the subregions.
- Airlines that have not been able to adapt to the liberalized environment are restructuring and refocusing their services. Some of them are looking into possibilities of merger.

Information for Development – PADIS and AISI

Pan-African Development Information System (PADIS)

In the 1970s, in its efforts to provide support to its member States to strengthen their planning and socio-economic development strategies, ECA found that the information needed to support its activities was not readily available. To address this gap, it decided in January 1980 to establish the Pan African Development Information System (PADIS), a decentralized and cooperative regional information system which would serve as a conduit for information and data, based on national, subregional and regional networks to which all members would voluntarily contribute information. The primary aim of the system was to establish a centralized development information database at ECA and to train information specialists from member States to develop similar databases in their countries. These databases would issue periodical printed bulletins of new additions and forward their input to a central system, where it would be incorporated and made available to all users.

Formerly known as the Pan-African Documentation and Information System, PADIS was renamed in 1987 to indicate that it focused on more than documentation and bibliographic databases, and would assess any information that supports development.
The achievements of PADIS were establishment of an ECA-based bibliographic database of development information; establishment and maintenance of bibliographic databases in the development planning support structures of member States; training; and raising awareness on the importance of accessible information bases for development planning in Africa. Thus, PADIS initiatives paved the way for the entry of the continent into the information age through better information management, access to online databases and the Internet.

AISI

The African Information Society Initiative (AISI), launched in 1996, is perhaps one of the most comprehensive regional ICT-for-development frameworks of its kind. Preceding the Geneva Action Plan of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) of 2003 and the WSIS Tunis Commitments of 2005, AISI can be credited for being a reference point for an African digital vision and agenda in a globalized world. The AISI originated from a 1996 resolution (812 –XXXI) adopted by the ECA Conference of Ministers requesting the Commission to “constitute a high level work group to develop an action plan on ICTs to accelerate socio-economic development in Africa”. The Ministers were convinced that building Africa’s information society would help the continent to “accelerate its development plans, stimulate growth and provide new opportunities in education, trade, health care, job creation and food security, helping African countries to leapfrog stages of development and raise their standards of living”.

AISI proposes that Africa should build, by the year 2010, an information society in which every man, woman, child, village, public and private sector office has secure access to information and knowledge through the use of computers and the communication media. This vision presents an ideal opportunity for development and encourages African nations to utilize ICTs, offering to citizens the resources necessary to be competitive in the world of today and tomorrow.

AISI was given a boost with the organization of the first African Development Forum (ADF I) from

Box 5.5: Architecture of PADIS

The PADIS system was composed of:
- Bibliographic data bases
- Statistical data bases
- Referral data bases

The PADIS network was composed of:
- National participating centres
- Institutional participating centres

The PADIS coordinating node was located at ECA in Addis Ababa, with distributed focal points in member States.
24-28 October 1999 under the theme “The Challenge to Africa of Globalization and the Information Age.”

The Forum inspired the launching of NICI policies and plans in some African countries. It was held at a time when twenty-two countries had commenced developing their NICI plans and policies and its impact is reflected in the NICI documents of countries that commenced or finalized their NICI policies and plans development process following the Forum.

The leadership role of ECA and the impacts of its work on national and supra-national ICT matters have been quite significant and are widely recognized in the global ICT community. ECA can take pleasure in its roles over the past decade of initiating an information revolution in Africa. Ten years ago, very few countries in Africa had a competitive environment for telecommunications. Today, over 40 countries have such an environment and there is an ongoing mobile revolution. In 1992, there were five independent telecommunications regulatory agencies, but by 2003 the number had risen to 40. New international linkages by satellite and cable are in place. Internet access is available in every country and Internet users exceed 20 million.

In the past few years, ECA has fostered the use of geo-information, also known as National Spatial Data Infrastructure, in the NICI process. This is an exciting use of information for development as planning issues and options are displayed in clear and comprehensible ways, new to many officials and to the citizenry. Already well-publicized training activities have taken place in the five subregions on creating metadata records on water. Eight countries are creating metadata services and two others have signed agreements among stakeholders to create such services.

**Industrial Development**

At independence, African economies were designed to support the metropolitan industries through the supply

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6 Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Ethiopia, Mali, Malawi, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda
of agricultural and mineral raw materials and to serve as captive markets for goods of those industries. Any existing industries were owned and managed by foreign industrial entrepreneurs and companies whose objectives were not usually in line with those of African countries.

In response, the Executive Secretary of ECA paid particular attention to the problem of industrialization in Africa. As a result, the Division of Industry, Transport and Natural Resources was established in 1961. In recognition of their crucial roles, industry and natural resources were subsequently given high priority in the work programme of the Commission and a Standing Committee on Industry and Natural Resources was established in 1962 pursuant to resolution 43 (IV) adopted by the fourth session of the Commission in February 1962.

In 1962, the Industry Division was created and in 1963 activities related to housing, building and physical planning were brought under its responsibility, on account of the emphasis put on the building and construction aspect at the time. In 1967, the Division was renamed Industry and Housing Division. ECA then organized the first ECA/OAU Conference of African Ministers of Industry in May 1971, which adopted the Addis Ababa Declaration on Industrialization reaffirming the

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**Box 5.7: Information Technology Centre for Africa (ITCA)**

Established in 1999 as an implementing arm of AISI, ITCA is an ICT-focused exhibition and learning centre promoting networking and capacity-building on emerging Information Society issues and enhancing the awareness and participation of African policy makers in championing the diffusion and utilization of ICTs for development in Africa. The Centre serves as a crucial mechanism to maximize current and future partnership programs in the use of ICTs as a means to accelerate Africa’s development.

To date, ITCA has trained close to 400 policy makers and other stakeholders. These include 29 African Ambassadors accredited to Ethiopia/AU/ECA and Ambassadors of SADC countries accredited to Zambia. During the same period ITCA launched an ICT awareness workshop series for African Parliamentarians enrolling a total of 80 MPs from Ethiopia and over 100 MPs from Kenya, Tanzania, Gambia, Uganda, Niger, Swaziland and Zambia.

Young women from 34 member States were trained for a six-month course on Internetworking technology with additional focus on ICT policies, gender, entrepreneurship and business management. Media professionals were also trained on web-based journalism.

ITCA has also trained Ethiopian customs officers to run customs-based software and 55 African youths on e-commerce for SME’s and Youth Entrepreneurship. ITCA has developed multimedia touch-screen kiosks on HIV/AIDS and also on management of title deed in Amharic to showcase the value of ICT for facilitating information delivery in local administration at the Nefa Silk Lafto Sub-City of the Addis Ababa Municipality, Ethiopia.

ITCA has undertaken more than 20 exhibitions within Africa and elsewhere to create awareness of the benefits and crucial role of ICT for development among African policy makers, using both virtual and paper-based exhibition.

ITCA has recently launched an on-line learning platform as an extension of its on-site training activities to reach as many policy makers and stakeholders as possible at: [http://www.epol-africa.org/learnafrica](http://www.epol-africa.org/learnafrica).
determination of African countries to ensure self-reliance and pursue concerted action in that regard. Realizing the need for action in the area of industrialization, the Conference of Ministers adopted resolution 249 (XI) on the creation of the Joint ECA/UNIDO Industry Division, which became operational in 1974.

Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA)

Decisions made by the Conference of African Ministers of Industry reflected the deteriorating economic situation on the continent following the 1973 global energy crisis. At successive ministerial meetings, ECA member States reiterated their belief that fulfilling industrialization goals required multinational cooperation. Within the context of the International Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade and the chapter on industrial development in the Lagos Plan of Action, ECA joined forces with the OAU and UNIDO to sponsor the proclamation of the first Industrial Development Decade for Africa in the 1980s (IDDA).

The objective of the Industrial Decade for Africa included changes to ensure that industry would not only produce final consumer goods to meet the basic needs of the population, but also produce inputs for further industrial production, agriculture, transport and energy. Other objectives included the development of indigenous technical and managerial capabilities, widening of national markets and the establishment or strengthening of integrated core industrial projects. While the programme focused on self-reliance and self-sustaining development, it also provided a platform for economic and technical cooperation not only among African countries, but also with other developing countries worldwide.

The programme contained broad strategies as well as issues and priorities for development of specific industrial sub-sectors and also identified some broad project ideas. The sub-sectors included food processing, textiles, forest industries, building materials, basic chemicals, engineering and small-scale industries. It also covered major inputs such as energy and the packaging industries, and outlined the major actions and capabilities to be developed at the national, subregional and regional levels for the implementation of the Decade.

In addition, the Commission contributed to research on industrialization in Africa, investment promotion, reorientation of industrial policies and planning, indigenization of industrial entrepreneurship through the organization of training workshops and meetings and the provision of industrial information and capacity. Beyond research and studies it conducted on aspects of
industrial development, the Commission engaged in the development and promotion of technical capabilities in the area of project preparation. The Commission also embarked on the creation of various industrial institutions at the national and regional levels to support national efforts. The most important institutions created included the African Regional Centre for Engineering Design and Manufacturing (ARCEDEM) in 1980 in Ibadan, Nigeria and the African Industrial Development Fund.

Paradoxically, despite the early efforts at industrialization, Africa has still not achieved this goal and the issue has once again been thrust to the top of the African agenda, constituting the focus of the AU Summit in January 2008.
Coordination of Statistical Development

In support of member States and the international community’s analysis, monitoring and evaluation of macro-economic policies, poverty strategies and follow-up of progress towards the development agenda, ECA has been providing authoritative development information on African countries. It has also been strengthening the capacity of member States and RECs to produce such information.

In the early 2000s, ECA developed its regional statistical database (Statbase) and made it accessible online to staff and other users. In it, priority is given to country data complemented by sources such as subregional organizations and other international sources. The quality of the African Statistical Yearbook (ASYB) and Statbase data is secured through close consultation with National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and subregional and international organizations. The online database can be accessed at http://www.uneca.org/statistics.

The production and use of quality information on African countries requires rigorous coordination at both the national, subregional, and international levels. Since the inception of ECA, member States and RECs have benefited from its regional supporting and coordinating role through the implementation of the Addis-Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa (AAPA) in the 1990s and, more recently, the Reference Regional Strategic Framework (RRSF) for Statistical Development.
Capacity Building in Africa. In fact, member States and the RECs rely heavily on the Commission’s coordination and leadership of statistical development efforts at the continental level.

Statistics being one of its first programmes, ECA established its first technical committee, the Conference of African Statisticians, in 1959, which later expanded to become the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers in 1979 and, subsequently, the Committee on Development Information (CODI) in 1997. The current Committee is the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa) established in 2007 following ECA’s repositioning exercise that created the African Centre for Statistics (ACS). StatCom-Africa is expected to provide a forum for discussions and decisions on all aspects of statistical development, which are of interest to its members within the framework of the policies and procedures of the UN and subject to the general supervision of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development.

Support to National Statistical Offices

Over the years, ECA carried out many activities to increase the capability of the NSOs for data collection, processing, analysis, dissemination and for the development of statistics. Recognition of the importance of statistics in development policy analysis and decision making, led to the training of statistical staff for NSOs which began as early as 1961. ECA supports the NSOs in all its member countries mainly through meetings, workshops, advisory services and exchange of published material, especially on international standards, concepts and definitions. In particular, during 1970-1993, it helped develop capacity in various statistical processes in African countries mainly through regional advisory services. In addition, the Commission supported the advancement in the use of geographic information to help member States improve their management of natural resources and the environment. As a result, African countries have increasingly adopted international concepts, standards and definitions that allow for the production of comparable statistics across the continent.
Adoption and Implementation of the 1993 System of National Accounts

The System of National Accounts (SNA) is a coherent, consistent and integrated set of macroeconomic accounts, balance sheets, and tables based on a set of internationally agreed concepts, definitions, classifications and accounting rules. It is a comprehensive accounting framework within which economic data can be compiled and presented in a format that is designed for economic analysis, decision and policy making. The main outputs of the SNA include the GDP and its main aggregates. As part of the Commission’s efforts to enhance statistical capacity in Africa, it has continued to assist countries in the implementation of the 1993 SNA through the provision of advisory services, training workshops, development and/or dissemination of methodological guidelines, manuals and software and through ad-hoc research activities aimed at resolving practical and conceptual problems. In this context, the Commission closely cooperates with regional and subregional organizations and economic groupings that have launched specific projects or activities in this area.

Population and Housing Censuses

Population and Housing Censuses (PHC) are the primary sources of information about the number and characteristics of a given population. Actual counting of all the people in a country is very important as results of the PHC are used in many cases for equity and fairness among national citizens and as a benchmark or a sampling frame for other surveys. The importance of PHC data for effective socio-economic planning and governance as well as for monitoring development policies and programmes in Africa cannot be underestimated. Hence, censuses are considered the most fundamental sources of national statistics. Furthermore, since some African countries lack the resources to conduct surveys on a regular basis, they often rely on censuses as their main sources of data for long periods of time.

Aware of the importance of PHC, ECA launched the African Census Programme (ACP) to assist African countries to participate in the 1970, 1980 and 1990 rounds of PHC in accordance with the principles and recommendations of the UN. The Technical Cooperation Office, Statistical Office of the United Nations Secretariat and the Population Division jointly implemented the programme with the ECA Statistics Division. A total of 21 African countries participated actively in the 1970 round, 47 in the 1980 round and 46 in the 1990 round. ECA was successful in generating important population data and in building considerable capacity in various data production areas in the NSOs. Unfortunately, this programme ceased in the 1990s resulting in the decline in
the participation of African countries in the 2000 round, in which only 34 countries took part.

In order to improve the participation of African countries in the current 2010 round (2005-2014), ECA, through its newly created ACS, is scaling up support to member States for censuses. In this regard, ECA initiated and is leading the organization of the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD), an African countries-driven initiative that seeks to work through ECA, with support from the ‘Friends of the ECA’ (Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa, Senegal, Rwanda and Tunisia), to help restore statistical development in Africa. A work programme has been developed, first offering critical political intervention and support, and then encouraging the holding of censuses in every African country for the purpose of enriching the information base for decision making.

In encouraging the participation of African countries in the 2010 Round of PHC, the ASSD aims to ensure that country-level monitoring becomes an indispensable element in assessing progress towards the MDGs. The ASSD also aims to assist in mobilizing resources to help African countries to meet the targets. As a result of the advocacy undertaken so far, 45 African countries have already committed themselves to undertaking a census during the 2010 round. Since the beginning of the round, some countries have already undertaken their censuses. These include: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Mozambique, Nigeria, and the Sudan.

Household Surveys
Given the importance of Household Surveys in the provision of data for development planning, policy
formulation and programme implementation, ECA launched the African Household Survey Capability Programme (AHSCP) in 1978. The program was designed to build the capacity of participating countries to enable them to continuously collect integrated and interdisciplinary data on a wide spectrum of subjects through a multipurpose integrated programme of household surveys. From 1981-1992, up to 24 African countries had implemented the programme. These surveys provide important data used for monitoring trends in MDG implementation. The success of the programme in Africa led to its extension to other regions and its establishment at the global level as the United Nations National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) with AHSCP as a regional component. The AHSCP ended in March 1993 when UNDP funding for the programme ceased. Nevertheless, ECA continues to support its member States in household surveys at a relatively lower scale.

The Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA)
The programme became operational towards the end of 1979 with funding from UNDP. The main objective of the programme was to make the region self-sufficient in statistical training. Sixteen statistical training institutions in Africa participated in the programme. In addition, the former Munich Centre for Advanced Training in Applied Statistics for Developing Countries and the International Programs Centre (IPC) of the U.S Census Bureau were integrated into the programme as associate institutes that would offer advanced and specialized training. The programme played a big role in statistical training in Africa during the period 1978-1993, carrying out many activities, including training of trainers for which scholarships were made available, organizing meetings of heads of training institutions participating in the programme, developing standard training programmes for high- and middle-level statistical training, offering training support missions of short duration as well as advisory services. Following a temporary setback in the 1990s, a detailed programme is being prepared within the framework of the ASCC to revive the STPA. One of the important steps already undertaken in this regard is the support to Portuguese-speaking Countries (PALOP) to establish over the long term a regional statistical training school that would train statistician-engineers. ECA was tasked with helping to prepare a feasibility study and a needs assessment in PALOP NSOs in cooperation with ACBF.
National Strategies for the Development of Statistics

The National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) are a new benchmark in statistical planning aimed at facilitating the development of statistics in a coordinated manner using modern management principles. In 2004, the Second Roundtable on Managing for Development Results held in Marrakech, Morocco, resulted in the Marrakech Action Plan for Statistics (MAPS), to which African countries committed themselves. Managing for Development Results calls for focusing development policies and programmes on increasing performance and outputs, outcomes and impact, through the use of better statistics. A key recommendation of the MAPS is that each developing country should design an NSDS by the end of 2006. This recommendation was re-emphasized in the RRSF. The assessment of countries with/without NSDS gives a gloomy picture for the region. By the December 2006 deadline set by the MAPS, only three countries had designed and adopted their NSDS; twenty-eight were designing theirs; seventeen had a statistical master plan and five had no plans at all. Accordingly, ECA and the ASCC have scaled up efforts in assisting countries to design and start implementing these overarching frameworks for statistical development.

The African Statistics Day

The African Statistics Day (ASD) is one of the most efficient tools for statistical advocacy in African countries. November 18 was set aside by African Ministers for Planning and Development in 1990 to be celebrated each year as African Statistics Day in order to increase awareness about the role and importance of statistics to society. In the past, the ASD had not been well celebrated by member States. When the ACS was established, it scaled up support to countries and as a result, the ASD was highly celebrated by member States in 2006. The ASD is well set on the agenda of African countries and, in addition to the materials sent to them for the celebration, countries seize this opportunity to launch the results of major statistical operations with the cooperation of political leaders and other stakeholders.

Flagship Publications

The results of the activities of ECA in tracking social and economic development in Africa are captured in the various regular publications. The following are a few of them.
The African Statistical Yearbook (ASYB) is an annual publication of data on various aspects of Africa’s development. This is meant to support evidence-based analysis at ECA and to provide development practitioners, policy makers, research and academic institutions, and the general public with quality information. The Yearbook was first issued in 1965 as the *Statistical Bulletin for Africa*, in English and French. From 1970 to 1973, the Yearbook was issued as the *Statistical Yearbook for Africa*, Since 1974, it has been the *African Statistical Yearbook*.

The ASYB presents data arranged by country for 53 ECA member States, generally for the latest nine years for which data are available. It is published in a single volume in the following order: Section One contains summary tables, which generally cover data on a five-year interval and data on the latest five years. In order to facilitate inter-country comparisons, the same unit is used for identical tables. However, individual country coverage, concepts and definitions of data may vary. The Yearbook therefore provides individual country footnotes for detailed explanations. Section Two consists of individual country tables grouped in nine thematic areas namely: Population; National Accounts; Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing; Industrial Production; Transport, Communications and International Tourism; Foreign Trade; Prices; Finance; and Social Statistics. When data presented in the Yearbook differ from the corresponding data for the same year, given in the earlier edition, it reflects corrections or revisions made as a result of receipt of further information.

The statistics presented in the Yearbook are, as far as possible, in accordance with international recommendations and definitions. Where important deviations exist, they are indicated in footnotes at the end of the table for each country. The main source of statistics is country NSOs. When data are missing, ECA uses subregional, regional, and international sources. The Yearbook is published in English and French.

In terms of compilation of the information, the development of a regional statistical database (StatBase) in the early 2000s has made it possible to automatically generate the Yearbook and allow users to access the database online. The electronic version of the Yearbook and the database can be accessed at: [http://www.uneca.org/statistics/asyb.htm](http://www.uneca.org/statistics/asyb.htm).
The main aim of the Economic Report on Africa (ERA), is to stimulate discussion on Africa’s development among world policy makers in general and African countries in particular. It provides a review of the continent’s recent economic performance and prospects for the short and medium terms and a thematic analysis of the region’s most critical economic and social challenges. First issued in 1984 and published annually, ERA has, over the years, assisted ECA to achieve a number of specific objectives: providing policymakers, development partners and other stakeholders with a concise analysis of recent economic and social trends in Africa as well as the medium-term outlook; identifying emerging development challenges on the continent; informing the debate on performance of African countries and key challenges to expand opportunities for Africa to promote economic and social development; disseminating findings of ECA research on topical development issues; and providing clients with up-to-date statistical information on African economic and social indicators.

ERA’s analysis of current economic and social development in Africa covers overall and sectoral growth performance, macroeconomic stability, savings and investment, internal and external balances, external debt situation and management, capital flows and exchange rates. It also monitors progress towards social development objectives such as the MDGs. Every year, a part of the ERA is devoted to a detailed thematic analysis of an economic development topic of particular interest to the continent. Some of the prominent topics examined in recent editions are:

1. **The challenge of poverty reduction and sustainability** (ERA 1999). The report argued that African countries needed to achieve and sustain an average annual growth rate of 7 per cent to reach the MDGs. This has since been internationally adopted as a basic MDG1 target. The Report also developed the **Economic Policy Stance Index**, which summarizes the performance of countries vis-à-vis the economic policies they have pursued, and the **Economic Sustainability Index**, which combines a large number of variables associated with good economic performance.

2. **Transforming Africa’s economies** (ERA 2000), which analyzed the key challenges to sustainable development and defined the continent’s development agenda for the 21st Century in terms of broad-based growth,
resource-based industrialization, human capital development, agriculture and rural development, regional integration and global competitiveness.

3. **Capital flows and development financing in Africa (ERA 2006)**. This report explained the need for Africa to mobilize and effectively manage increased external capital flows to promote economic transformation, speed up and sustain growth and reduce poverty.

ERA presents detailed analysis and background information for the *Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa*, an annual compact publication of ECA since 1967. The survey provides a brief and easy-to-read discussion of recent economic and social development in Africa as well as recommendations to inform dialogue in the Commission’s annual Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on how to address emerging development challenges in Africa. With effect from 2007, both ERA and the **Survey** are jointly prepared and published by ECA and the African Union, and presented at their joint annual Conference of Ministers starting with the 2008 session. This partnership helps both institutions to avoid duplication of efforts, rationalize the use of resources, and enhance the development impact of their activities. The publications are in English and French.

In recent years, ECA has focused on how Africa can grow and most effectively reduce poverty as recommended in the MDGs. *Transforming Africa’s Economies* (2001) reveals that despite widespread pessimism about meeting the MDGs in Africa, some African countries are making good progress vis-à-vis the 2015 targets. The interactive web magazine, *MDGs in Africa: a Challenge for Change*, launched at http://www.uneca.org/mdgs and can be used to track Africa’s performance in meeting the MDGs. An ECA website, http://geoinfo.uneca.org/mdg can be used to obtain a geovisualization mapping of the progress made towards the MDGs in Africa.

**Assessing Regional Integration in Africa (ARIA)**

ARIA was initiated as a mechanism for periodic appraisal of progress in the process of integration in Africa. It was designed to thoroughly research and analyse the status of Africa’s integration process so as to inform the performance of member States and the REC’s towards the attainment of established goals and objectives. ARIA brings into sharper focus the level of
progress made in achieving the established integration objectives and the precise actions and resources required to ensure the fulfillment of objectives. This simply means subjecting Africa’s integration process to close and constant scrutiny, and providing stakeholders with transparent findings and objective analysis, showing where efforts may be succeeding, failing or inadequate. Informed decisions can thus be taken with a view to speeding up progress and enhancing overall efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of Africa’s integration plans and programmes.

The maiden edition, ARIA I, which was published in May 2004, broke new grounds in terms of information, appraisal and analysis of Africa’s integration process. It focused on a comprehensive assessment of the status of regional integration in Africa. Subsequent ARIA series have addressed critical thematic challenges in this area. For example, ARIA II examined and made recommendations on the burning issue of rationalization of multiple integration groupings in Africa that had overlapping memberships. ARIA III analysed the issue of macro-economic policy convergence, as well as monetary and financial integration in RECs. ARIA IV focuses on intra-African trade, which remains a key challenge in the integration process.

The preparation of ARIA involves the efforts of all partners, including the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, and the RECs. It is a sustainable platform for cooperation among partners in fulfilling the goals and objectives of African regional integration. It is published in English and French.

The African Governance Report (AGR) was conceived as a tool for monitoring progress towards good governance in Africa in response to the emerging consensus that good governance is central to Africa’s development and progress, and the growing demand for sustained improvements to Africa’s governance situation. The first issue in 2005 was based on studies conducted in 27 African countries and widely acclaimed as a comprehensive and path-breaking work on governance in Africa. AGR II covering nine new countries and an update of 26 countries surveyed in the first phase of the African Governance Project is scheduled for release in 2008.
AGR has become:

- A major tool for policy making and dialogue;
- A vehicle for identifying governance gaps and deficits;
- A veritable instrument for setting performance benchmarks, in addition to assessing efficacy of intervention strategies, owing to its periodicity;
- A mechanism for mutual accountability - horizontal and vertical; and
- An instrument for identifying good practices worthy of emulation across countries.

The report is published in English and French.

**Sustainable Development Report on Africa (SDRA)**

The SDRA was launched in the 2004-2005 biennium, as one of the flagship publications of ECA to be produced biennially. It serves as an important medium for monitoring and assessing sustainable development in Africa. It is also aimed at promoting a balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development and is thus essential for quickening the design and implementation of sustainable development plans and programmes in the region. In fulfilling this function, the SDRA assesses progress made by member States in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), provides recent documentation of experiences in the implementation process, and promotes knowledge networking among member States to deepen and enhance the learning and implementation process. The thematic focus of each issue of the SDRA is now aligned with and provides Africa’s regional perspectives on the cluster of issues covered by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in accordance with its multi-year programme of work.

The SDRA is produced through inter-divisional and institutional collaborative processes. It is based on studies carried out in selected member States and inputs provided by many experts from UN institutions and bodies, the AU and its NEPAD Programme, academic institutions, and civil society organizations. To date, two issues have been produced: *Managing Land-Based Resources for Sustainable Development (2005)* and *Five-Year Review of the Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development Outcomes in Africa - WSSD+5 (2007)*.
The SDRA has become an important tool for advocacy through the ECA Africa Committee on Sustainable Development (now the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development), for member States to develop and implement measures to speed up progress in achieving sustainable development. It has also been used to inform discussions at the global CSD. The report has therefore helped to advance dialogue at the national, regional and international levels on Africa’s priorities for sustainable development. An example of its impact is the improved articulation of Africa’s priorities in the outcomes of the various CSD sessions. It is published in English and French.

**African Water Development Report (AWDR)**

The African Water Development Report (AWDR) process was initiated in 2004 to review, monitor and report on Africa’s water resources situation and emerging challenges. The scope of the report covers all aspects of freshwater in Africa, including surface- and groundwater, the interface between fresh and sea water, the assessment of quality and quantity of water resources, their development, use, management, protection, and conservation. The scope also covers sanitation – access to and use of sanitation by Africa’s peoples – and interaction between sanitation and freshwater, water-related disasters, emergencies and water-related extreme events and their impact on human security.

The approach is bottom-up, evolving from the national and river basin units to the subregional and continental levels. At the national level, national water writers produce national reports, which are in turn synthesized at the five African subregions by the subregional offices of ECA. Liaison is also maintained with the existing River Basin Organizations (RBOs) in the five subregions.

The Terms of Reference is agreed with the UN-Water/Africa group of agencies whose secretariat is hosted at ECA. The five subregional synthesis reports serve as inputs to the final AWDR, which in turn is peer-reviewed with the involvement of UN-Water/Africa group of agencies. An editorial committee as well as an advisory board that includes the Chairperson and five subregional vice-chairpersons of the African Ministers’ Council on Water (AMCOW), is in place.
The first edition of the report was published in 2006. The second edition is expected in 2009. The periodicity of the publication is 2-3 years.

The African Water Development Report serves as a sustainable mechanism for monitoring progress made in the continent in the water sector; assessing the progress made in implementing the Africa Water Vision 2025; providing African decision-makers with an authoritative basis for managing Africa’s water resources, and strengthening the UN-Water/Africa group of agencies.

**African Women’s Report (AWR)**

The African Women’s Report (AWR) is one of ECA’s flagship publications and the only one dedicated to gender issues at the continental level. It is an important tool for informing regional and global processes on the situation of women in Africa. The AWR also provides African member States with an update of emerging issues on gender that need their attention. AWR contributes to streamlining of reporting on all important gender related conventions, resolutions and other documents that African countries have signed and/or ratified. Its objectives are to:

- Report on progress, best practices and new priorities on the status of women in Africa;
- Bridge the knowledge gap between stated achievements by member States and the real impact of gender mainstreaming efforts; and
- Democratize statistics and qualitative indicators on gender equality and women’s empowerment.

The first AWR was published in 1995 and focused on “Women’s Participation in the Economic Sector” followed by a second edition in 1998 on “Post-conflict reconstruction in Africa: A gender perspective”. The report examined post-conflict reconstruction with its differing gender roles and impacts and derived best practices for fostering gender-balanced, sustainable development, on platforms that mobilize both men and women to play their parts. These early reports were based on relevant themes for Africa’s gender and development agenda.

Since then, there has been a switch in the approach. The latest AWR introduces the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI) to measure the status of inequality that exists between men and women, and assesses the performance of African governments in implementing international and regional resolutions, conventions and instruments on gender equality to which they committed themselves.
The current edition of AWR uses the results of AGDI country studies to measure progress in addressing gender inequalities in the social, economic and political spheres, and therefore allows for a more objective way to measure progress. AGDI addresses the inadequacy of existing monitoring mechanisms which track progress towards gender equality and women’s advancement. It maps the extent of gender inequality in Africa and assesses government performance in addressing the issue. The implementation of the AGDI in African countries indicates that women lag behind in all the three dimensions captured by the index: social, economic and political.

