What are the main drivers of the reforms and restructuring in the ECA?

The main drivers of this reform are –

- The need to improve the alignment of roles and responsibilities to our deliverables;
- The need to improve alignment with the continental agenda of economic integration;
- The need to work towards greater visibility, communication, accountability, transparency, and consistency in the application of rules within the ECA;
- The Global UN Reform championed by the Secretary-General, re-emphasizing the role of the five Economic Commissions as premier think tanks.

What are the three core functions of the Regional Economic Commissions defined under the UN reform?

Regional Economic Commissions will have three core functions defined under the UN reform, namely:

- **Convening function** - providing dedicated regional intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder platforms for development discussions.
- **Think-tank function** - conducting multisectoral research and analysis that nurture the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development, and promote peer learning, innovative thinking and the advocacy of public policies while fostering intersectoral linkages and synergies;
- **Operational function** - provision of policy advice at the country level through direct demand-based support to member States in areas related to its normative and analytical work and in collaboration with the United Nations system at the country level.
What are the ECA’s new strategic directions?

The Commission’s five new strategic directions are:

- Advancing ECA’s position as a premier knowledge institution by strengthening the knowledge profile of staff
- Developing macroeconomic and structural policy options to accelerate economic diversification and job creation
- Designing and implementing innovative financing models for infrastructure, human, physical and social assets for a transforming Africa
- Contributing solutions to regional and transboundary challenges, with a focus on peace security and social inclusion as an important development nexus
- Advocating Africa’s position at the global level and developing regional responses as a contribution to global governance issues

What are the key highlights of this reform on the programmatic side?

Working with countries to help achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the overarching objective of ECA. We plan to move beyond merely focusing on the public sector, but aim to actively adopt, as part of our working modalities and efforts, ideas and actions designed to deepen and grow the African private sector - by harnessing the private sector as the engine for driving production and productivity growth, and as a provider of alternative means of financing development.

ECA will deepen its collaboration with the private sector in support of policies that foster a stronger private sector participation and governance of African economies. The Commission’s work will emphasize governance reforms to support inclusive growth - including focusing on conflict and post-conflict countries with the aim of building their resilience and thereby preventing further crises. A renewed emphasis on issues of poverty and inequality will also guide the Commission’s work to ensure, as enshrined in the 2030 Agenda, that no one is left behind.

ECA’s programme of work will be organized around 8 divisions and 9 interdependent and complementary subprogrammes:

- **Macroeconomics and governance** - Supporting African member States in their efforts to accelerate economic transformation and inclusive development, the subprogramme will be broadened to address economic governance matters;
- **Regional integration and trade** - Focusing on the central role of achieving effective regional cooperation and integration among member States by supporting efforts to deepen regional markets, boost intra-African trade, accelerate industrialization and tackle the challenges of structural transformation;
- **Private sector development and finance** - Supporting member States to achieve sustained economic growth and transformation with an emphasis on increasing private sector investment in agriculture, infrastructure, energy and services, promoting innovative
financing for developing capital markets, attracting investment and improving the business-enabling environment;

- *Data and statistics* - Improving the production, dissemination and use of quality and comparable data and statistics in Africa to support evidence-based policymaking, planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting under the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063;

- *Climate change, environment and natural resource management* - Supporting efficient management of the continent’s natural resources; reducing the negative impacts of climate change by moving towards green transitions, climate-resilient development; and harnessing new technologies for sustainable development;

- *Subregional activities for development* - Delivered through the five Subregional Offices of ECA whose selected thematic areas of specialization will equip them to tackle more effectively the development challenges faced by member States in their respective subregions;

- *Economic development and planning* - Strengthened to improve public sector management and development planning in support of the structural transformation of member States;

- *Poverty, inequality and social policy* - Sharpened focus to contribute towards achieving inclusive and equitable sustainable human and social development in Africa;

- *Gender and women in development* - Addressing emerging issues that have impacts on African women and girls and promoting and supporting member States in their work to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment.

The capacity development work of the Commission will be mainstreamed as a core function across all subprogrammes, delivering knowledge through policy dialogue, advisory services and technical assistance.

**Snapshot of programme-related changes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Existing Subprogramme</th>
<th>Revised Subprogramme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Macroeconomic policy</td>
<td>Macroeconomics and governance</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Regional integration and trade</td>
<td>Regional integration and trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Innovations, technologies and management of Africa’s natural resources</td>
<td>Private sector development and finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Statistics</td>
<td>Data and statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Capacity development</td>
<td>Climate change, environment and natural resource management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Gender and women in development</td>
<td>Gender equality and women’s empowerment</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Subregional activities for development</td>
<td>Subregional activities for development</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Development planning and administration</td>
<td>Economic development and planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Social development policy</td>
<td>Poverty, gender and social policy</td>
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Areas of Specialization of the Subregional Offices (SROs)

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<tr>
<th>SRO</th>
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<td>Employment Skills and Balanced Development</td>
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<td>SRO-SA, Lusaka</td>
<td>Inclusive Industrialization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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What are the broad principles that were applied while undertaking ECA organizational restructuring to ensure its agility, responsiveness and that it is fit for purpose?

