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[Home](#) > ECA launches much-awaited Country Profiles amid plaudits from member states

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Addis Ababa, 3 April 2016 (ECA) - The UN Economic Commission for Africa on Sunday launched comprehensive and analytical profiles of 20 African countries in its bid to help the continent's leaders in their planning and policy formulation processes.

Speaking at the launch, ECA Deputy Executive Secretary Ms. Giovane Biha said the country profiles would provide periodic economic and social assessments of ECA member States, with a view to making relevant and strategic recommendations to governments and regional organisations on structural transformation.

Ms. Biha told delegates at the launch that in the long run, country profiles would be used as a tool through which the ECA will monitor the pace of structural transformation on the continent.

The ECA country profiles highlight the importance of accelerated structural change, focusing on the need to shift resources out of the traditional agricultural sector into higher value-added activities in manufacturing and services, among others.

The initial profiles launched are for Botswana, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Guinea, Lesotho, Kenya, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, São Tomé, Senegal, Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Ms. Biha presented a comparative analysis of the 20 countries that was produced in 2016, saying that in 2017, the country profile exercise would be scaled-up to cover the entire continent.

She noted that 14 out of 20 countries assessed during the exercise to come up with the country profiles recorded real GDP rate in excess of African the average of 3,9%.

"Cote d'Ivoire was the fastest growing economy in 2014 with real GDP growth of 8.5 percent. Rwanda and Tanzania registered the second highest real GDP growth rate of 7%," said Ms. Biha.

The launch attracted more than 100 experts and African economists, including some African ambassadors accredited to Ethiopia.

Experts praised the ECA for producing the country profiles which they said are critical to boosting transformation on the continent.

"These profiles are going to help our governments in a big way", said Susan Sikaneta, ambassador of Zambia to Ethiopia, adding that the country profiles will also assist African

countries to own their data and consequently effectively plan on how to move together as a continent in terms of development.

The ECA strongly believes that the country profiles would help the continent to take more control of its own developmental narrative, placing Africa in a better position to make evidence-based policy decisions that address many issues that continue to plague Africa like poverty and unemployment.

The ECA will update the country profiles on a quarterly basis, working with national statistical agencies and think tank organisations as well as other institutions and leaders on the continent in their bid to help transform the African economy.

Click [here](#) [1] to access the Country Profiles

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