When used to assess the performance of African countries in implementing international and regionally agreed commitments, the AGDI shows that governments score high in terms of ratifying and developing policies for gender equality. However, their performance is poor with regard to the implementation of the process.

While there is consensus that violation of women’s human rights and gender inequality in access to and control over social capabilities, economic opportunities and political power, remain one of the greatest challenges facing Africa, there is little evidence to support this consensus. The lack of appropriate national and regional gender statistics and indicators in all spheres impeded accurate assessment of achievements and gaps in addressing inequalities and violations of women’s human rights during the Beijing Plus Five and Beijing Plus Ten review processes. Consequently, since policy can only address the ‘known’, evidence-based advocacy for sound policies and leveraged political and financial support for gender mainstreaming suffered severe limitations.

The document, Outcome and Way Forward, which emanated from the Beijing Plus Ten review process in Africa calls on “Governments to evaluate on a regular basis the extent to which political will is translated into concrete results, so as to identify and remedy the gaps in existing gender policies and implementation and support them with the allocation of the appropriate human and material resources”. Such evaluation requires up-to-date gender disaggregated data in various sectors and at various levels in all African countries.

“Les Economies de l’Afrique Centrale”
The socioeconomic report ‘Les Economies de l’Afrique Centrale’ has been the flagship annual publication of the Subregional Office for Central Africa (SRO-CA) since
The report provides a comprehensive analysis of macroeconomic and social conditions in Central Africa as well as progress achieved with respect to the regional integration agenda. Moreover, a special thematic section of the book deals with a key development challenge in the subregion every year. For instance, the theme of the 2007 edition was “The interactions between growth, redistribution and poverty reduction”; the theme of the 2008 issue was “The role of primary commodities in the socio-economic development of Central African countries”. The publication contains a statistical annex with data by country and by subregional aggregates on basic economic indicators over a period of five years.

The report is a unique source of information on the economies of Central Africa and it has now become a standard reference for policy analysis in the subregion. It is distributed in the ten countries of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to a wide audience including government departments and other national institutions, subregional institutions, civil society organizations, universities, schools, the private sector, UN agencies and development partners.

The publication responds to the basic need for statistics, thus facilitating policy making and contributing to the policy debate through its analysis and recommendations. In this sense, it is one of the key channels through which SRO-CA delivers its technical assistance and policy advocacy services.

### East Africa Subregional Economic Report

This annual report reviews progress achieved in economic and social development in the East African subregion and assesses the various relevant policies in the subregion. It aims at strengthening the capacity of member States to design, implement and monitor appropriate policies for sustained economic growth.

The report outlines the major economic and social challenges to and achievements of East African countries in the areas of macro-economic policy harmonization, regional economic integration, information harnessing, infrastructure development, private sector and enterprise development, and gender promotion. It is published in English and French.

The themes of the most recent reports are:
(a) East Africa at the crossroads: Consolidating peace, accelerating poverty reduction and deepening regional integration (2003);
(b) Challenges in reducing poverty and achieving the MDGs (2004);
(c) Improving macroeconomic policies for poverty reduction (2005);
(d) Financing development and poverty reduction in Eastern Africa (2006); and
(e) Meeting subregional challenges in the 21st Century: Regional integration towards the achievement of MDGs (2007).

Since 2007, the Report on Social and Economic Conditions in Southern Africa has assessed progress made in the subregion in macroeconomic policy and in integrating or harmonizing institutions. For 2008, the report covers regional integration issues under the theme: “Achieving Free Trade Area (FTA) and Customs Union (CU): Emerging Challenges and Opportunities for Southern Africa” in anticipation of SADC’s Free Trade Area which came into force in August 2008, and COMESA’s Customs Union (December 2008).

Report on Economic and Social Conditions in West Africa
The report on economic and social conditions in West Africa gives an overview of the economic and social situation and analyses the major political developments across the subregion. Its aim is to stimulate a broad dialogue for policy coordination and harmonization among member States, intergovernmental organizations and other development players. The report has been instrumental in initiating exchanges of views among experts of member States and IGOs on current and
emerging economic and social development issues of interest to the countries and the subregion. The insights they gain and the common positions they arrive at during deliberations are key to policy harmonization in the West African subregion.

The report draws mainly on recent literature and data available in member States, subregional institutions such as ECOWAS and WAEMU, and international organizations, including the UN, the IMF, the World Bank, and other relevant sources. It is divided into two parts: review and implications of recent economic and social trends; and thematic focus on a burning or emerging issue. Previous thematic issues discussed included physical integration, privatization, employment, informal sector, fiscal space for financing MDGs and NEPAD in West Africa.

This year’s edition is a departure from previous ones: for the first time, the report is prepared jointly with the ECOWAS Commission in accordance with the partnership agreement between the two institutions. Its thematic part is entitled: “Harnessing Africa’s resources: What strategies for the development of the bio fuel sector in West Africa?” It seeks to sensitize member States and relevant subregional organizations on the need to explore alternative ways of using investment opportunities for optimum exploitation of the region’s resources to produce bio fuels with a view to reducing the impact of rising oil prices and combating poverty.

Report on Economic and Social Conditions in North Africa

The report reviews economic and social conditions in the region and in its respective countries in the first part, and a thematic issue of interest in the second. The report is an important assessment tool for ICE and provides member States information on the state of North African economies; facts for coordinating and standardizing economic indicators; country, regional and global comparisons of economic conditions; and an evaluation of progress as well as challenges facing North African regional integration. The survey is an important working document for member States, especially in preparation for the ECA Conference of Ministers. It also serves as a reference source for member States, the RECs and other organizations.

Every year, the report focuses on a specific theme. In 2006, it highlighted critical issues to strengthen the economic
integration process in North Africa, for example, the need to measure and monitor progress in achieving mutually agreed commitments on free trade agreements; intra-regional trade promotion; policy coherence; and strengthening the trade negotiation capacity of member States. In 2007, it focused on infrastructure development as a factor for trade facilitation and investment, and a tool for promoting sustainable growth and competitiveness; especially as North Africa faced infrastructure development problems in the transport, water, energy and ICT areas, which are essential for regional cooperation and integration. The report proposed a longer-term pragmatic approach to planning, development and financing of infrastructure at all levels, a strategy that was highly appreciated by member States and organizations in the region. In 2008, the focus was on SMEs, considered by an Arab Maghreb meeting of experts as a vector of regional integration and, on this, the survey served as input to a final study to be issued as a publication. Consequently, the meeting called for adequate financing, strengthening and improvement of SMEs as sustainable development players in formulating economic policies. In 2009, the theme will be on the relationship between education and job creation.
Pioneering Women and Development (WAD) Movement

As far back as 1960, the second session of the ECA Commission decided that the ECA Community Development Programme should include a training course for women to enable them participate in community development. In the same year, a seminar held at the UN Headquarters recommended mechanization of agriculture in order to decrease the workload of women and free them for other roles. By 1963, ECA had added social affairs concerns to its community development programme and sought expert advice on how to integrate social planning in overall rural and urban development planning.

ECA, as part of the UN system, adopted and practically implemented the strategy of integrating women’s concerns into overall African development concerns. Considering women in the context of history, making their grassroots solidarity groups one of its key policy concerns, and considering development as multifaceted and complex, the Commission’s approach to its women and development programme has been more institutional and community-based than individualistic. Furthermore, ECA has made unique contributions to the theory and practice of development and women’s participation in it.

As part of its efforts to increase the productivity and well-being of the African people through community and social development, ECA began to promote related activities, organize related regional conferences, and undertake
training and research projects to allow women’s voices to be heard.

In 1964 ECA reported to the Conference of Ministers on urban problems and the role of women in urban development. In its effort to embrace women’s issues as had been requested in various meetings held in 1964, ECA sponsored the *Status and Role of Women in East Africa*, a study that covered Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia. The study confirmed that women bore a substantial part of the economic burden. It also noted that a few countries had involved women in the early years of community development programmes. By the mid-1960s, there was much information, mostly from ECA-sponsored studies and meetings, to confirm that women were playing a central role in the achievement of social and economic progress in their countries.

By 1969, based on information on the status of women, ECA, for the first time, included activities on the role and participation of women in national development under the theme “Popular Participation in Development” in the work programme of the Human Resource Development Division. The subsequent meeting on the role of women in national development, organized in 1969, in Addis Ababa, recommended, *inter alia*, that an Africa regional training institute and a regional standing committee on women, should be established to steer the work on women and development.

Women’s programme evolved quickly at the ECA. A regional conference held in Morocco in 1971 on education, vocational training and work opportunities for girls and women in African countries, stressed the imperative of involving women in the development process since their needs reflected the nation’s needs. The women’s programme also laid the framework for the proposed operational programme to transform the resolutions of the various conferences into an ECA Women’s Programme. The final plan was completed and entitled “*The Five-Year Programme for the Pre-vocational and Vocational Training of Girls and Women Towards Their Full Participation in Development, 1972-1976*”. It constituted the core of the Women’s Programme placed in the Human Resource Development Division in 1972.

The women’s programme was further strengthened by the results of a series of studies and meetings on subjects such as the imperative of women’s involvement in development sectors; women’s solidarity groups and organizations as the backbone of rural development; negative attitudes of men and women as an impediment to the progress of women and the nation; failure to acknowledge women’s

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1 The *Status and Role of Women in East Africa*, ECA, Addis Ababa, 1967
economic activity in the modern sectors; and the need for sustained long-term institutional support to WAD activities nationally and regionally.

On the basis of the above imperatives, ECA decided to support the creation of institutions directed exclusively to women’s concerns. At the national level, the Commission encouraged member States to establish national commissions to examine and evaluate women’s contributions to development and how they could be strengthened. The commissions would be assisted by technical women’s bureaus located in government structures that would operate as the secretariats.

Internally, women’s concerns were included in the overall Programme of Work and Priorities of ECA for 1974-1976, an initiative lauded by ECOSOC which, accordingly, invited the other Regional Commissions to do the same. Furthermore, as part of institution building and as recommended by the women’s conference in 1969, the Women’s Programme actively advocated the creation of an African Training and Research Centre for Women at ECA that would “enable member States of the region to make full use of their human resources for development … by offering women more education and training and by involving them in the planning and execution of development activities”

Mobilizing Africa’s women to influence the First World Conference on Women in Mexico (1975)

The preparations for the First United Nations World Conference on Women held in Mexico City were a major boost to the movement of women and development in Africa. The process consisted of a number of activities that helped galvanize African women’s concerns and priorities and build a consensus around them. ECA provided the necessary catalytic support during the process. The first opportunity was the invitation of ECA to a meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in January/February 1974 to discuss how to celebrate the first International Women’s Year, 1975. During the discussions, the African delegation cited the

Five-Year Programme as exemplary and proposed that the other Regional Commissions emulate it. They also supported the creation of the long-proposed and ECA-supported Pan-African Women’s Centre and an African Women’s Task Force.

In March 1974, the International Forum on the Role of Women in Population and Development organized at United Nations Headquarters and attended by ECA helped to define women’s position at the International Women’s Year. The Forum provided an opportunity to showcase the ECA Women’s Programme, which was recommended to other Regional Commissions. It also led to the forging of several partnerships between ECA and such UN agencies as FAO and UNFPA. By June 1974, ECA had completed the Database for Discussion on the Interrelationship between the Integration of Women in Development, their Situation and Population Factors in Africa. The document quantifies men and women’s participation in traditional and ‘modern sectors’ and provides an opportunity to discuss the proposal for establishing a pan-African women’s centre with African women and UN institutions. It was also the main working document for the Regional Seminar for Africa on the Integration of Women in Development with Special Reference to Population Factors, which was convened in Addis Ababa in 1974 by the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, in cooperation with ECA.

The outcome of the seminar was the Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development in Africa, which recommended inter alia that governments and regional and international organizations should set up an organizational machinery to assist women in development activities and expand their skills and opportunities. The seminar supported the establishment of National Commissions on Women and Development, Women’s Bureaus, NGO Coordinating Committees, the Africa Regional Standing Committee and a Pan-African Research and Training Centre for Women. Thus, by the end of 1974, the Women’s Programme at ECA had a strong intellectual, financial and administrative base.

The momentum that had been building over the years finally resulted in the establishment of the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) in ECA, in 1975, having evolved from the Five-Year Women’s Programme. The Centre was viewed as a programme intended “to assist governments and voluntary agencies by serving as a focal point for the mobilization of African women, to broaden their horizons and strengthen their
skills. It worked with a volunteer task force, allowing skilled women from all the subregions to share their knowledge and activities with one another.

The establishment of ATRCW generated much excitement from the 37 African delegations to the World Conference on the International Women’s Year in 1975, in Mexico. The African delegations worked closely together under the leadership of ECA and the OAU. They held regular OAU-chaired meetings to discuss and strategize on issues of interest to Africa. The Guinea delegate chaired the Conference Committee that drafted the World Plan of Action and, together with the other African delegates, ensured that the Plan incorporated African women’s concerns as contained in the African Plan. During the various deliberations, many references were made to ATRCW and the preceding ECA Women’s Programme as examples of best practices that should be emulated.

Box 7.1: ATRCW: A View from Outside

“As the first regional Centre for women in the world, the ATRCW is recognized as a bold and imaginative experiment. It has had no model to follow, but rather has itself become a model for other regions. Moreover, the region served by the Centre is a vast area, comprising no less than forty-nine countries, and is culturally characterized by a multiplicity of languages, cultural institutions, political systems and levels of economic development. Any assessment of the Centre’s success in fulfilling its role during the first few years of its existence must start with an appreciation of the constraints imposed upon it by virtue of the diversity of the context… in which it is located”.


Expanding WAD structures to the subregions

During the 1980s, ATRCW became part of the core of ECA activities. In keeping with its move to decentralize activities to the subregions through the MULPOCs, and to set up the accompanying subsidiary policy organs, ECA sought to expand the women’s programme to the subregions. African women themselves were anxious to see entities established at the regional and subregional levels to follow up women’s causes on a long-term basis. Accordingly, ECA deployed some staff from Addis Ababa to the MULPOCs so that they could be closer to the women of the subregions and contribute effectively to gender-sensitive work programmes in the MULPOCs.

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5 ECA, Presentation prepared for the Pan-African Training Centre for Women, Donors Meeting, United Nations, New York, 28 and 29 January 1975
At the Nouakchott Regional Conference on the Implementation of National, Regional and World Plans of Action in 1977, ECA proposed the creation of the long-awaited Africa Regional Coordinating Committee (ARCC). The role of ARCC at the regional and subregional levels was to advise ECA on the needs and concerns of African women. ATRCW would be the secretariat of ARCC at the regional level and the MULPOCs would play a similar role with the ARCC Subregional Committees. The Conference eventually adopted the ECA proposal after much debate and amendments to the original proposal.

