This is the sixth edition of the “Questions & Answers with the Executive Secretary” series about issues that concern and impact the organization and staff. In this edition the ES speaks about ECA’ staff engagement programme and how it is designed to positively impact organizational climate and enhance organizational effectiveness.

1. Hello ES and welcome to the sixth edition of the “Q&A with the ES” series. The first UN Secretariat-wide Staff Engagement Survey was conducted in December 2017. Could you take us through the concept of staff engagement, and its importance specifically in the ECA context?

ES: First I want to wish everyone a Happy Ethiopian New Year. Let me begin by speaking about the concept of staff engagement itself - Staff engagement has generally been explained as “a workplace approach that results in the right conditions for all members of an organization to give off their best each day, commit to their organization’s goals and values and be motivated to contribute to organizational success with an enhanced sense of their own well-being.”

It is important to realize that staff engagement is based on trust, integrity, two-way commitment and communication between an organization and its members. It is an approach that increases the chances of business success, contributing to organizational and individual performance, productivity and well-being. It can be measured, and it can vary from poor to great. It can also be nurtured and dramatically increased; equally, it can be diminished and lost.

ECA has a rich legacy of positively impacting the socio-economic landscape of Africa through advocacy, policy research and capacity-building. Our staff take justifiable pride in their contribution to this cause and are proud members of the global UN community. It is important that we continue to build on that shared sense of purpose by engaging with staff at all levels – through extensive organisation-wide communication, cross-organisational team work. We must also celebrate the success of individuals and teams towards the achievement of our mandate and address staff concerns on issues that impact them. I have been trying, through the townhalls, unit meetings and other interactions to do this. But there is still more to do.
2. **ES how was the staff Engagement Survey administered across the Secretariat and how is it expected to be carried forward?**

**ES:** The staff engagement survey evaluates the way the organizational practices, structures, policies and operations influence the key drivers of engagement and serves to identify best practices and areas where there is room for development. In December 2017, the first global United Nations Staff Engagement Survey was conducted, and UN staff members had the opportunity to express their opinions regarding engagement and other pivotal areas that affect their work such as trust, communication, performance management, accountability and innovation. The survey provided an important opportunity for staff to have a say about their workplace and measured the engagement levels of staff.

The survey was conducted by Gartner, an independent consulting firm engaged by the UN Secretariat. All answers to the survey were confidential, and the survey was available to staff in both English and French. Over 14,662 staff members of the 37,801 invited, representing 39 per cent of the staff population, participated in this exercise, offering valuable feedback on the challenges the UN Secretariat faces in the workplace.

The survey results and analysis provide valuable insights on staff engagement and the opportunities for improvement. The results were a key input for the action planning process to create and sustain a working environment that promotes strong staff engagement and high performance while making the UN a more flexible, adaptable and dynamic organization. It is part of an ongoing process of improvement and will be conducted approximately every two years. Therefore, the 2017 survey will serve as a benchmark for future survey results. The next survey is expected to be conducted in December 2019.

3. **What was the model of staff engagement used in the first survey? Is it expected to be the same in the second survey?**

**ES:** The model was simple. The Staff Engagement Survey is based on Gartner’s model. The Survey contained 49 close-ended questions and 3 open-ended questions. The items were organized into the following 14 categories:

- **3 Universal measures critical for the success of all organizations:**
  - Engagement – measuring staff pride, energy and optimism about the organization;
  - Alignment – measuring the connection between staff work and goals with those of the organization;
  - Agility – measuring the UN’s ability to anticipate, respond to and equip staff to influence change.

- **2 Critical workforce capabilities needed to execute on the UN’s strategic priorities:**
  - Continuous Improvement – measuring the UN’s ongoing effort to improve products, services or processes. Improvements can be either incremental or breakthroughs, where improvements radically alter the way we work;
Gender & Diversity – measuring the UN’s commitment to equality and supporting and empowering staff.