In line with the revised strategic priorities, and to enable an organizational structure premised on efficiency and effectiveness, the SMT articulated the following principles for restructuring of organizational units:

- Substantive Divisions were to be organized into 3 Sections, with an RB (Section 18) post distribution principle of 3 P5, 4 P4 and 5 P3 posts, while retaining the number of P2 posts as per their original deployment;
- SROs were to comprise two Sections, with an RB (Section 18) post distribution principle of 3 P5, 4 P4 and 5 P3 posts, while retaining the number of P2 posts as per their original deployment;
- OES and the Programme Support Divisions (PCKMD and the Division of Administration (DoA)) were excluded from the post distribution principles listed above because of their existing configurations defined by large spans of control;
- From an organizational effectiveness and efficiency perspective and to cater to the requirements of the programmatic changes, certain organizational units were to be remapped in line with adjacencies and synergies.

The principles were articulated to enable consistency in the way the Divisions are resourced, while providing a critical mass of staff complement for each Division.

Which organizational units were remapped and to where, as an outcome of the restructuring principles articulated by ECA’s SMT?

The revised structure consists of a “Programme” vertical to be headed by the DES (Programme) comprising all substantive Divisions, the SROs and IDEP; and the “Programme Support” vertical to be headed by the DES (Programme Support) comprising DoA and the reconstituted Publications, Conference and Knowledge Management Division (PCKMD). The Executive Direction and Management (EDM) vertical including the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) will consist of the reconstituted Strategic Planning, Oversight and Results Division (SPORD) in addition to Partnerships and Resources Mobilization Section (presently with SPPOQD) and Communications and Media Relations Section (presently with PIKMD).
• CDD as a Division has been abolished with the view that capacity development work of the Commission will be mainstreamed as a core function across all subprogrammes, delivering knowledge through policy dialogue, advisory services and technical assistance.

• To ensure that ECA had full oversight and management of centres and contributes technically to the work of the centres, the existing centres will be moved into Divisions.

• Work of the African Centre for Gender (ACG) will be integrated into the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section of the newly constituted Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division (GPSPD).

• Work of the Land Policy Initiative (LPI)/African Land Policy Centre (ALPC) will be integrated into the newly constituted Private Sector Development and Finance Division (PSDFD) under the Agriculture and Business Enabling Environment Section.

• Work of ACPC and AMDC will be integrated into the Climate Change Section and the Natural Resource Management Section, respectively, of the newly constituted Climate Change, Environment and Natural Resource Management Division (CEND).

• The Conference Management Section (CMS) in DoA will move to the newly constituted PCKMD to enable greater synergy between the publications, language, knowledge management and conferencing functions.

• The Budget Unit of the Programme Planning and Budgeting Section (PPBS) in SPPOQD will move to the reconstituted Finance and Budget Section of DoA to enable greater coordination and synergy.

What were the critical HR matters that the SMT reviewed in the context of the ECA Reform?

In addition to the review of strategy and structure, the critical HR issues that the SMT reviewed in the context of the ECA reform were:

• **Review of cases of staff with permanent/continuing appointments encumbering Extrabudgetary or Outside Headquarters (XB/OH) posts** - The SMT reviewed around 44 such cases, including 13 in the “P and above” category; 4 in the “National Officer (NO)” category and 25 in the “General Services (GS) and related” category, including staff members who could be potentially impacted due to the Global Services Delivery Model (GSDM)-related post abolition. Staff members with permanent and continuing appointments encumbering XB/OH posts will be reassigned to identified RB posts. The objective is to ensure that such staff members were provided established posts and any rightsizing of the extra budgetary projects would not impact their acquired rights in addition to providing stability of funding for this category of staff, especially when they are performing core functions.

• **Review of Special Post Allowance (SPA) cases** - The SMT reviewed around 14 cases in receipt of Special Post Allowance (SPA). Used judiciously, it could be a tool to recognize and to provide growth opportunities for talent within the organization, for short periods of time. Used indiscriminately, it could end up becoming a substitute for actual recruitment
against critical posts. The SMT advised actions for each case, including recruitment through JOs and reverting staff back to their original functions and posts. The SMT further advised that appropriate communication be issued to all staff members to educate them about the rules that governed the granting of SPA.

- **Review of Special Leave Without Pay (SLWOP) cases** - The SMT also reviewed the case of all staff members who were on Special Leave Without Pay (SLWOP). The purpose was to ensure that all such leave had been granted in line with the Staff Regulations and Rules and conformed to the administrative issuances currently in place. The SMT further advised that appropriate communications be issued to all staff members to educate them about the rules that governed the granting of SLWOP.

- **Staff Skill Mapping and Talent Review exercise** - The Talent Review was designed to provide an additional input to the restructuring process in terms of knowing what skill sets resided within the organization and how they could be gainfully deployed for various subprogrammes. The benefit of this review by the SMT was that the staff skill sets, relevance to the organization, potential, and so on were discussed in the presence of all Directors and was not the output of one Director or supervisor alone, but several Directors who had worked with the staff member in the past. Directors provided inputs regarding the quality of performance and career aspects of the staff members using the e-PAS, educational qualifications and work experience as the basis for the discussion.