After the conference in Mexico, ECA organized an Africa regional conference on women in Lusaka, Zambia in 1979. Its goal was to review Africa’s performance in the implementation of the 1975 World and African Plans of Action in preparation for the Second United Nations World Conference on Women at Copenhagen, in 1980. The Secretary-General of the Copenhagen Conference congratulated the African women for their achievements since Mexico, citing, in particular, the three-tier structure of ARCC at the regional, subregional and national levels as an exemplary way of reaching all women, including the grassroots women. ¹

However, the ECA report on the situation of women indicated that women continued to be generally excluded from jobs, low or high, in the non-traditional sectors of the economy. Discussions on apartheid and its effects on the status of women in Southern Africa were on the agenda and a resolution to sever relations with all apartheid regimes was passed. In Copenhagen, African women supported the Programme of Action that was formulated, which they found to be relevant to their needs and priorities. They also decided to channel assistance to Southern Africa through the Liberation Movements recognized by the OAU.

The next ECA-organized regional meeting was the Third Africa Regional Conference on Women, held in Arusha, Tanzania, in 1984, to prepare for the Third World Conference on Women, in Nairobi in 1985. The issues of women in agriculture and in industry dominated the deliberations. The consensus reached was that women’s contribution in both areas should be acknowledged and expanded to reflect their highly significant roles in agriculture and food security and in informal and household sectors. ECA provided information on how the serious recession in Africa at that time was affecting women’s access to factors of production needed by both women and men, such as land, agricultural

finance, credit, subsidies, training and technology, and extension services.

The Conference adopted the *Arusha Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women in Africa*. These were intended to guide the integration of women in development and constituted part of the official documentation of the Third World Conference in Nairobi. The success of the Arusha and Nairobi Conferences left African women feeling proud and involved, and ARCC ensured that the interests of African women were comprehensively reflected in the outcome documents of both conferences. Fifty African nations were represented in the regional and global process. To ensure that the World Conference focused mainly on assessing achievements and formulating strategies for a better future, the African Group sponsored 15 resolutions based on the recommendations of the Arusha Conference. In the end, the Third World Conference unanimously adopted the *Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (FLS)*, a comprehensive document that expressed women’s views in practically every area of socio-economic development. The consensus marked a new level of maturity in the Women and Development movement as the women of the South and those of the North reached a deeper understanding of their common problems and the realization that their perceived differences were a mere reflection of their specific experiences.

**Consolidation and Implementation of Africa’s Priorities (1985-1995)**

In conformity with its mandate to promote and support women and development, ECA continued to play the dual role of coordinator and provider of direct services in response to numerous requests from member States which requested advisory and training services to strengthen indigenous entrepreneurial capacity to achieve economic recovery and development. In response to such requests, ECA conducted a series of operational projects targeted at women in the business sector, involving training in all aspects of running and managing a business, including accessing credit.

By 1989, large numbers of young rural women had started leaving the rural areas to enter the informal sector of commerce in urban areas. In response, ECA and UNDP established an interagency, ECA-managed, project to provide credit and training to such women. By 1990, ECA
had produced a guide on credit and entrepreneurship. Recognizing the importance of networking and access to mutual reinforcement, the Commission encouraged women to create national associations of women in business. By 1993, following the growing number of national associations of women entrepreneurs, an ECA-sponsored Federation of African Women Entrepreneurs (FAWE) was established, bringing the national associations under one umbrella organization. Its primary task was to promote legal provisions and appropriate economic and financial policies.

Box 7.2: ECA mitigates the economic crisis of the 1980s for women

The Centre’s activities in the 1980s gave emphasis to the informal sector and entrepreneurship. Two projects on the informal sector were designed and funds mobilized. One of the projects involved research on women in the informal sector in eight countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, whilst the second project, funded by UNDP, had four components namely: training, access to credit, policy issues, coordination and monitoring the implementation of the project. The project involved four players, ILO, UNIFEM, OAU and ECA. ECA played a major role of monitoring the implementation, coordinating the activities of the various components, disseminating information and reporting to UNDP and member States. Through the project, women gained knowledge and skills in such areas as savings, accounting, marketing, packaging, accessing credit as well as building confidence in their business.

A study tour for women entrepreneurs from Eastern and Southern Africa was organized which took them to Accra, Ghana. The study tour provided them with the opportunity to transfer knowledge, technology and skills in various areas of the clothing industry and fashion, food processing, preservation, storage, marketing and the like.

Source: Informal communication with Dr. Mebo Mwaniki, former Chief of ATRCW (2008)

Gender Mainstreaming: A Strategy for Achieving Gender Equality

Several studies on the impact of the economic crisis of the 1980s showed that women suffered much more than men, given their status in society and the accompanying roles assigned to them. ECA organized the Fourth African Regional Conference on Women in 1994, in Dakar that assessed the state of implementation of the Arusha and Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies and, as stated in the Dakar Declaration, found that “only modest progress has been made and critical gaps still exist in several areas. The more glaring gaps are in relation to, inter alia, gender disparity in access to education, employment, health services, access to and control of productive resources and technology, under-representation in the higher political, economic, and social decision-making levels, inadequacy of national machineries, policy and programmes for the enrichment of women’s cause, lack of availability and use of gender-disaggregated data, de jure and de facto discrimination….”

The Fourth Regional Conference adopted The African Platform for Action, a “synthesis of regional perspec-

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tives and priorities as well as a framework for action for the formulation of policies and implementation of concrete and sustainable programmes for the advancement of women.

The consensus document defined Africa’s position towards the advancement of women and the critical areas and actions for addressing them, all of which were reflected in the Beijing Platform for Action of the later Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China. The Regional Conference also defined the operating principle of the African Platform as “integration of the gender perspective in all policies, plans and actions directed towards the achievement of equality, development and peace.” Both Platforms agreed that gender mainstreaming was the strategy of implementation.

As the women’s programme gained momentum in Africa, ECA adjusted its own role accordingly. ATRCW had been mostly supported on an inter-agency basis by UNFPA and UNDP. In 1992, ECA transformed it into the African Centre for Women (ACW), to reflect its catalytic role consistent with the preparations for and implementation of the outcome of the Beijing Conference, which breathed a new life into ECA’s Gender and Women’s programme.

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6 Ibid p.1
7 Ibid p.1

Box 7.3 : The Gender Perspective

“Discussion on structural constraints to women’s participation in all aspects of society took a new orientation in the last two and a half decades, the gender orientation. This orientation is a dynamic concept, which takes away focus from women as a separate category and directs it to the relations between the sexes, that is, gender relations. Thus, when women’s issues are formulated in gender terms, they are delimited in terms of what a woman can do in the private and the public sphere, and are automatically compared with the rights, responsibilities and entitlements of her counterpart, the male.

The gender perspective...therefore facilitates a comprehensive analysis of issues of concern to women by taking account of relations between women and men. Distinction is made between men’s and women’s productive and reproductive roles and how they interact between them. The social and economic structures and trends particularly with respect to education, employment, economic and political participation are examined in reference to women and men’s productive and reproductive roles. In using the gender perspective, the issue of power relations as demonstrated by the inequitable distribution of such economic properties as time, incomes, property ownership, the legal and social entitlement to all these, and the numerical presence of women in power structures, come to the surface. It also brings out the false dichotomy between the work place and the home front. This false separation has resulted in the minimization of inequalities within the family. In the economic sector, the false differentiations between economic production and social reproduction have resulted in the economic marginalization of women despite their indispensable contribution to production.”

In response to the call for gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the African and Beijing Platforms for Action, ECA further strengthened ACW, elevating it in 1999, to the status of a Division. Thus, ACW became the African Centre for Gender and Development (ACGD) reflecting the new gender orientation and strategy, a move that was endorsed by ECOSOC. This move was bold and groundbreaking in the UN and ACGD enjoyed the highest status among the other structures dealing with gender in the five UN Regional Commissions. Since then, gender activities became one of ECA sub-programmes, while gender, as a concept, became a crosscutting element in all ECA work programmes and special initiatives. With the strategic repositioning of ECA, ACGD became the African Centre for Gender and Social Development.

Post-Beijing Orientation

After the Beijing Conference, the work of ECA on gender centred on facilitating implementation of the Platforms for Action in African countries, enabling them to develop national gender-based action plans that reflected their own priorities among the regional and global concerns indicated. ECA also continued with its catalytic role of strengthening the information and data base through research and surveys; advocacy and advisory services through missions; and the convening role for consultations, exchange and consensus building. Special emphasis was put on women’s human rights and economic empowerment.

In 1998, ECA organized an international conference that focused on the contributions of African women, to mark its 40th anniversary under the theme: “African Women and Economic Development: Investing in Our Future”. It was a major event that involved a cross-section of stakeholders and participants, including representatives of governments, civil society, NGOs, and the private sector. The focus of the Conference was “African women’s past and future contributions to Africa and the world …[and] the imperatives of eliminating gender discrimination and strategies for advancing this cause.” The Conference also provided the occasion to launch the African Women’s Committee on Peace and Development, jointly sponsored by the OAU and ECA. It was established upon the strong recommendations by African women in various forums, to be a vehicle for women to channel their views and advice on matters of peace and conflict to ECA and the OAU. Its membership was representative of the five subregions of Africa and the issues raised highlighted the plight of

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women and girls in conflict and post-conflict countries and their remarkable activities in peace building and reconstruction.

In 1999, ECA organized the Sixth Africa Regional Conference on Women, which conducted the Beijing+5 review of the implementation of the Platforms for Action. The review showed that “most countries have allocated both financial and human resources to implementing national plans of action. They have registered...increased school enrolment of girls; wider areas of coverage of health services; creation of women groups for solidarity and collaborative work; wider coverage of awareness-raising campaigns and programmes with regard to women’s human rights; establishment of micro credit schemes; and expansion of adult literacy programmes. Fifteen [countries] have formulated national gender policies…”^9.

The review resulted in the adoption of the African Plan of Action, the African common position that provided a framework to guide the formulation of specific national, subregional and regional strategies and mechanisms to address and resolve selected priority issues that had received little attention in member States. In this context, ECA, in working with member States, focused on the priorities identified in the newly adopted African Plan of Action. Accordingly, it drew up a work programme to help governments intensify their efforts in monitoring and evaluating implementation of the Plan; analysing national sectoral policies; and suggesting strategies for mainstreaming gender in poverty reduction programmes in order to promote women’s access to productive resources and the value of their unpaid work. The aim was to build member States’ capacity to formulate, implement and evaluate gender-sensitive development programmes; develop adequate communication and information strategies; and undertake policy advocacy for the elimination of gender-based discrimination against women.\(^10\)

In all, ECA worked successfully with member States during the post-Beijing era, and made notable contributions in several areas, including convening regional and subregional meetings of women ministers and civil society, and giving voice to women in Africa to articulate their concerns which, for example, enabled them to articulate their human rights concerns as evidenced by the adoption of the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

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^9 Sixth Africa Regional Conference on Women on Mid-Term Review of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action, Nov. 1999, p 3, ECA

^10 ACGD Brochure, 2000
Achievements and Challenges at Beijing + 10

The ECA Seventh African Regional Conference on Women held in Addis Ababa in October 2004 was convened to review the status of implementation of the **Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action**. The review showed that considerable progress had been made in reducing the gender gap in several sectors. Girls’ school enrolment at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels had risen in many countries; illiteracy had declined in some while others had instituted measures for women’s educational training; life expectancy had increased in some countries and fertility levels fallen, especially in North Africa; policies and structures have been developed to control HIV/AIDS in almost all countries; population policies had been broadened to handle reproductive issues beyond population control; women’s presence in parliament and other decision-making positions had grown and some countries, especially Southern Africa, are determined to respect the representation levels in organs of governance and management recommended by the UN; while countries had ratified CEDAW, even though implementation was lagging behind the targets and timeframes.

Nevertheless, some major obstacles to women’s empowerment persisted. Gender gaps continued to characterize the education sector especially at the tertiary level. Women and girls continued to be marginalized in the information technology and science fields and large numbers were still held back in attrition, repetition and illiteracy. In the health sector, women were devastated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic as they suffered greater infection rates that were still on the rise in some countries, and by limited access to health facilities and drugs, including retroviral drugs. The burden of care of the sick and dying weighed heavily on women, especially with the spread of the AIDS pandemic and the overwhelming increase of orphans in the urban and rural areas alike. Maternal mortality rates remained high.

Violation of women and girls’ human rights also persisted as they continued to suffer biases in the family, and sexual violence, especially in situations of war. Since only a few countries had introduced an affirmative action policy, women continued to be few in the decision-making arena, most countries falling below the 30 per cent level recommended by the United Nations, a percentage that was expected to rise to 50 per cent over time. The level of
Leading Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

The Way Forward

As we project beyond Beijing + 10 and consider the challenges ahead, ECA continues to hold fast to its vision to catalyze action on gender issues in Africa by triggering consensus on various strategic frameworks. The latest of such strategic framework is the *Outcome and the Way Forward* document which emanated from the *Beijing + 10 Review of the Implementation of the Platforms for Action*. It constitutes the African consensus on the findings of the review and identification of priority actions that must be implemented in the next five years in order to speed up attainment of the goals of the Platforms. The AU also endorsed the framework in January 2005 in Abuja.

Box 7.4: Gender balance: the challenge of leading by example

“The General Assembly has repeatedly called for the United Nations to reach gender parity at all levels. The goal was mandated to be achieved by the year 2000. Yet overall representation remains sub-optimal at approximately 37% in the Secretariat and varies widely for the different entities of the UN system. Progress has ranged from being unacceptably slow in some instances, to being markedly positive in others. Achieving and sustaining the target, however, requires consistent political commitment at the highest level as well as policies which assist in translating this commitment into an organizational culture that facilitates equal participation of men and women in all dimensions of the organization’s work.” (OSAGI office of the Focal Point for Women in the United Nations, “Gender Related UN Secretariat Policies”).

Over time, ECA has demonstrated leadership and commitment to the UN policy of promoting gender parity particularly in its work with the African women and the member States. Within the organization, however, the pace has been slow and has hardly kept up with the strides that some UN organizations and agencies have achieved.

When the UN allowed special measures to accelerate the attainment of the 30% target in the system by 1990, at ECA, women professionals rose from 12.7% to 17.4% in 1990. By 1992, women occupied 20% of the regular budget posts. ECA also established in 1990 the Task Force on Women in ECA (TAFWE) to advise the Executive Secretary on measures that should be taken to accelerate the process within the UN guidelines. TAFWE proposed a 3% annual increase of women professionals until the UN targets were met..