The survey also provided for open-ended questions, which allowed staff to provide comments across the 14 categories. The responses to these open-ended questions were made available to the Heads of Offices and Departments. The results of the survey were tabulated at the UN entity-level.

The next survey is expected to be along similar lines, though there may be some improvements or variations based on the lessons learnt from the first survey. We hope to improve our scores in the various areas that form part of the survey.

4. **Were you happy with the overall staff participation in the first Staff Engagement Survey?**

**ES:** The participation in the first survey could certainly have been better. If you recollect, 41% (288) of ECA staff members participated in the survey. Of the total 288 staff who participated, 60% were male and 40% were women. This represents another area that needs to be worked on, in terms of encouraging our female colleagues to participate in the survey.

55% of the respondents were in the “GS & related” categories with 45% from the “P & Above” categories.

The Staff Engagement Survey is voluntary and the participation levels are in some way indicative of the prevailing sentiment within the organisation and reflective of the staff members’ optimism in the process of change. Subsequent participation also depends on staff members’ perceptions about how the first survey results translated into concrete actions. We hope to get more participation in the next survey.

5. **You have extensively communicated the findings of the survey at the various town hall meetings. What were the key findings at that time?**

**ES:** As I said earlier, the survey results were insightful and were a powerful gauge of staff sentiment at the point when it was administered. It helped guide my decisions on how to strengthen our community.

Out of the 14 categories, ECA drew a ‘favourable’ response rate of **less than 50% for 8 categories.** These included Retention; Brand Excellence; Growth & Development; Empowerment; Work/ Life Balance; Business Transformation; Innovation; and Agility.

ECA drew a ‘favourable’ response rate of **greater than 50% for the remaining 6 categories** which included Gender & Diversity; Alignment; Engagement; Performance Management; Trust & Integrity; Ethical Behaviour; and Continuous Improvement.
The ECA scores were mapped against the responses of the UN System and the Public Sector Norm. The design of the survey incorporated questions to allow analytic comparisons to an external benchmark, CEB’s Public Sector Norm. The Public Sector Norm is a representative sample of the global workforce within the following industries: federal government, state and local government, and non-profit organizations. It is made of a panel of working adults (not companies), who work in a broad range of functions, levels across over 38 countries. The survey provided a comparison of 44 out of the 49 close-ended questions across these 2 data sets. A summary of the responses provided by respondents in ECA to the 14 categories is listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item or Category</th>
<th>ECA 2017 (n = 288)</th>
<th>Comparisons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strengths /</td>
<td>UNS 2017 (n = 14,622)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>% Fav</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender &amp; Diversity</td>
<td>70% 20%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment</td>
<td>67% 18% 15%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>66% 21%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Management</td>
<td>57% 21% 22%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust &amp; Integrity/Ethical Behavior</td>
<td>54% 25% 22%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous Improvement</td>
<td>52% 26% 22%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention</td>
<td>49% 20% 31%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Excellence</td>
<td>48% 28% 24%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth &amp; Development</td>
<td>46% 23% 29%</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>47% 20% 24%</td>
<td>47%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work / Life Balance</td>
<td>47% 24% 28%</td>
<td>47%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Transformation</td>
<td>46% 28% 26%</td>
<td>46%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>46% 26% 28%</td>
<td>46%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agility</td>
<td>41% 29% 30%</td>
<td>41%</td>
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6. Based on the results, what actions did ECA initiate to address the findings of the survey?

**ES:** Shortly my arrival, I discussed the Staff Engagement Survey 2017 in the town hall meetings, we constituted the staff Engagement Project Team (SEPT). The SEPT was tasked with reviewing the survey results and proposing Action Plans to address the areas that emerge as opportunities for improvement. The team was constituted with representatives from the Divisions, SROs and IDEP, ensuring a diverse and gender-balanced mix of staff members from across levels. In my interactions with the SEPT, The team were also at liberty to involve additional members as the need arose I have also reiterated that the team members should exercise great objectivity in their assessment of the indicators so that an effective Action Plan emerges from their deliberations.