There was a perception that in addition to the mandated e-PAS system, other frameworks had been used to undertake the staff skill and talent review and that could potentially impact staffs’ careers.

The discussion at the SMT is a discussion all senior level management in any organization should have - which is a stocktaking of the qualifications and capabilities of staff as well as their career plans and paths. As an organization, we should manage our main resource, which is our staff, in a way that is optimal for the institution. We cannot do that if we do not have a comprehensive picture of the complement and their related expertise. As the new ES, the exercise also allowed me to understand the stock of staff at the ECA and how best to build a team.

What was the outcome of the reform in terms of the review of functioning of the XB-funded Centres?

As part of the comprehensive organization review, the SMT also reviewed the structure and functioning of the XB-funded Centres. This was done in the context of the severe XB-funding constraints that have emerged over the past few months.

- Staff have been informed about the impact of the lack of funding on their employment contracts, including the fact that, in accordance with Staff Rule 9.4, fixed-term appointments expire automatically and without any prior notice on the expiration date.
specified in the letter of appointment and do not carry any expectancy, legal or otherwise, of renewal or conversion, irrespective of the length of service pursuant.

- A notice of separation is required under Staff Rules for termination of appointment (30 days for staff with fixed term appointments and 15 days for staff with temporary appointments). However, although separation upon expiration of appointment is not counted within the definition of termination, staff members encumbering posts that do not have continued funding have been provided notices of separation three months ahead of the date of the expiration of their appointments.

- Staff encumbering XB posts whose contracts are being extended based on XB resources are now informed of the consequences of the nature of their contracts to enable them to manage proactively their professional aspirations and personal obligations and to enable ECA management to abide by the Staff Rules.

- Wherever possible, the structures of the XB-funded Centres have been rationalized in line with the available funding. In doing so, staff members with temporary appointments encumbering XB posts that had run out of funding were separated at the end of their current appointment. Staff members on secondment from other United Nations entities, and who were encumbering XB posts that had run out of funding, were reverted to their parent entity at the end of their current appointment.

- International staff members with fixed term temporary appointments, encumbering OH posts that did not have continued funding, were also issued three months’ notice and separated at the end of their current appointment. This enabled the organization to redirect the available resources towards sustaining the contracts of local staff members (in the NO and GS levels) encumbering OH posts.

- Programme Managers of the Centres have been directed to intensify efforts along with the Partnerships and Resource Mobilization team to mobilize funds for the Centres. I have personally led delegation-level talks with donors and international agencies. Programme Managers of these Centres have been advised to work towards ensuring that staff contracts are extended for at least one year as against a piecemeal approach of extensions for a few months.

- The Human Resources team and I have met with impacted staff members along with the Programme Managers, individually and in groups, to explain the background of the rationalization and the challenges of post funding.

It is understood that the present exercise is aimed at nursing the Centres back to health by rationalizing their structures, redistributing scarce post resources to provide longer contracts to staff members as against spreading the resources thinly, while ensuring that the expected achievements are delivered. These are supplemented by a proactive resource mobilization drive.
When do the revised ECA structure and reporting relationships come into effect? How will we manage the change process?

ECOSOC has, during its July 2018 session, reviewed and endorsed the new ECA Strategic Framework. The revised framework and the programme planning and budget will be submitted to the Fifth Committee and the General Assembly for review and approval during the fall session. The revised structure will come into effect on 1 January 2019.

- As part of the change management process, I have shared communications regarding the high-level structure of ECA and about the “ECA Reforms” with staff members through multiple Town Hall Meetings, starting with the one on 17 April 2018.

- I have also held special meetings with Professional staff members across levels addressing their concerns and queries regarding the change process and the ECA reforms. Additionally, I have also kept a continuous communication channel with the Staff Union leadership about various aspects of the ECA reform, culminating with the formal Joint Negotiation Committee (JNC) meeting on 10 July 2018.

- Division Directors have organized communication meetings with their staff to brief them about the impending changes to the structure and work outputs. Once the organizational structure and resourcing is approved, a standardized communication package would be rolled out for the leadership to engage with their respective teams.

- Lateral movements of staff members will be undertaken after a review of their professional experience and a match of their skill sets in line with the requirements of the revised strategic framework and programme-related changes. Such lateral transfers would be undertaken in consultation with the staff members’ current and future managers.

- Since August 2018, recruitment of “P and above” positions have been on hold in preparation for the ECA reform. In line with the broad principles of restructuring for this ECA reform, some vacant posts have been reassigned across subprogrammes – necessitating a reformulation of the terms of reference of the position and possible reclassification. The process of recruitment has been restarted in stages. For vacant posts that need to be advertised, where there are no substantial changes to the functions of the position relative to the classified position/GJP, the process will be commenced immediately.

- In the interim, pending approval and implementation of the revised organization structure and reporting relationships, staff members complete their Work Plans for the performance cycle 2018-2019 with their current managers, up until the new structure comes into effect, that is, 1 January 2019. In a few cases, exceptional arrangements will be advised. Reassignment letters or memos informing movements to new functions or duty stations will be issued where applicable.