Source: ECA, ACGSD, 2008)

implementation of ratified legal and policy instruments remained low due to lack of political backing while persistent wars and political upheavals relegated women and gender concerns to the back seat. Gender Focal Points in most sectors lack adequate gender analysis skills and do not have the power or resources to influence programmes in their sectors. Lack of monitoring and evaluation, as well as accountability mechanisms, remain important challenges.
In response to the adoption of the *Outcome and Way Forward*, ECA set out to facilitate its implementation by developing the *Follow-up Strategy on Beijing + 10* that was also endorsed by the Committee on Women and Development. The Strategy emphasizes the importance of effective institutional mechanisms for mainstreaming gender in all sectors, including explicit gender policies to guide plans of action in the various sectors, a time frame during which the set objectives are to be achieved, and allocation of adequate resources for implementing the planned programmes. The institutional arrangements include mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress being made within the timeframe and the deployment of necessary resources.

To ensure that member States keep gender issues relevant and high on the agenda of national development policies, plans and strategies, ECA plans, among other things, to capacitate African countries to honour and implement their Beijing + 10 commitments. Accordingly, ECA will hold routine subregional training workshops for senior civil servants who are decision makers in the ministries of agriculture, health, trade or commerce and planning and finance. The workshops will familiarize participants with the *Follow-up Strategy on Beijing +10*, and assist them in preparing national action plans or work programmes in accordance with the Follow-up Strategy. Countries are expected to monitor their progress annually and report every two years to CWD through ECA.
Independence for African countries came with many imperatives, one of which was to establish a productive, efficient and effective civil and public service with appropriate structures and management capacity. The countries also had to address the challenge of ethics and accountability in public management. These factors, together, defined the trajectory of ECA public administration efforts designed to shape and strengthen public and development management in African countries.

The Commission established its first public administration programme in line with ECOSOC resolution 907 (XXXIX) of 2 August 1962, which states “that solid administrative structures and sound public administration are essential prerequisites for the progress of the developing countries.” Accordingly, ECA was mandated by resolution 70 (V) at its 5th meeting in February 1963, “to assist African Governments individually and jointly in their efforts to improve administrative aspects of their development programmes and to Africanize their civil service.”

Earlier, in October 1962, ECA had organized a seminar in this connection, in coordination with the Division of Public Administration of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The report of the seminar formed the basis for “a guide in planning regional and subregional activities relating to public administration”, drawing the attention of African governments to the need to improve public administration at the national and local levels. In addition, ECA made the services of regional advisers in public administration available to member States and invited regional and subregional agencies

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1 ECA, Fifth Conference of Ministers, February 1963.
working in public administration or in the administration of major services and programmes to make full use of the Commission’s services. Subsequently, ECA drew up a plan for subregional and regional support of national efforts to improve public administration in the short and longer terms and developed training facilities in the area, using existing institutions.

Following internal discussions in 1963 on the relationship between planning and development, the planning aspect of development was assigned to IDEP, while the public administration aspect remained at ECA to cover issues of public administration, personnel training and local government.

The first ECA Regional Adviser in Public Administration was appointed in 1963 and worked with the other public administration experts who also served as public administration advisers for countries and as researchers and instructors, produced publications for schools and institutes, including the highly successful *The Organization and Methods Training Manual*. They also conducted lectures in public administration at IDEP.

The Commission delivered its services through several channels: contact missions to countries to explain to governments how ECA could assist them, and to collect documentation; organization of, or participation in, seminars, training courses and meetings to study and solve administrative problems; in-service training to African officials; collection, researching and preparation of technical documentation for circulation to government departments, schools and institutes; and participation in studies outside the Commission.

The public administration activities included delivery of services to ministries, public enterprises and public administration institutes in Africa and participation in interregional meetings of the UN, the African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development (CAFRAD), and other African training and research institutions.

Moreover, a Working Party on Public Administration was established in 1964 comprising mostly African experts who met regularly to review the programme for regional and subregional public administration support to countries. The programme covered management of public enterprises, involvement of local administrations in development tasks, establishing local examination boards, management leadership and training courses for officials responsible for manpower planning and coordination, public administration and training needs,
as well as human resources development. In general, the public administration problems of Africa in the 1960s continued into the 1970s, also a period of independence and consolidation of independence for some countries in Africa.

For the consolidation, ECA encouraged African governments and universities to deploy the manpower resources needed for their economic development, prepared studies on management leadership, and undertook several technical assistance, advisory and survey missions to countries.

By the mid-1970s, several public administration and management institutions and university courses had started in African countries and management assistance requests to ECA became more specialized. Thus, ECA studied the problem of harmonizing methods of administrative training, policies and programmes in Africa for the regional meeting in 1976, to formulate a plan on the subject.4

In the 1980s, public administration activities at ECA focused on the interrelated areas of formal educational systems and practices, especially trends, issues and practices in human resources development, manpower training, employment, labour and skills management. It also took account of non-formal educational systems and practices, including informal training and extension courses. The Commission organized and offered advisory services on training for skills development and technology transfer, career planning, guidance and counselling, institution building, administration and development, fellowships, as well as identification and facilitation of the return of African experts and skilled people. It also encouraged the development of institutional machinery for facilities, student intake and effective research, teaching and consultancy, and conducted studies with universities on conceptual frameworks using labour and socio-economic indicators for planning. In 1987, ECA organized jointly with OAU, a conference of vice-chancellors and rectors of institutions of higher learning in Africa, in Harare, to consider African strategies for higher education.

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The limitation of ECA Public Administration in the 1970s and early 1980s mainly to human resources development, manpower planning and policy for development, especially through training, can be understood in light of political trends, which in general influenced public policy. The policy environment in Africa during that period was characterized by fragmented efforts by governments towards development, until landmark regional policies such as the LPA were conceptualized by ECA with a view to restructuring the economy of Africa. However, the LPA advocated continued strong government participation in the economy, in order to create employment, which later led to calls for privatization as State intervention increased.

Meanwhile, the human resources focus of the public administration work continued into the early 1990s. In line with the recommendations of the fourth session of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization held in 1991 on the theme “Africa’s Human Resources Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond”. The Conference acknowledged the urgent need to improve the human condition and sustain human resources planning, development and utilization, in guiding the work of ECA in public administration.

A UN Inter-Agency Task Force and a Ministerial Follow-up Committee of Ten were also set up for this purpose. The Conference reiterated human-centred development, which was advocated by the Lagos Plan of Action, and subsequent policies and initiatives, such as APPER, UNPAAERD and AAF-SAP. In addition to management enhancement activities and the review of the implementation of UNPAAERD, ECA also produced and distributed technical publications on personnel, public service ethics, motivation and productivity, in an effort to address reform and privatization of public enterprises.

**Origins of Modern Governance**

Governance was rooted in the public administration work of ECA during the 1980-1990 decade.

The Commission’s efforts to address the concept and issues of governance became more visible in 1990 with the Arusha Conference. The attempt to redefine the nature of the African crisis, which at the time was more in line with AAF-SAP, placed popular participation within the
context of democratic governance. This explains why the Arusha conference called for the guarantee of basic political freedoms and civil liberties like freedom of association; the establishment of democratic institutions such as political parties, trade unions, grassroots organizations and professional associations; the guarantee of constitutional rights; representation of the people and their organizations in national bodies; the rule of law and social and economic justice, political accountability; and decentralization of decision-making processes and institutions. In practice, “democratic governance” is intricately linked to the concept of “democratic development.”

Thus, by the mid-1990s, as the democratization and economic reforms started producing tangible results in a few African countries, some governments took measures to protect the vulnerable segments of society from the heavy social costs of adjustment, and calls were made for ECA to play an important role in providing support to African-led socio-economic reforms that would benefit all Africans and reinforce African countries’ efforts to be an integral part of the global economy. Some participants at the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Human Resources Planning, Development and Utilization reported reforms “in their countries towards the establishment of civilian-led good governance and democratic pluralism or return to civil rule after multiparty elections.” Accordingly, ECA began to broaden its work in public administration to include research, experience sharing and exchange of documentation on development management. It also put particular emphasis on fostering public-private partnership in support of development; promoting public sector reforms for enhanced effectiveness and efficiency; and enhancing the interface between government and civil society organizations.

During 1996-1997, ECA published: The Role of Local Government in Enhancing Popular Participation, Politics and Administrative Efficiency in Africa: Enhancing Accountability in the Management of Public Enterprises, in addition to other works on public expenditure for rural development, and

employment generation and government mechanisms for privatization. These activities showed that the era of governance had dawned in earnest at ECA, which was further confirmed by the Commission’s organization of the Global Forum in Local Governance, in cooperation with UN headquarters, UNDP and the Government of Sweden, as well as the first Governance Forum in Addis Ababa in 1997, which affirmed that sustainable human development required the participation of all economic actors, including the State, business community and civil society.

**Stronger Development Management**

The emergence of governance as a major issue broadened the perspectives of development management in the work of ECA. To that end, the Commission set out to examine the impact of the reforms and other improvement measures that had been taken with regard to the public sector, the private sector and civil society, and on how they would affect globalization and liberalization in Africa.

Continued interest in improving human resources, governance at the local level, conflicts and sound financial management, led to further studies in these areas, including in best practices, service delivery, traditional governance, and the role of parliaments in the budgetary process. Among these studies are: *Trends in the Management of Human Resources in Public Administration in Africa*, *Popular Participation in Decentralized Governance*, *Government Policy on Financing Local Development and Administrative Structures in Africa*, *Best Practices in the Participatory Approach to the Delivery of Social Services*, *The Economics of Civil Conflicts*, *The Relevance of African Traditional Institutions of Governance*, and *The Role of African Parliaments in the Budgetary Processes especially on the Medium Term Expenditure Framework*.

Moreover, ECA undertook major practical public administration activities for African countries or institutions, and designed, packaged and implemented programmes for groups of countries. The case of the Namibia Institute and the administration of pre-independence Namibia is summarized in box 8.1.

More recently, ECA has continued to work with UNDP within the framework of the inter-agency cooperation to strengthen development management and promote good governance and democracy for development, with the first Governance Forum organized in preparation for the
1998 Conference on Governance in Africa, to consolidate the institutional foundations for good governance.

The period up to 2000 witnessed a further strengthening of development management based on good governance as a means of preventing conflicts and achieving socio-economic growth, through increased stakeholder participation in countries. ECA stressed that the continent needed effective development management systems, practices and institutions, and provided analysis and documentation on reform strategies and best practices for enhancing institutional, organizational and administrative capacities. It continued to conduct research and facilitate experience sharing through workshops and meetings with a view to ensuring synergy between the public and private sectors of the economy.

The aim of promoting public-private partnerships (PPP) is to create an enabling environment for capital investment and efficient management of scarce resources and human capital. The public sector reforms are aimed at enhancing the efficiency and impact of the sector as well as the role of civil society organizations in the development process.

The focus on the public sector was complemented with thorough research, policy and advisory services for private

Namibia is an example of United Nations success at nation building, peace and development, achieved through integrated management and capacity-building. The United Nations Council for Namibia (UNCN), established in 1967 and led by Mr. Matti Athisari, administered Namibia until independence, and prepared it for nationhood. In this context, the United Nations Institute for Namibia (UNIN), based in Lusaka, which worked closely with ECA to provide training and research programmes in development management, education and skills upgrading for Namibians adapted to socio-economic development needs of post-independence Namibia. In helping to articulate the mandate of UNIN, ECA ensured that the Institute’s programmes were geared to Namibia’s critical civil service human resource needs and provided technical assistance in civil service best practices as well as expertise in analysing nation-building programmes.

ECA helped to develop the UNIN Diploma programme in Development Studies and Management, structured to cover the following clusters: Constitutional, Legal and Judicial Affairs; Social and Education Affairs; Agricultural and Land Resources; Economics; and Historical, Political and Cultural Studies. The Institute also had a Teachers’ Diploma in Basic Education and Teacher Training/Upgrading, and undertook research, produced publications and organized workshops and seminars in which best practices were discussed exhaustively.

Aware that the public sector could not employ all Namibians and that the private sector would drive growth as the government’s partner in economic and social development, UNIN designed with ECA and the University of Zambia, a Diploma programme in Business Management and Administration, whose graduates are among the most successful business people in Namibia today have been placed in countries and institutions worldwide, including the ECA Secretariat.

Furthermore, the former Director of UNIN, Dr. Hage Geingob, became the first Prime Minister of Namibia for two terms, and introduced modern management in government and national reconciliation as policy. One of the numerous UNIN research studies and publications, on constitutional options for independent Namibia contributed to the country’s constitution, which has stood the test of time and is considered as one of the most inclusive and democratic on the continent. Another, “Namibia: Perspectives for National Reconstruction and Development” became the government’s first blueprint.

Finally, the work of ECA with UNIN in management and leadership capacity-building for an independent Namibia gave the country a headstart for good governance, nation building and socio-economic development beyond sovereignty. Later, ECA staff worked with UNTAG on the ground and ECA helped to prepare investment and other public policy documents for the first Donors’ Conference for independent Namibia.

Contributed by Dr. Wilfred Asombang, Retired ECA Staff Member and Former Senior Lecturer at UNIN.
sector development. The work here covered the informal and formal private sectors. The view that developing the informal private sector can reduce poverty led to studies on ways of facilitating micro-financing for the sector’s operators, including *Improving Access to Loans by Small Scale Enterprises; Enhancing the Competitiveness of Small Scale Industries in Africa: A Strategic Framework for Support Services; National Pilot Programmes for NGOs and the Micro-Economy.*

The Commission’s establishment of the African Centre for Civil Society (ACCS) in 1997 as a resource centre for the institutional and capacity development of African civil society organizations made it possible for these organizations to play a greater role in their respective countries. ECA also organized subregional and regional seminars and workshops in this regard and to strengthen the capacity of NGOs, especially for policy analysis, formulation, implementation and advocacy. By mainstreaming them into the policy discourse, development and governance processes in Africa, they were provided a basis for critical policy interventions in the continent for knowledge generation and for information sharing and dissemination. In defining its agenda on civil society, ECA produced a strategic document entitled, “ECA and CSOs: A Framework for Partnership”.

All these prepared the ground for the early years of the Commission’s work on development management and governance, focusing on preparing an enabling environment for public, private and civil society sectors, facilitating synergy between them and providing them the instruments for assessing governance and negotiating policy priorities in countries.

The public administration activities of ECA also involved efforts at civil service reform and revitalization, for which it undertook several technical comparative studies aimed at promoting efficiency, accountability and transparency with a view to creating service standards for improved productivity and performance. The objective was to improve financial management for local development and articulate policies for pro-poor public spending. The emphasis put on civil society and popular participation during this period produced the first meeting of the Committee on Human Development and Popular Participation, followed by another meeting on Participation in Development and Governance in late 2000 to define approaches, strategies and the framework and mechanisms for participatory development and to examine the contribution of civil society organizations to development and governance.
The new millennium saw the inclusion of governance in the Development Management Division (DMD), which had been reformulated to include public sector management, private sector development, and civil society participation in the governance and development processes. The aim of this realignment was to highlight and promote good governance as a means of ensuring that Africa’s social and economic priorities were based on societal needs, with all citizens and stakeholders participating in the development process. This would increase civil society participation, improve private sector operations and force the State to operate properly and effectively. Meanwhile, the focus on accountability, transparency and efficiency in civil service delivery and management of public goods and resources continued, with governance as its foundation.