On 31 May and 1 June 2018, the SEPT undertook an Action Planning Workshop at here in Addis Ababa. At the workshop, the SEPT reviewed and analyzed the survey results, to choose the relevant indicators to work on, to present their findings to the Senior Management
The SEPT endorsed the Action Plan and subsequently steps were taken for implementation of the Action Plan. The Action Plan and other details regarding staff engagement are available on ECA’s intranet and can be accessed using this link: intranet.uneca.org/staff-engagement.

What is important to note is that the need for more communication across the organization was a common thread that cut across the different metrics and dimensions. In the past many months, we have tried to address this need through various initiatives which I shall elaborate on further.
7. **ES could you tell us more about the concrete actions that have resulted from the implementation of the staff engagement Action Plan?**

**ES:** Yes. The implementation of the staff engagement Action Plan was entrusted to all Division Directors, including SRO and IDEP. Noting the need for enhanced level of organisational communication, we have started to utilise the ECA intranet more to improve our levels of information dissemination. You may have already noticed some of these changes.

We continue to be in the throes of reform as part of the UN Secretariat, having gone through our own ECA reforms in 2018 up to the start of 2019. The process of reform itself induces elements of uncertainty, doubt and anxiety. When reforms are not well handled, they can lead to adverse impact on the health and wellness of the organisation’s members. We have tried to address these issues through regular and frequent communication, openness and transparency.

Here, I would like to dwell on some of the initiatives undertaken as well as the work in progress:

- **Monthly Divisional Meeting “Ubuntu”:** In February 2019, we rolled out the monthly Divisional meeting under the “Ubuntu” umbrella. I also stressed on the importance of this platform through my information circular titled “Implementation of the revised organisational structure to support the new strategic directions of ECA” as a key change management initiative. To recap, the word “Ubuntu” is part of the Zulu phrase “Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu” which translates to “a person is a person through other people.” It has also been translated to “I am, because you are”. The central theme here is to respond to staff concerns about lack of information, synergy and alignment by getting the whole Divisional together once a month, at least, to discuss a minimum of four standing items – (i) status of programme implementation; (ii) Back to Office (BTO) reports of staff members upon their return from missions; (iii) review of actions agreed upon in the previous meeting(s); and (iv) Celebration of achievements of individuals and teams in support of the delivery of outcomes of the Division. Most Divisions have implemented the initiative – the initial reactions have been mixed – with some Divisions seeing good results and other still at the initial stages of roll out. For me the institutionalisation of this platform would also be a key indicator of the Divisional leadership’s commitment to positive staff engagement.

- **Provide means for staff to generate and share new ideas:** As part of the 60th anniversary celebrations of UNECA, we organised the Innovation Challenge that provided staff members the opportunity to showcase, through past achievements, innovative solutions to problems on the programmatic and programme support side. We are in talks with UNHQ and with international consultants to institutionalise our efforts around innovations. We have recently conducted an Innovation Maturity Assessment based on the ECA’s Strategic Framework, the staff engagement result and interviews of categories of staff at all levels within ECA. We are in the process of studying the outcomes of this assessment in view of making our systems, processes and culture more amenable to fostering innovation.

- **Mid-Year Programme Performance Review:** This was conducted on 11 July 2019 to take stock of the progress made towards achieving the Commission’s
expected accomplishments as per the targets and performance measures set by sub-programmes / Divisions in the revised 2018 – 2019 Strategic Framework, the 2019 Annual Business Plan, and the ES’ Compact 2019. The meeting also reviewed how the work of each sub-programme / Division contributes to the realization of the five strategic directions of Commission and the Sustainable Development Goals. Finally, the meeting dwelt on major planned results and interventions for the second half of the year including joint deliverables in Countries of Focus as well as how sub-programmes planned to translate ideas into action by the end of the year. I do believe that performance review meetings help strengthen organization learning and accountability.