In this regard, ECA organized a consultative meeting in November 2000 for senior officials of international parliamentary associations, representatives of corporate bodies and non-governmental organizations to examine the role of the State in political and economic transactions and the role of the legislature in designing and implementing policies to promote broad-based growth in order to reduce poverty. The meeting maintained that Africa should strengthen the State’s capacity to perform its legitimate duties.

Governance was also a major item on the agenda of the second meeting of the Big Table and other big forums. Just before the above-described consultative meeting of parliamentarians and other senior officials, ECA cooperated with UNDP in organizing the fourth African Governance Forum (AGF IV) in Kampala, in September 2000, to strengthen development cooperation and partnerships among African governments, civil society, development partners and other stakeholders. The Governance Forums aimed to increase awareness and facilitate exchange of information, experiences and best practices. It also aimed to promote good governance, facilitate resource mobilization for national governance programmes and follow-up in Africa. The fifth AGF on local governance for poverty eradication took place in Maputo in 2002. The sixth, in Kigali, in 2006, focused on the challenges and opportunities of APRM implementation; while the seventh, in Ouagadougou, in 2007, was on building the capable State. Governance has also been the focus of forums such as the eighth International Forum on African Perspectives, the Forum of Federations, the African Civil Society Forum and the Global Civil Society Forum.

The fourth African Development Forum (ADF IV) organized by ECA in 2004 was also devoted to governance under the theme “Governance for a Progressing Africa.”
ADF IV reviewed the synopsis of “Striving for Good Governance in Africa”, first *African Governance Report* (AGR1) of ECA which examined the state of governance in selected African countries and how to build the capable and accountable African State.

ECA also carried out a special governance project on the theme “Measuring and Monitoring Progress Towards Good Governance in Africa”. The project was premised on the emerging consensus that good governance is central to Africa’s development agenda and progress, and is a *sine quâ non* for building a stable, prosperous and democratic society. It covers seven major areas of governance: political governance, institutional effectiveness and accountability of the executive, institutional checks and balances, public economic governance and public sector management, corporate governance and private sector development, human rights and the rule of law, and capacity development. The project produced the flagship report, AGR I, using a set of indicators that covered the major aspects of governance in Africa.

For ECA, the governance concept should embody good governance, its impact on the livelihood of the people, and its role in reducing poverty, promoting economic growth and ensuring democratic stability. Good governance should strive to achieve: (a) an efficient State; (b) constitutionalism and the rule of law; (c) participatory democracy; (d) transparency and efficient economic management; and (e) citizens and civil society empowerment. The three main agencies for good governance are (i) a democratic capable State (ii) a virile civil society and (iii) a thriving private sector.

The core finding of AGR I is that governance is improving in Africa, but is still faced with formidable challenges. The liberalization of the continent’s political space has been phenomenal, with more political parties established, CSOs flourishing, and media organizations multiplying and enjoying increased freedom. This is ensuring better and quality information for the people, better observance of the rule of law and respect for human rights, better management of the economy, and growing transparency in the conduct of government business. The challenges are also daunting. Corruption remains a major obstacle to development, with tax evasion, bribery and embezzlement of public funds rampant; the culture of impunity, though on the decline, is still prevalent; the legacy of authoritarianism is still very much alive with repression of opposition parties and social activists in some countries; the manipulation of the electoral process and perpetuation of personal rule are still occurring; and the democratic process in Africa remains fragile and
even reversible\textsuperscript{8}. Africa therefore has a major challenge of democratic evolution and consolidation for the people’s voice to be entrenched and good governance institutionalized.

**Governance Reinforced**

In 2005, DPMD became Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD) with the Commission’s repositioning. The Division now has a stronger focus on governance, in particular, public sector management, State capacity, popular participation, civil society, and private sector development.

\textsuperscript{8} For a comprehensive view on the findings of the report, see, UNECA, *Africa Governance Report*, 2005.
In addition to being the regional arm of the UN in Africa, ECA has also proved to be a key deliberative organ for Africa and its various partners to discuss key development issues relevant to the continent. As an organization that serves a vast continent of 53 countries, with a wide variety of challenges, ECA uses the mechanism of consensus building to listen to the voices of its constituencies and bring them together to discuss, understand and participate in devising solutions to these challenges.

Conference of Ministers

Traditionally, ECA has played this role through its statutory legislative organs, the highest one being its Conference of Ministers. Established by resolution 188 (IX) of 10 February 1969, this organ comprises African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and meets every year at ECA headquarters in Addis Ababa or in any of its member States to:

(a) Consider matters to be included in the Commission’s programmes and priorities;
(b) Consider intra-African and international economic policy issues and make appropriate recommendations to member States;
(c) Review programme implementation and approve the proposed biennial programme of work and priorities;
(d) Consider reports submitted to it by its Technical Preparatory Committee of Experts;
(e) Consider questions of Africa’s representation on international or intergovernmental bodies on economic and social matters;
(f) Consider and endorse, for onward transmission to ECOSOC and the General Assembly, proposals from sectoral ministerial conferences; and

(g) Consider the work programmes of the SROs and integrate them into the overall work programme and priorities of ECA.

ECA fulfills its consensus-building role through its statutory policy organs and through various informal, but officially recognized, forums initiated in the 1980s. These forums and consultations have generated crucial ideas and policy recommendations on many of Africa’s topical development issues. Through these mechanisms, ECA is able to organize, sponsor or co-sponsor meetings, conferences and consultations bringing together high-level representatives of governments, intergovernmental or international bodies, eminent personalities and local and international civil society organizations. Through their rich inputs, these representatives generate ideas leading to action plans that, in many cases, evolve into policies or, in matters concerning international negotiations, help to build Africa’s voice and common positions.


ADF and the Big Table

Currently, the main non-statutory mechanisms of ECA for consensus building on socio-economic development issues at the international level are the African Development Forum (ADF) and the Big Table. ADF, attended by a broad cross-section of participants, is an initiative for discussing pressing issues of the “Africa-driven development agenda” and for mobilizing consensus as well as partnerships on these issues from among the continent’s stakeholders worldwide, leading to specific
programmes for country or continental implementation.¹

The Big Table is also an ECA forum for “informal exchange of views among partner institutions, African Finance Ministers, Development Cooperation Ministers of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, heads of agencies and senior officials of multilateral and bilateral agencies².

The 2007 Big Table, like those before it, was designed by ECA to promote policy-oriented, frank, institutionally-independent and interactive dialogue between senior African policy makers and their OECD counterparts. It centred on how to effectively manage Africa’s natural resources for growth and poverty reduction, through sound natural resource governance, capacity-building, better linkages with other sectors and an oversight mechanism involving civil society. The meeting recommended sound management through Africa’s ownership of the development process, strengthening governance systems, reinforcing institutional capacity, negotiating better terms, integrating the natural resources sector into national development frameworks, and properly investing natural resources in economic innovation and capital and infrastructure development. The meeting also produced a number of compacts for future action.

Generally, the Big Table format and agenda are designed to allow for maximum interactive dialogue, with no formal statements³. Informal and independent as these forums may be, they select and address topical issues of African policy and produce results that feed into, inform and drive more formal policies and actions with a bearing on Africa’s socio-economic development. Through the ADF, for example, the key stakeholders in African development – governments, civil society, the private sector, researchers and academics, intergovernmental organizations and development partners – are presented the results of current research and views on key development issues, in order to formulate shared goals and priorities, draft action programmes and define the environment for African countries to implement these programmes.

These forums are designed to meet regularly on different development issues. For example, ADF began slightly earlier than the Big Table and held its first conference, ADF I, in Addis Ababa, in October 1999, on the challenges of globalization and new information and communications technology to Africa. Not only did that conference stimulate a rich debate on how the African continent could participate in the world economy through ICTs, it also mobilized major public and private sector interests, actions and financing support that

¹ADF and ADF IV Guide, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
²Table Special Session, ECA, 28 October 2003, Washington, D.C.
³ECA Update, February 2007

ADF II, held from 3 to 7 December 2000, in Addis Ababa, focused on HIV/AIDS as one of Africa’s greatest challenges and how the pandemic could be tackled at all levels and spheres of the African society through effective leadership. That forum brought together dignitaries, experts and stakeholders from various walks of life, including the then United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, several African Heads of State and Government, other United Nations high officials and leaders of civil society. It was a resounding success that produced the “Addis Ababa Consensus and Plan of Action”, a most comprehensive document on the regional response to HIV/AIDS in Africa.

As expected, the outcomes of ADF II fed directly into the April 2000 Abuja Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Infectious Diseases and the June 2001 United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on HIV/AIDS. In addition to generating strong momentum for combating HIV/AIDS, ADF II also provided the impetus for further action on the subject as well as other initiatives on HIV/AIDS and related infectious diseases.

One such initiative was the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, a mechanism created in 2002 that has, to date, committed $US10.7 billion in 136 countries to support aggressive interventions against all three diseases, and continues to sign and disburse new grants, especially in developing countries.

The ideas from ADF II also spurred the establishment of Scenarios for the Future, a private-public partnership project on AIDS in Africa set up by UNAIDS and Shell International, with support from AfDB, ECA, UNDP and the World Bank, to explore HIV/AIDS evolution in
Africa up to the year 2025, and map out its implications for advocacy, policy and action, by engaging a wide group of key stakeholders to share knowledge on future scenarios. The project has organized a series of workshops in this regard in various parts of Africa since 2003.

Another direct outcome of ADFII was the Commission on HIV/AIDS and Governance in Africa (CHGA) launched by the UN Secretary-General in 2003 and implemented by ECA. It was based on policy consultations in which 16 commissioners comprising leaders, academics and eminent personalities in development, networked with numerous Africans, policymakers, organizations, research institutions, UN agencies, civil society and people living with AIDS, to verify and advise African governments on the impact and development implications of HIV/AIDS, while championing the issue through policy advocacy. CHGA published background documents and produced a final report that advances knowledge with key recommendations on HIV/AIDS policy based on its research findings and the views of its wide variety of participants. The final report entitled Securing Our Future was presented to the UN Secretary-General on 9 June 2008 at the UN Headquarters at a special event during the High-level Meeting on AIDS, which was followed by a High-level Panel discussion on regional lessons in the progress towards Universal Access.

The report contains eight key messages and 26 bold recommendations which, the Secretary-General says, could sharpen Africa’s response to the pandemic. Receiving the report from former President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and former Prime Minister Pascoal Mocumbi of Mozambique, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the eight messages in Securing Our Future were crucial. “It is why we must act on the understanding that Africa has multiple AIDS epidemics, and one-size-fits-all policies will not work across the region. It is why we must learn better to grasp how cultural norms and attitudes increase the risk of infection. It is why we must enforce laws

Box 9.1: CHGA: Eight Key Messages To Secure Our Future

**Message 1:** There are multiple AIDS epidemics in Africa  
**Message 2:** The epidemics in Africa reflect a strong gender disparity  
**Message 3:** The growing number of children infected and affected by HIV presents a challenge  
**Message 4:** Prevention must remain priority  
**Message 5:** Inadequate human resources constrains treatment and care  
**Message 6:** AIDS financing needs to be coordinated, long term and transparent  
**Message 7:** Leadership at all levels needs to be reinvigorated and sustained as part of a coordinated response  
**Message 8:** The ultimate goal of good governance should be the creation of an enabling environment in which every citizen becomes part of the national AIDS response and the State is able to maintain efficient public institutions.
to eliminate violence against women and girls and take action to improve the lives of AIDS orphans,” he said.

ADF III, held in March 2002, focused on regional integration. Held at a time when OAU was about to transform into AU, ADF III was ECA’s channel for mobilizing expert public discussions, analyses and views from various stakeholders in Africa, thus expanding Africa’s ownership of the impending AU. The discussions shed more light on the complexities and implications of regional integration to the benefit of the AU, the RECs, and the governments and people of Africa.

Little wonder then that ADF IV, held in October 2004, co-sponsored by ECA, AU and AfDB, focused on the issue of good governance for economic transformation under the title “Governance for a Progressing Africa” clearly reflecting the concerns expressed in the ADF III consensus statement. The concerns had also formed part of discussions at the AU Council of Ministers and Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2002, in Durban, South Africa which, inter alia, called upon member States, in view of TICAD IV, to boost economic growth, in order to achieve the MDGs, ensure human security, consolidate peace and democratization and address environmental and climate issues.

The ADF III consensus statement emphasizes the overwhelming demand by Africans for their aspirations to unity to be fulfilled through political and economic integration based on common values. It calls upon African leaders to implement this concern as stated in the various treaties, citing failure to achieve economic transformation and development, structural factors, poor implementation of treaty obligations, conflicts, and non-resolution of political differences, as hampering regional integration efforts.


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and Monitoring Progress towards Good Governance in Africa”, with a study based on household surveys, expert panels and desk research in 28 selected African countries. A synopsis of that report revealed the strong consensus across Africa on the critical importance of good governance as a precondition for achieving the MDGs. The report expresses strong support for NEPAD and APRM, as pointers to unprecedented and new commitment to self-monitoring and review of progress towards good governance.6

ADF V was held in November 2006 on Youth and Leadership in the 21st Century. Its consensus statement calls for partnerships at all levels to provide the youth with leadership opportunities that would enable them to speed up development, peace and prosperity. This is to be facilitated by implementing the African Youth Charter, which calls for the inclusion of youth and leadership issues in the APRM process.

Sometimes, the same issues are addressed by both ADF and the Big Table at different times, venues and dates but issues relevant to the economic and social development of the continent, including NEPAD/PRSPS, the MDGs and governance, have generally featured on the agendas of both forums. For instance, Big Table I, held in November 2000 in Addis Ababa focused on national poverty reduction strategies, pro-poor growth policies and the International Development Goals while its consensus statement made clear references to the PRSP process and its relevant capacity-building objectives. Big Table II, held in October 2001 in Amsterdam, addressed the issue of good governance (ADF IV), with focus on African ownership and responsibility for good governance practices. That meeting also endorsed the APRM.

Big Table III, held in Addis Ababa in January 2003, focused on mutual accountability between African countries and their development partners for development effectiveness. It came up with commitments to be implemented and monitored by Africa and its foreign partners, as well as the relevant framework for doing so. The conference agreed that African countries should improve the quantity and quality of aid and coordinate their aid, trade and debt policies in line with the MDGs.

The conclusions of Big Table III led to the convening of a special session to consider how the policies of the World Bank and the IMF could best help Africa to meet the MDGs. That special session, which took place in 2003 in Washington, D.C., discussed inter alia, how external shocks, including fluctuating export prices and the vagaries of weather, constitute an impediment to poor

6 Synopsis of AGR IV, ECA, 2004
and vulnerable countries, their development, efforts to combat poverty and ability to maintain debt sustainability. The meeting therefore questioned the suitability of the policies and activities of these Bretton Woods Institutions for the anti-poverty strategies of African countries. It also expressed reservations about the suitability of the PRSPs as the framework for utilization of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA).
ECA recently repositioned itself to effectively face Africa’s development challenges in the new millennium. The aim was to streamline and sharpen the Commission’s focus by reorganizing its programmes and activities while bearing in mind the need for a comprehensive coverage of Africa’s key development areas. The reposition is built on enhanced partnerships with various stakeholders, including the AU, AfDB and the RECs.

The Commission has undertaken several institutional reforms in the past, notably in 1991, 1993, 1996 and 2002, in part as a result of changes in the UN system and in Africa. The latest reform to reposition ECA is similarly compelled by present efforts to reform the UN system and the renewed international commitment to improving Africa’s development prospects. Indeed, the current set of UN reforms is closely linked to the outcome of the 2005 World Summit, which underscored the importance of meeting Africa’s special needs and the commitment of global leaders to Africa’s development needs. These efforts are anchored around Africa’s own vision articulated in NEPAD.

Africa’s Development Challenges

The maintenance of peace and security is one of Africa’s foremost challenges, as violent conflict remains a major obstacle to development in several parts of the continent. Apart from its human and material costs, conflict disrupts production, damages infrastructure and prevents effective
delivery of social services. In addition to the imperative of ensuring peace and security, several other challenges requiring special attention by Africa have been identified, as follows.

**Achieving the Millennium Development Goals.**
Africa is the region with the highest proportion of people living on less than one dollar a day and the only one in which poverty has risen in absolute and relative terms since 1980. The major challenge therefore is to reduce the high incidence of poverty in the continent, which is a key MDG. To achieve the MDGs, African countries need to build and pursue strategies to promote sustainable growth with equity.

**Integrating for Development.**
Regional integration is a long-standing strategy to overcome the limitations of Africa’s small and fragmented economies and also to give the continent a greater voice in the management of international economic processes. In spite of the emphasis placed by African leaders, and long-standing commitments, the process of regional integration has been slow and therefore remains a major challenge.

**Benefiting from Globalization.**
Globalization has wrought changes in the functioning of the international economic system and poses major challenges for African countries, which continue to be marginalized from its benefits. It is therefore important to articulate appropriate actions to respond to the process of globalization and its implications for African development.

**Strengthening Institutions and Capacity Development.**
African countries generally have weak institutional arrangements and face challenges relating to the creation of capable States, as well as the institutionalization and governance of the development process. The NEPAD framework recognizes the important role of institutions in the development process and the APRM is geared to enabling African countries to learn from the best practices of their peers and to obtain a candid assessment of their own performance.

**Climate Change and Development in Africa.**
This has emerged as one of the most daunting challenges for sustainable development in Africa. Although the continent contributes only a tiny percentage of total...
greenhouse gas emissions, its countries are among the most vulnerable to climate change in the world due to multiple stresses and low adaptive capacity. Its direct and indirect impacts threaten to reverse decades of development efforts and promising trends of increased economic growth experienced in the region over the past several years, including efforts to reach the MDGs. Responding to the challenge requires effective integration and implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies into regional and national development frameworks in Africa.

The African Union aims, among other things, to speed up the political and socio-economic integration of the continent, promote and defend African common positions and create the necessary conditions to enable the continent play its rightful role in the global economy. In addition, the main objectives of NEPAD are to reduce poverty; place African countries on the path of growth and sustainable development; halt the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process; ensure the continent’s full and beneficial integration into the global economy; and quicken the empowerment of women.

The dual role of ECA as a regional arm of the UN and as part of the regional institutional landscape in Africa endows it with unique comparative advantages that enable it to make special contributions to member States’ efforts to address these challenges. It is therefore important to align the mission of ECA with the priorities of NEPAD and the AU. In particular, ECA will focus on developing capacities and managing knowledge towards achieving regional integration and meeting Africa’s special needs.
ECA Repositioned: Two Pillars of a New Strategic Focus

Analysis of the challenges facing Africa and the comparative advantage of ECA in the landscape shows a need to refine the Commission’s programme priorities to avoid duplication, promote complementarities, eliminate inconsistencies and place the required emphasis on important sectors. In maintaining its analytical and knowledge-sharing capacity across the full range of development themes and sectors, and developing stronger partnership and more dynamic networking with core stakeholders, ECA must focus its “operations” on a limited set of sectors and themes where its competence and contribution are widely acknowledged.

Thus, in view of its mandate and the agenda of the AU, ECA is focusing on achieving results in two related areas of promoting regional integration and meeting Africa’s special needs and global challenges. These will strengthen the AU vision and priorities as well as the implementation of NEPAD.

(a) Support to the African Union Integration Vision and Priorities. The Commission’s focus in this regard is in line with African countries’ consistent affirmation of their desire for closer integration, a commitment boldly expressed in the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) and reiterated with the creation of the African Union. Accordingly, ECA is bringing its technical competencies and convening power fully to bear in support of this enduring continental objective. It is therefore poised to support the implementation of the AU regional integration agenda mainly through research and policy analysis on regional integration issues, strengthening the capacity of, and providing technical assistance to, institutions driving the regional integration agenda, including the RECs, and working on a range of cross-border activities and initiatives in sectors vital to the regional integration agenda.

(b) Meeting Africa’s Special Needs and Global Challenges in Support of NEPAD Implementation. Aware of Africa’s special needs, especially in meeting the MDGs and sustaining equitable growth, ECA is acting comprehensively to foster the implementation of NEPAD, including providing institutional support to the APRM process.
Programme Focus

The results-oriented stance of the Commission in this regard has made it to organize its capacity and staff work around programme clusters that will ensure synergies and facilitate a multi-disciplinary approach to service delivery. ECA is therefore pursuing its objectives through the following programme clusters:

**Food Security and Sustainable Development** - This combines agricultural production, food security and environment to enhance the synergies between agriculture and sustainable development. Particular attention is given to the issue of climate change by establishing an observatory for monitoring and developing programmes for mitigating the impact of climate change.

**Promoting the Advancement of Women and Social Development** - This cluster brings together issues relating to poverty reduction strategies; population and migration policies; health, including HIV/AIDS; education and other related social issues. It continues to cover issues relating to analysis of gender-disaggregated data, the indispensable role of women in socio-economic development, the projection of gender issues in ECA and the close relationship with social issues under the MDGs.

**Trade, Finance and Economic Policy** - This arrangement brings together in one cluster issues relating to macroeconomic analysis, including monitoring of macroeconomic trends and macro-micro linkages, along with international trade, international trade negotiations, development finance and financial sector policies, debt, aid, investment, and industrial policies. Here, the activities of ECA in the area of trade are matched with related issues of concern to the continent while ensuring full utilization of the complementarities and linkages between the various aspects of national economic policy.

**ICT and Science and Technology for Development** - This cluster is responsible for ICT policy, science and technology policy, science and technology production, geographic information systems, cartography and science-related activities including relations with African centres of excellence. It maintains the visible profile of ECA in the area of ICTs, an area of increasing importance to African countries.

**Governance and Public Administration** - Here the activities of ECA in the area of good governance, public administration, institutional development and the APRM are brought together and complemented with matters of, public finance, private sector and enterprise development, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction.
Economic Cooperation and Regional Integration - Regional integration and infrastructure are priority areas of NEPAD, which this cluster handles together with related issues, including institutional aspects of regional integration, transport, energy, mining, water, natural resources and intra-Africa trade with a view to effectively coordinating the Commission’s support to a very important sector for African countries.

Subregional Activities for Development - This cluster of work covers the subregional activities of the ECA currently undertaken through five SROs, each of which develops a specific cluster of activities to suit the specific needs of its subregion in accordance with multi-year programme agreements signed with the RECs.

Statistics and Statistical Capacity - The importance of statistics, amply underscored in various statistical fora, including those held under the auspices of ECA lies in the fact that good statistics, inter alia, provide a basis for good decision making, help governments to identify best courses of action in addressing problems, are essential to managing effective delivery of basic services, and are indispensable for accountability and transparency. The importance of statistics in the design, management, monitoring, and evaluation of national policy frameworks such as the Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs) and for monitoring progress towards internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs and as an enabling factor for development, is underpinned by the work of ECA through this cluster.

Knowledge Management and Sharing - The aspiration of ECA to lead and serve as a repository of knowledge on critical development issues in Africa relies on the Commission’s Knowledge Management Initiative, the systemic catalyst for the efficiency and effectiveness of all the other components of the ECA programme. Through effective Knowledge Management, ECA works to continuously improve performance and standards of service delivery and global outreach to positively shape the economic policies of member States and the achievement of MDGs in Africa.

Services

ECA delivers the above programmes through the following three types of services.

Knowledge Generation, Sharing and Networking - ECA generates and shares knowledge products internally and, increasingly, from other partners in and outside the
continent on critical development issues. Its successful experience with Poverty Reduction Strategies is built on to expand peer learning activities to other areas. While maintaining the publication of its flagship reports, ERA, AGR, ARIA, APRM, AWR and SDRA, other publications resulting from demand-driven studies, include policy papers and monographs on specific topics. The Commission continues to organize subregional workshops for experience sharing and dissemination.

**Advocacy and Building Consensus** - The Commission serves as a catalyst for African development activities through advocacy and building consensus among member States. Consensus building extends to the formulation of common positions on important global issues and thus to the moulding of Africa’s “voice” on such issues. Conferences and major meetings, including ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the African Development Forum and the Big Table, are the most successfully employed fora for dialog and consensus building.

**Advisory Services and Technical Cooperation** - ECA assists member States, RECs and other major regional and subregional organizations in developing capacities to design and implement development policies and through technical cooperation. The key modality for delivery of this service is the provision of demand-driven advisory services, workshops and seminars, including at the subregional level. An attempt to move closer to the client underlies the plan of ECA to deploy some of its regional advisers to the SROs.

**Strengthening ECA Subregional Presence: Enhanced Role of the SROs**

The above-mentioned deployment of regional advisers to the SROs is only one of the measures by ECA to develop a markedly stronger subregional presence by empowering the SROs to play an enhanced role in the delivery of its work programme. Thus the SROs:

*Lead in shaping ECA agenda and implementation at subregional level* - In playing a more direct role at the subregional level, they become the first port of call between Headquarters on the one hand and the RECs and Member States on the other. They also lead the delivery of operational activities and act as the implementing arm of ECA in the various subregions. In the new multidisciplinary approach to problem definition and solving, SROs thus
provide guidance to the strategic planning services of ECA, mobilize the Commission’s competencies for capacity building and concerted subregional responses to major international development agendas.

Promote and support specific subregional priorities and programmes - The SROs work closely with RECs to identify and promote subregional initiatives and programmes based on established priorities and build consensus around them. Each SRO therefore concentrates on the priority sectors for its subregion and will be provided with human and financial resources for tangible contribution in such areas.

Operate as subregional nodes for Knowledge Management and Networking. The re-positioning of ECA to properly manage and disseminate knowledge means that the SROs be similarly enabled to operate as nodes in the Knowledge Management and Networking activities, in the various subregions to capture, evaluate, synthesize, organize, distribute and apply knowledge to complement similar activities at Headquarters while promoting networks of experts and institutions.

Coordinate UN System activities for subregional integration - This will involve coordinating the programmes and activities of the UN agencies at the subregional level, thus bringing this perspective to the UNDG framework. It implies working closely with UNDP at the subregional level in a cooperation that will enhance joint programming of work at the subregional level and the possibility of a coordination framework at that level similar to CCA/UNDAF at the country level.

Modalities for SRO Programme Delivery

The modalities through which the SROs function are based on strong partnership and networking with other relevant actors. This requires positioning the SROs along the lines below, allowing them to be:

Acting as privileged partners of the RECs - As the first port of call for the RECs, the SROs will act as their privileged partners and will also be required to sign partnership agreements with multi-year programmes. This arrangement will be facilitated through the co-location of SROs with RECs and in the case of ECOWAS, ECCAS and SADC, a liaison officer will be posted to each one of them to ensure the desired close level of cooperation and collaboration. In addition, a liaison officer will be posted
to the APRM Secretariat to build on ECA’s existing support in this area.

Partnering AUC subregional offices and other subregional institutions - In furtherance of ECA partnership with the AUC and its comparative advantage as the UN agency best placed to play a vital role at the subregional level, the SROs will also be required to partner closely with the subregional offices of the AUC as well as other subregional agencies that contribute to meeting Africa’s regional integration objectives and its special needs.

Engaging Member States through UN Country Teams - UN Country Teams (UNCTs) provide an opportunity for SROs to engage at country programme level. The SROs are therefore required to focus on ensuring that integration issues feature in the different UNDAF processes and to work with UNCTs to build country capacities for effective participation in regional integration processes and programmes. SROs will also work with UNCTs for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) from a subregional perspective.

Participating in a Joint AU-AfDB-ECA Programme on Regional Integration - A joint AU-AfDB-ECA subregional prospectus on integration shall be prepared in cooperation with the RECs to enable donors to buy-in into such activities at the subregional level. SROs would be required to prepare ECA inputs into the prospectus.

Making Strategic Use of Regional Advisory Services - The use of ECA Regional Advisers will be realigned to increase the correlation between their services and the operational needs of the SROs. To this end, new guidelines governing the management of Regional Advisory Services will be drawn up to align the work of Regional Advisors with SRO-driven service delivery as well as improved programming and evaluation of their work.

Forming other Key Partnerships - As the first points of call for subregional and country requests for ECA support as well as the operational channels for the provision of required support from all ECA programmes, SROs shall build strong partnerships at country level with national focal points dealing with integration issues such as Ministries of Regional Integration in addition to the private sector, civil society organizations, as well as academic and research institutions.

Improving Communications and Outreach - SROs will be fully integrated into the comprehensive external communications strategy of ECA and will be provided the appropriate equipment for this purpose including through the upgrading of their ICT facilities and the
installation of V-SAT equipment, which provide effective links between the SROs and ECA headquarters.

Leveraging Through Partnerships

Building partnerships is an important part of the work of ECA because continental institutions and development partners working for Africa or in pursuit of its interests have to collaborate to harness required resources, ensure coherence and avoid duplication in their activities. This would entail an appreciation of the different roles that various partners can play and the potential complementarities with them. Engaging in active partnerships also enables ECA to focus on its comparative advantages, scale up its resources and derive maximum results from service delivery.

While the RECs are to be major clients of ECA, they are also partners in the sense that strong partnerships will be built around multi-year programmes in the proposed Partnership Agreements. In addition, however, ECA will work closely with other core partners including:

(a) Continental Organizations - AU and AfDB. ECA has longstanding close relationships with the AU and AfDB. Its partnership with the OAU/AU has involved close cooperation in the articulation of historic development strategies and the preparation of major regional initiatives. The Commission will therefore continue to focus on the implementation of the African agenda with the AU providing the political leadership while ECA leads the technical aspects. The main mechanism for partnership is the AU-ECA-AfDB Joint Secretariat, which is being resuscitated. ECA partnership with the AU will focus on consensus building and advocacy for Africa’s development, domains where the AU has high competencies.