- **Weekly ECA Newsletter:** We now have a weekly Newsletter released through the ECA announcements that provided staff members an update on the different events and programmes that were organised by the Commission in the past week. A great source of information to keep abreast with the Commission’s activities.

- **Television updates on all floors:** Television sets have been installed on all floors to disseminate communications regarding ECA internal programmes, staff initiatives, Commission’s conferences, training programmes, updates on ECA’s intranet. Very soon we would also be launching a “Know Your colleague” series, an informal and fun way to know more about your colleagues, their interest and their funnier sides.

- **Monthly Q&A with the ES series:** I have also instituted a regular questions and answers series called the “Q&A with the ES”. From time to time, I communicate on critical issues that impact the organization and staff members. The effort is to communicate management decisions and also offers clarifications to staff members on important matters. The Q&A include issues that are raised and addressed as part of the staff town hall meetings and also cover any additional topics on upcoming matters. I believe it is an important platform aimed at enhancing transparency by communicating more and better with the most important assets of the organization – our staff.

- **Working and delivering together as a team:** In the past year, we have consciously driven ways and means to come together and deliver as a team based on the complementarities of our work. Some examples that demonstrate this team work include - peer review of the ECA Econometric model, presentation on ECA Data availability, joint missions and inter-divisional collaboration on AfCFTA, work on the Integrated Planning and Reporting Toolkit and a very successful delivery of the Conference of Ministers in Marrakesh.

- **Expanded Senior Leadership Team:** To foster communication and promote the notion that ECA is a think tank, we have now established two versions of the senior leadership team (SLT) - an SLT devoted to management issues and an SLT+P5 which focuses on showcasing what is working well at ECA, not just at the Division level but drilling further down to the section level. It provides an opportunity for colleagues to see what each other is working on, provide constructive feedback and encourage inter-divisional coordination and working. The emphasis is on thinking collectively, challenging each other and fostering a ‘one’ ECA.
• **Seeking feedback on ECA’s programmes**: As part of enhanced staff involvement, SPORD sought online feedback on major ECA events held in the period from March to April 2019 to help improve the effectiveness, efficiency and results of major ECA events and for the SLT team to learn from past events, identifying areas that worked well and those that need improvement, and to inform the conduct of future events. The online feedback was sought on the major events— (i) 52nd session of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (20–26 March 2019); (ii) 20th session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa and the third joint meeting of the Regional United Nations Sustainable Development Group (23 and 24 March 2019); (iii) Fifth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (16–18 April 2019).

• **Town Hall Meetings with the ES**: I have fundamentally believed that more communication is always good and that there cannot be enough communication. I have organized town hall meetings with staff at regular intervals with the aim of enhancing organizational communication and to keep staff members informed about important developments that impact their work and that of the ECA as well as that of the UN Secretariat. The table below gives you a snapshot of the number of town hall meetings organised and the issues that have been discussed with staff members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Agenda Items</th>
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<tr>
<td>29 July 2019</td>
<td>Highlights of the second quarter 2019</td>
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<td>Upcoming work for the next quarter</td>
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<td>Video Presentation from the Sub-Regional Office – Central Africa</td>
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<td>High Level Political Forum Presentation (HLPF) - key take away/lessons learnt</td>
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<td>Presentation on the Ebola Outbreak – Thank you note - National Tree Planting Day Ceremony</td>
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<td>30 April 2019</td>
<td>Highlights of 2019</td>
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<td>Upcoming work for the next quarter</td>
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<td>UN Reforms</td>
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<td>Ideas for Action</td>
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<td>Staff recognition and accountability</td>
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<td>15 January 2019</td>
<td>Welcome to 2019</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Highlights of 2018</td>
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<td>Work Program for 2019</td>
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<td>5th October 2018</td>
<td>United Nations General Assembly report back and update</td>
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<td>Letter to the ES from Staff Union</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other Matters.</td>
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<td>20th September 2018</td>
<td>The evolving institutional environment at the UN: UNDS’s and ECA’s reforms, to include the Five Strategic Directions (Q&amp;A); The ES ‘s Compact 2018 and ECA ‘s work program: PPB 2018-2019, ABP 2018, Risk register (Discussion) ECA’s planning and working modalities moving forward.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26th June 2018</td>
<td>ECA’s Compact;</td>
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<td>ECA Reforms;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Staff engagement survey; and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Upcoming AU Summit.</td>
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<td>17 April 2019</td>
<td>ECA reforms</td>
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• **Workplace Socialisation:** We have also enhanced the levels of workplace socialisation through events such as the commemorative programme in celebration of ECA’s 60th anniversary on 17 December 2019 at the Sheraton, which provided an opportunity for staff members to relax and celebrate the founding of this institution 60 years ago. On 11 July 2019, we also organised the Africa Nations Cup Live Soccer Watch Party (Algeria v/s Ivory Coast) which was another event that saw great participation from ECA staff members. We also organised the Iftar dinner on 30 May 2019 where we had the opportunity to break the day’s fast with our Muslim brothers and sisters. On the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of ECA, we had the opportunity to honour our colleagues who had contributed ground breaking innovative solutions to address some of ECA’s problems.