ECA and AfDB have institutional arrangements to govern their cooperation and collaborative work including a Memorandum of Understanding that spells out the areas of mutual cooperation. Partnership with the AfDB is on implementing the African agenda bearing in mind the Bank’s principal role of funding development projects. Here too, the mechanism for partnership will also be the AU-ECA-AfDB Joint Secretariat. ECA’s partnership with AfDB will concentrate around resource mobilization, an area where AfDB has high competence.

(b) UNDP and Other United Nations Agencies. ECA’s work with UNDP and other UN agencies will enhance coordination
of UN activities in Africa, including the provision of technical assistance and advisory services at the national and subregional levels. As part of this process, ECA is aligning its activities with the UN family through the regional consultation mechanism chaired by its Executive Secretary and the conclusion of MOUs for joint delivery of services. Specifically, the SROs and the Subregional Facilities of UNDP are encouraged to establish mechanisms for working together at the subregional level and cooperate in the re-establishment of joint divisions with UN Specialized Agencies in key sectors. Partnership between ECA and other UN Agencies will continue to cut across a broad spectrum of identified services.

(iii) Bilateral Partners. Bilateral partners have supported ECA activities through funding, sharing experiences and joint delivery of services. Most of the current bilateral partners are members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) but strong economic performance in the Asian Tigers and countries like Brazil, China and India provides ECA with an opportunity to widen its base of bilateral partners. The mechanisms for cooperation with bilateral partners are MOUs or grant agreements as well as consultation mechanisms such as the Big Table and Partners Forums. These partners play an important role in resource mobilization, and ECA will continue to build its relationship with them in this regard.

(iv) Non-Governmental Actors. As part of its commitment to creating and managing knowledge in the continent, ECA will continue to partner with African universities and research institutions as well as civil society organizations working on development issues. These groups are natural partners well placed to complement the Commission’s two pillars of work, especially as regards capacity development and knowledge management. Partnerships with non-governmental actors will revolve around policy analysis, consensus building and advocacy, areas in which such organizations are strong.
Expected Results and Outcomes

The decision to strategically focus the work of ECA on the two specified pillars is expected to result in the following, among others:

**Progress towards Achieving the MDGs** - The rationale for the MDGs is development with equity, requiring poverty eradication and the promotion of gender equity. These are key objectives of national development strategies and ECA is helping to achieve these goals by, among other things, becoming a repository of knowledge in this area for the region, assisting its member States to develop performance indicators and statistics for MDG planning, tracking, and building capacity through strengthened statistics departments and training activities.

**Increased Regional Integration** - The successful integration of Africa requires strengthened institutions and centres of excellence, harmonization and convergence of policies, increased intra-regional trade, development of sustainable infrastructure links and regional public action. ECA is contributing in this regard by helping to build the capacities of RECs and the existing Centres of Excellence in research and training on the continent. It is also supporting the coordination of regional policies to promote coherence through knowledge activities, advocacy, consensus building, advisory services and technical cooperation. The Commission is measuring progress towards increased intra-African trade through concrete activities to support the implementation of trade agreements and trade facilitation programmes. Similarly, ECA continues to make a tangible contribution in the area of infrastructure by reviewing existing feasibility and sector studies in transport, energy, water resources, natural resources and ICT for implementation and sponsorship of regional integration projects. Furthermore, since peace and security, migration, environment, and health issues cut across national boundaries and require collective regional action, ECA is undertaking economic impact assessments of these issues and developing policy options and programmes for the benefit of its Member States.

**Development of Priority Productive Sectors Including Greater Value-addition** - While some African countries have made progress in increasing the processing of their commodities, many others have been less successful in adding value to key agricultural products and natural resources in the extractive industries. ECA is working to identify key priority sectors for African countries and helping to develop an integrated programme of support.
for the development of the sector in the subregion through research and advisory services.

**Development of ICT and Participation in the Knowledge Economy** - Information and Communications Technologies play a central role in the global economy, improving processes, reducing costs and speeding up transactions. They simultaneously contribute to the knowledge economy as platforms for learning, networking and processing of information. Africa lags behind other regions both in ICT use and ICT policy frameworks. ECA therefore continues to articulate legal and regulatory frameworks and capacity building in the use of ICT in various areas, including trade, education, and natural resource databases.

**Stronger Institutions, Strengthened and Networked Centres of Excellence** - Aware of the importance of institution building, ECA is working to establish new institutions in response to emerging needs and to strengthen existing ones, especially the Centres of Excellence in various areas of science and technology, which ECA was closely involved in establishing across the continent. These are to be supported with ideas and resources to sharpen their focus, widen their reach and enhance their effectiveness in generating knowledge and delivering services.

**Improved Macroeconomic Policies and Economic Governance** - African countries are vulnerable to external shocks from the rest of the world as well as rising oil prices, declining aid flows, and sharply declining commodity prices, which have deleterious impact on the balance of payments as well as fiscal revenues. These challenges require appropriate macroeconomic policies and improved economic governance in both the public and private sector. In this regard, ECA continues to support mutual accountability, providing advice, advocating policy options, and building capacity for research, economic forecasting and policy analysis in member States.

**Increased Integration into the Global Economy** - The world economy is characterized by an increasing value of trade and financial flows facilitated mostly by improved scientific processes and technological links. Africa is regarded as being marginalized from these flows and processes ECA support to African countries in this regard will help them to gain better outcomes from globalization, including improved access to markets, scientific knowledge and ICT. The Commission is helping to build trade-related capacity in the continent in addition to assisting member States to develop strategies and policies for science and technology development as well as articulation of ICT policies, all of which are geared to increasing the participation of member States in the knowledge economy.
Improved Statistical Capacity of Member States - Many African countries do not have strong statistical systems and therefore lack the data needed for planning and tracking of economic development. ECA is, therefore, assisting African countries in improving their statistical databases and statistical capacity at various levels. This is expected to enhance planning for MDG achievement and for monitoring progress in this regard.

Cross-cutting Outcomes - ECA continues to support the achievement of cross-cutting outcomes and results throughout its work programme, especially in promoting more gender-sensitive structures, improved governance, appreciable post conflict development, and more human rights-based approach to development.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AACB</td>
<td>Association of African Central Banks</td>
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<tr>
<td>AAF-SAP</td>
<td>African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes</td>
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<td>AAPA</td>
<td>Addis-Ababa Plan of Action for Statistical Development in Africa</td>
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<td>AATA</td>
<td>Association of African Tax Administration</td>
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<td>AATPO</td>
<td>Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACARTSOD</td>
<td>African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development</td>
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<td>ACBF</td>
<td>African Capacity Building Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACCS</td>
<td>African Centre for Civil Society</td>
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<td>ACGD</td>
<td>African Centre for Gender and Development</td>
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<td>ACGSD</td>
<td>African Centre for Gender and Social Development</td>
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<td>ACM</td>
<td>African Common Market</td>
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<td>ACMAD</td>
<td>African Centre for Meteorological Applications for Development African</td>
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<td>ACMS</td>
<td>Centre for Monetary Studies</td>
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<td>ACPC</td>
<td>African Climate Policy Centre</td>
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<td>ACS</td>
<td>African Centre for Statistics</td>
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<td>ACW</td>
<td>African Centre for Women</td>
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<td>ADF</td>
<td>African Development Forum</td>
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<td>AEC</td>
<td>African Economic Community</td>
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<td>AEO</td>
<td>African Environment Outlook</td>
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<td>AFCAC</td>
<td>African Civil Aviation Commission</td>
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<td>ADB</td>
<td>African Development Bank</td>
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<td>AFPLAN</td>
<td>Regional Food Plan for Africa</td>
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<td>AFRAA</td>
<td>African Airlines Association</td>
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<td>AFREF</td>
<td>African Reference Framework</td>
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<td>AGDI</td>
<td>African Gender and Development Index</td>
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<td>AGF</td>
<td>African Governance Forum</td>
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<td>AGR</td>
<td>African Governance Report</td>
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<td>AHSCP</td>
<td>African Household Survey Capability Programme</td>
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<td>AIHTTR</td>
<td>African Institute for Higher Technical Training and Research</td>
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<td>AISI</td>
<td>African Information Society Initiative</td>
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<td>AMCEN</td>
<td>African Ministerial Conference on the Environment</td>
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<td>AMCOST</td>
<td>Conference of African Ministers for Science and Technology</td>
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<td>AMCO</td>
<td>African Ministers’ Council on Water</td>
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<td>AOORS</td>
<td>African Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing</td>
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<td>APPER</td>
<td>Africa’s Priority Programme for Economic Recovery</td>
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<td>APRM</td>
<td>African Peer Review Mechanism</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOSOC</td>
<td>Economic and Social Council</td>
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<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>ERA</td>
<td>Economic Report on Africa</td>
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<td>ES</td>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
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<td>ESAMI</td>
<td>Eastern and Southern Africa Management Institute</td>
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<td>ESAMRDC</td>
<td>Eastern and Southern Mineral Resources Development Centre</td>
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<td>ET</td>
<td>Ethiopian Airlines</td>
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<td>FACC</td>
<td>Federation of African Chambers of Commerce</td>
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<td>FAL</td>
<td>Final Act of Lagos</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agricultural organization of the United Nations</td>
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<td>FASDEV</td>
<td>Forum on African Statistical Development</td>
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<td>FAWE</td>
<td>Federation of African Women Entrepreneurs</td>
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<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<td>FLS</td>
<td>Forward-Looking Strategies</td>
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<td>FTA</td>
<td>Free Trade Area</td>
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<td>GATT</td>
<td>General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade</td>
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<td>GCOS</td>
<td>Global Climate Observing System</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GEATM</td>
<td>Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria</td>
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<td>GNI</td>
<td>Gross National Income</td>
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<td>GPAD</td>
<td>Governance and Public Administration Division</td>
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<td>GTAP</td>
<td>Global Trade Analysis Project</td>
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<td>HIPC</td>
<td>Highly Indebted Poor Countries</td>
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<td>HSGIC</td>
<td>Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee</td>
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<td>IACC</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee</td>
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<td>ICE</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Committee of Experts</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communications Technology</td>
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<td>IDA</td>
<td>International Development Assistance</td>
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<td>IDDA</td>
<td>Industrial Development Decade for Africa</td>
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<td>IDEP</td>
<td>African Institute for Economic Development and Planning</td>
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<td>IFI</td>
<td>International financial institution</td>
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<td>IGAD</td>
<td>Inter Governmental Authority on Development</td>
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<td>IGO</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Organization</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>IPC</td>
<td>International Programs Centre</td>
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<td>ITC</td>
<td>International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation</td>
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<td>ITCA</td>
<td>Information Technology Centre for Africa</td>
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<td>ITU</td>
<td>International Telecommunications Union</td>
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<td>JEFAD</td>
<td>Joint ECA/FAO Agriculture Division</td>
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<td>JIU</td>
<td>United Nations Joint Inspection Unit</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>KQ</td>
<td>Kenya Airways</td>
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<td>LPA</td>
<td>Lagos Plan of Action</td>
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<td>MAP</td>
<td>Millennium Partnership for African Recovery Programme</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>United Nations Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of understanding</td>
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<td>MRCOSUR</td>
<td>South American Common Market</td>
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<td>MTNS</td>
<td>Multinational trade negotiations</td>
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<td>MULPOC</td>
<td>Multinational Programming and Operational Centre</td>
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<td>NAFTA</td>
<td>North American Free Trade Agreement</td>
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<td>NAI</td>
<td>New African Initiative</td>
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<td>NASA</td>
<td>National Aeronautics and Space Administration</td>
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<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for Africa's Development</td>
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<td>NHSCP</td>
<td>United Nations National Household Survey Capability Programme</td>
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<td>NICI</td>
<td>National Information and Communication Infrastructure</td>
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<td>NSO</td>
<td>National Statistical Office</td>
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<td>OATUU</td>
<td>Organization of African Trade Union Unity</td>
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<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organization of African Unity</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODA</td>
<td>Official Development Assistance</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSAGI</td>
<td>Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAC</td>
<td>Pan-African Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>PADIS</td>
<td>Pan African Development Information System</td>
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<td>PALOP</td>
<td>Portuguese-speaking African Countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>PANA</td>
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<td>Pan African Postal Union</td>
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<td>PATU</td>
<td>Pan African Telecommunications Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHC</td>
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<td>PICTA</td>
<td>Partnership on Information and Communication Technologies for Africa</td>
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<td>PMAESA</td>
<td>Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa</td>
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<td>PMANA</td>
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<td>African Learning Group</td>
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<td>PTA</td>
<td>Preferential Trade Area of East and Southern Africa</td>
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<td>RASCOM</td>
<td>Regional African Satellite Communication Organization Regional Centre for</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCSSMRS</td>
<td>Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing</td>
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<td>River Basin Organization</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCM</td>
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<td>RCMRD</td>
<td>Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development</td>
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<td>RECS</td>
<td>Regional Economic Communities</td>
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<td>RECTAS</td>
<td>Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys</td>
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<td>RRSF</td>
<td>Reference Regional Strategic Framework</td>
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<td>SACU</td>
<td>Southern African Customs Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>Structural Adjustment Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDRA</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Report on Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEAMIC</td>
<td>Southern and Eastern African Mineral Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Small- and medium-scale enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNA</td>
<td>System of National Accounts</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRDC</td>
<td>Subregional Development Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRO</td>
<td>ECA Subregional Office</td>
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<td>SRO-CA</td>
<td>Subregional Office for Central Africa</td>
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<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
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<td>SSATP</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan African Transport Policy Programme</td>
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<td>Statbase</td>
<td>Regional statistical database</td>
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<td>StCom-Africa</td>
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<td>STPA</td>
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<td>TAFWE</td>
<td>Task Force on Women in ECA</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAH</td>
<td>Trans-African Highway</td>
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<tr>
<td>TICAD</td>
<td>Tokyo International Conference on African Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAR</td>
<td>Union of African Railways</td>
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<tr>
<td>UEMOA</td>
<td>West African Economic and Monetary Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN-SIA</td>
<td>UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa</td>
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<td>UNAIDS</td>
<td>Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCC</td>
<td>United Nations Conference Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCN</td>
<td>United Nations Council for Namibia</td>
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<td>UNCT</td>
<td>United Nations Centre for Transnational Corporations</td>
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<td>UN General Assembly</td>
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<td>United Nations General Assembly Special Session</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children's Fund</td>
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<td>UNIN</td>
<td>United Nations Institute for Namibia</td>
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<td>UN-NADAF</td>
<td>United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s</td>
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<td>UNPAAERD</td>
<td>United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development</td>
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<td>UNU/WIDER</td>
<td>World Institute for Development Economics Research of the United Nations University</td>
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<td>UPU</td>
<td>Universal Postal Union</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>USGS</td>
<td>United States Geological Surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>V-SAT</td>
<td>Very Small Aperture Terminal</td>
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<td>West African Clearing House</td>
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