• **Providing staff access to information on programmes and budgets:** The ECA intranet has been redesigned to provide staff members the access to ECA PPB. Strategy, Divisional Work Plans, Senior Management Compact of the ES with outcomes against expected targets. The status of budget allotments is also provided. This is now available as a link on ECA intranet.

• **Providing staff access to a programme management tools, statutory documents, knowledge and best practice repository:** The ECA intranet has also been redesigned to include a section that includes case studies and previous organizational learnings on best practices both programmatic and programme support. Knowledge of best practices is important to sustain the quality of work that we deliver. The knowledge repository is being continuously refreshed with the latest information. The link on the intranet on programme management provides important reading on ECA’s programme cycle from the establishment of the strategic framework to the reviews required by important stakeholders. The strategic framework sets out expected accomplishments or desired outcomes for each sub-programme. This section on the intranet also provides staff members access to information regarding the reforms in the UN Development System.

• **Comprehensive induction for new recruits:** This year, for the first time, we organised a comprehensive induction programme for new staff members including our Fellows. The idea was to provide them a complete understanding of ECA’s Vision, Mission, Strategic Framework and to build appreciation for the programme of work of each Division. I believe this programme was received well and has reinforced our belief that a good induction programme is the building block for strong alignment with organisational values and goals.

8. **What about initiatives to enhance the agility of the organisation and empowerment of staff?**

    **ES:** These are important elements of the staff engagement action plan and are very much complementary in nature. Agility is a measure of our ability to anticipate, respond to, and equip staff influence change. Empowerment is a means by which individuals are given the authority to analyse situations autonomously and take proactive decisions. This instils a sense of ownership towards the organization. Empowerment enables staff members to determine their own work roles, accomplish meaningful work, and influence important decisions.
The Secretary-General’s management reform articulated in his report, “Shifting the management paradigm in the United Nations: implementing a new management architecture for improved effectiveness and strengthened accountability”, is aimed at decentralising management functions and delegation of authority to increase efficiency and effectiveness in programme delivery; empowering managers to determine how best to use their resources to support programme delivery and enhancing transparency and accountability in programme planning, budgeting, monitoring, delivery, evaluating and reporting, amongst other things.

We have tried to drive some action in these areas through the following:

- **Increased delegation of authority**: Earlier this year, based on the delegation of authority matrix and in line with the accountability framework and ST/SGB/2019/2 on Delegation of authority in the administration of staff regulations and rules and financial regulations and rules, we undertook a comprehensive exercise of delegating authority further down to the point of execution. A large part of this exercise focused on the programme support functions and we hope that the speed of processes is increased by elimination of irrelevant processes that require multiple levels of authorisation. We are also hoping that the delegation empowers staff members and enriches their job encouraging greater job satisfaction and autonomy.

- **Delegation of programme and project management functions to Division**: The Commission’s revitalized programme of work and structure that aims at delivering a prosperous Africa also places accountability and learning at the heart of its programme delivery and business processes in line with ECA’s decentralized programme and project management framework (PMF). Effective 5 July 2019, in line with the SG’s overall direction for increased delegation, ECA decentralized the programme and project management functions which were earlier under the purview of SPORD to the Divisions.

- **Skills training for staff**: Our efforts here have been towards developing learning opportunities for staff in response to the changing strategic/technological landscape, with the objective of upskilling. Some of the key training interventions during the past year, both on the substantive side and on the programme support side were:

  - Workshop on Coaching Skills for managers and supervisors - to enable managers to understand how to review and build the context, strategy, culture and processes for coaching and mentoring at a strategic level
  - Workshop on Strategic Knowledge Management
  - Econometric Software (STATA and EVIEWS)
  - Technical Writing skills in English and French
  - Macroeconomic Modelling
  - Workshop on Development Planning
  - Strategic Communication Skills (Networking Track)
  - Training for administrative staff on Advances in Office Management
- Language and communication skills courses offered through the Language Hub

- PRINCE2 Project Management training

- The HR team was also provided training on Job Evaluation

- A workshop was organised regarding Career Opportunities for GS staff members

- Umoja Refresher trainings and trainings for implementation of UEII

During the period over 1,300 person-hours of training were delivered with over 48% of the participants being female staff members.

Further, six staff members went on a mission to IMF to strengthen the cooperation with IMF in developing knowledges and advocacy that could better serve African countries, in the context of the SDGs; to identify critical areas of collaboration, including on debt sustainability analysis, fiscal issues and SDGs; to disseminate and discuss ECA Macro Model, Economic Report on Africa and other initiatives including AfCFTA; and to familiarize colleagues with the IMF’s growth analysis and forecasting frameworks and macro-economic tools for purposes of customization and adoption to the African context.

We are also working out ways and means in which we can support our staff members in better communications ability and confidence through the Toastmasters Club initiative in ECA. This is in the final stages of deployment and will enable staff hone their public speaking skills.

**Clear terms of reference for staff members:** Through the restructuring process, we have tried to clarify roles and responsibilities. My information circular titled “Implementation of the revised organisational structure to support the new strategic directions of ECA” clearly laid out the terms of reference (ToR) for each Division and Section. Additionally, staff movements across organisation units were implemented only after thorough discussions were held between the staff member and the Directors of the releasing and the receiving Divisions. In all such cases Directors were advised to issue revised ToRs to the impacted staff. We had also worked towards having clear ToRs for P5 and P4 staff members in year 1. There has been substantial progress in this direction. I encourage staff members and supervisors to complete this process expeditiously.

9. **What have been some of the notable initiatives around Work-Life Balance? What is in the pipeline for the future?**

**ES:** Quite a few actually. We understand and appreciate staff concerns on work-life balance. We are also aware that increasingly with limited resources, each of us would be called upon to do more with less. It is therefore important that whilst we go about resolving this dichotomy, we continue efforts to build a work place that is welcoming, caring, healthy and free of discrimination, harassment or abuse. The SLT is sensitive to the need to personally invest time in building this culture.

- **Communications on Flexible Work solutions:** We have been regularly communicating the various options available to staff members under the Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) policy that was rolled out earlier this year through
ECA Announcements and ECA-HR Bulletins. We have also seen an increase in the number of staff members requesting such work arrangements. It is important to note that as per the revised process, managers are expected to provide cogent reasons in case they do not approve of FWA. It is equally important for staff to note that FWA is not a right but is a voluntary arrangement that requires the agreement of the staff member, the manager and the institution.

- Flexible Work Space: Additionally, extensive consultations have been held with staff representatives and staff members to work out the process of implementation of Flexible Work Space (FWS) and transitional space policy. The FWS concept will help usher in better ergonomics in workplace design, more common areas, better lighting and ventilation along with a more contemporary workplace. I am aware that the implementation of FWS did raise concerns in the staff community. We have tried to enhance the scope of consultations with the staff union on this area. We both agree that FWS is the way forward – for its apparent positives. The modality of implementation is being worked out.

- Directors to consolidate annual leave plans for all their staff at the beginning of performance cycle with a bi-annual review: To enable better work distribution as well as to flag any possible cases of burn out, directors were advised to consolidate annual leave plans of their team member. This was done to ensure that leave was distributed in line with the work load and need for timely programmatic outputs as well as to reduce incidence of work stress levels.

- Facilitate change to physical working environment: I have been informed that a gymnasium survey was conducted by the Staff Union late last year. I hope the findings of the survey will enable the Staff Union to address any staff concerns arising out of the state of the gymnasium. The Facilities team has also supported the repair and replacement of floor tiles and carpeting, repaired walls and painted, realigned and improved all lighting, worked with the staff union on new locker installation and are working with them to improve and maintain the shower and bathroom areas. We work with and react to any repair needs for the gymnasium including assisting the facility with equipment installation and repair. Work has just been concluded on fitness equipment and a fitness area in the basement of Congo building for SSS. 3 locker room areas were rebuilt for the over 140-person strong SSS team (UNCC ground, Nile basement) and work is underway for the locker and rest/recreation/lunch rooms for the Officers. Lunch and Locker area was specifically recreated for women SSS officers in the MRB building with capacity for further addition of numbers.

Over the past three years and in consultation with the Staff Union, we built a soccer field in the marshalling area behind UNCC. It has beautiful grass, is irrigated, well-maintained and fenced. The area is for football, frisbee, volleyball or any activity for staff and children. It is coordinated by the staff recreation centre. We have installed sun and rain awnings at Zambezi cafeteria and at Tivoli cafeteria and built an additional patio area at Tivoli greenhouse restaurant area for increase client needs. Soon we are planning to move all Rotunda services to the newly constructed facilities in the Congo and Nile buildings with a new and refreshed Market place of outlets and services.

- Health alerts online: As part of the action items outlined in the staff engagement action plan, and to commemorate the “World Diabetes Day” on 14 November
2018, the UN Health Care Centre launched “Health Alerts”, a new health education resource from “UpToDate”. UpToDate is an online resource which provides more than 1,500 patient education topics written in English, out of which more than 1,000 translated into universal Spanish. These materials educate and promote shared decision-making based on medical evidence, clinical recommendations, and patient preference. Engaging patients in their medical care and treatment decisions often reduces costs and leads to better outcomes. This initiative was expected to help us promote healthy living, prevention and up-to-date medical diagnosis and treatment at the intermediate level of care to UN staff and their dependents. UNHCC has also organized a few seminars on these topics. Commemorative days such as the “World Osteoporosis Day” are conducted to help focus on important health ailments that staff suffer from and methodologies to improve.

- **Wellness Week**: A Wellness Week was also organized from 22 to 24 January 2019 where health professionals spoke and interacted with staff members through various seminars, lectures, talks and events along with screenings, free tests, one-on-one consultation and nutritional advice. The events included Zumba dance, a Health Expo, the ECA Mountain climbing initiative (ECA staircase climbs to encourage staff to use stairs instead of lifts) innovatively called the *Tullu-Dimto*, *Ras Dashen* and *Kidus-Yared* Mountain climbing expeditions. Talks were also held on health testing and on keeping your heart healthy.

- **Manager accountability for creating enabling work environment**: I have emphasized that the work place should be respectful and free of any forms of discrimination, harassment or abuse. I have also called upon all directors to personally drive efforts in their respective areas in this direction. Complaints of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment and abuse are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. I have communicated aggressively on sexual harassment and demonstrated with action. On 5 November 2018, I also issued a communication reiterating the zero-tolerance policy of ECA on sexual harassment and abuse of authority. Exemplary deterrent punishments will also be handed out to reinforce the organization’s commitment on this. I have also asked the SLT to dialogue with teams as part of their monthly Ubuntu meetings about clarity on the resources available to deliver on outcomes. In small measures we have been trying to make resources available through online repositories and links on the ECA intranet. We are also trying to provide virtual connectivity through the VPN network to enable staff members access official resources from any location. I welcome more ideas form you to make this effective.

10. **ES, can you also tell us about those elements of the staff engagement Action Plan that are “work in progress” or which will unfold soon?**

**ES**: Indeed, we are also working on some new to further enhance the impact of staff engagement. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few:

- **Community Civility Communication Workshop**: Very soon we would be organising training workshops for “Community Civility Communication Workshop” in partnership with the Office of the Ombudsman. This programme will be triggered at the SLT level and then subsequently cascaded across the organisation. The workshop contains four parts. After a brief introduction, the
workshop first focuses on the connection between dignity and civility in the workplace. Next, the workshop explores how communication enhances or undermines dignity. Finally, the last session invites participants to brainstorm how to build communities that support the notion of dignity. The purpose of having this is to make interpersonal communications and engagement at the workplace based on principles of civility and upholding the dignity of individuals.

- **Soft Skills and Wellness Training Programmes:** We are also partnering with the Staff Counsellor’s office at UNHQ to roll out trainings on – (i) Insomnia, Sleep Deprivation, and Sleep Hygiene; (ii) Building Resilience Programme (iii) Stress Management Workshop; (iv) Getting Serious about Depression; (v) Coping with Change in the Workplace; (vi) Managing Your Team Effectively During Times of Change & High Stress; (vii) Helping Colleagues manage Difficult Emotions. Some of these programmes would be open to all staff members and some are targeted at managers and supervisors. Additionally, a programme on stress management is also planned to be rolled out.

- **Executive Governance and Resource Stewardship training program:** This training program carves out a space for senior leaders to address the question of “how do I lead/govern my entity better” through a combination of traditional training experience and hands-on practical implementation. This programme is co-facilitated by the Capacity Development and Operational Training Service (CDOTS) of the Department of Operational Support and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). The programme is expected to develop skills at the senior leadership level in organizational governance, leadership and resource stewardship principles as they are applicable in the context of the Organization and challenge those charged with governance to embody and promote transparent and effective accountability.

- **Develop a business intelligence dashboard on programmes and resources:** Work is underway to consolidate existing dashboards to get a tactical, strategic, and operational view of progress on ECA mandates. This will provide staff members access to the tool that generates information, user-friendly charts, graphs and reports so that management can take important decisions based on collected business intelligence on ECA’s strategic priorities.

- **Career Conversations:** We are working on developing a framework for managers to have quarterly career conversations with their teams. The framework is important to equip managers/supervisors with tools required to engage in a meaningful conversation with their teams and also to contribute positively to their career development efforts. This will also be supplemented with workshops on career coaching for managers and supervisors. In 2018, we had conducted two workshops in partnership with UNSSC, Turin to enhance the coaching skills of our managers. These were received well by the participants and we intend to continue this series.
11. ES if there is one initiative which you think would be a game changer in terms of
the way staff engagement is seen in ECA, what would you choose and why?

ES: I have deep faith in the power of communication and the ability to listen to one
another. From my perspective, the Ubuntu initiative for Divisional meetings can prove to be a
real game changer if it is conducted in its true spirit and institutionalised. We have had some
success in rolling this out, whereas some Divisions are yet to commence on this journey. From
where I see it, the Ubuntu, meetings can help bring teams together, build alignment towards
the Divisional vision and programme of work, thereby contributing to alignment towards
ECA’s Vision and Mission, provide staff members the platform to share constructive feedback
and encourage ideas for action. A key part of the Ubuntu framework is recognition of staff
members and celebrations of their achievements as individuals and teams and this is a very
important element of our staff engagement efforts. I have suggested that we dedicate a day in
the month of September 2019 for each division to stand down and organise this meeting.

I call upon each Division and staff members to work towards making this initiative a
success.

Thank You ES.