



QA
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
with the Executive Secretary



This is the fourth edition in the series of Question & Answers with ECA’s Executive Secretary about issues that concern and impact the organization and staff. In this edition the ES speaks about the UNECA Transitional Office Space Policy (TSP) and Flexible Work Space (FWS).

- 1. Hello ES and welcome to the fourth in the series of “Q&A with the ES”. During the last Town Hall meeting on 30 April 2019, staff members raised concerns about the movements and realignment of offices in the context of flexible workspaces. Can you help us understand the concept of flexible workspace (FWS)?**

ES: Flexible Work Space (FWS) is an open space concept designed to foster a collaborative and team working approach and is being implemented by UN secretariat worldwide, in alignment with General Assembly Resolution 71/272 dated 23 December 2016. But more importantly, it is a reflection of our move towards the ‘One UN’ policy and aligning ECA and our UN agencies with ongoing reforms related UN common house and new capitals project.

The concept aims to improve the staff productivity, efficient use of office space, workplace environment and staff wellbeing. It will provide ECA staff with a variety of optimized workplace environments that are modern, ergonomic, accessible, safe and tailored to the users’ work practices. The concept is not designed to be implemented as a one size fits all. The concept incorporates areas for team work, break out rooms, quiet rooms depending on how a team wishes to work.

- 2. In the context of FWS, we also keep hearing about the transitional office space policy, often referred to as the TSP. Could you tell us more about TSP?**

ES: The TSP draws on the pre-determined office space size determined by Headquarters in August 2004. These dimensions are provided below and have taken into consideration local variations contextual to ECA:

Level	Existing space allocation	Space allocation as per the TSP
USG/ ASG/ DES	36 m ² closed office	36 m ² closed office
D1/D2/ Head of Agency	24 m ² (3-Window) closed office	18 m ² (3-Window) closed office
P5	18 m ² (2-Window) closed	12 m ² (2-Window) closed

P1 - P4/ NOA - NOD	12 m ²	9 m ² - 2 staff to share 18m ² (3 Window) closed or open office/ shared office using multiples of 9m ² or a workstation/cubicle
G2 - G7/ IC/ Consultant/ Fellow/Intern	9 m ²	6 m ² - 3 staff to share 18m ² (3-Window) closed or open office/shared office using multiples of 6 m ² or a workstation/cubicle

Here at ECA, we plan to start implementing the FSW with Floor L2 in 2020/2021. This would entail moving the existing teams on L2 to transitional spaces on other floors (primarily L7 and L8) whilst we start work on the second floor. This is where the Transitional Space Policy (TSP) that I spoke about on 25 April 2018 comes into play.

ECA is therefore mandated to adhere and implement these secretariat-wide design and dimensions.

We have analysed that successful implementation of TSP will enable ECA to optimize its space usage by more than 20% and FWS forecasts an additional 20%, depending on the design parameters. This will be a great opportunity for the ECA to join all of the leading duty stations such as UNHQ, ESCAP, UNOG and UNON in effective space management. We envisage that it will also allow us to become more eligible for consideration when it comes to our requesting for funds for new major projects, through the Strategic Capital Review, to, for example, refurbish our facilities into modern, sustainable, accessible and equitable workplace.

As part of the ECA reform, irrespective of FWS or TSP, we also have to move staff and teams around so that they are co-located with their new Divisions. For example, the Capacity Development Division (CDD) has now been amalgamated with several Divisions and this necessitates movements of teams to the new Divisions where additional spaces will be required.

3. Staff members have raised concerns on the manner of implementation and communication of the proposed changes in the space policy. What would be our approach to allay these concerns?

ES: I think it is important to emphasize that the FWS implementation is a secretariat-wide institutional mandate which the ECA is following. In my discussions with the Staff Union, indeed concerns were raised about the implementation and gaps in consultation or communication. I have asked all parties to the initiative – DoA, FMS, HR and the staff union – to engage in meaningful discussions on the matter with the aim of reaching a consensus and communicating on how best we implement this approach. **A joint management-staff team has been consulting on the matter and we expect to have closure in the next few weeks.**

4. What are the future master plans of the ECA? What is the ECA's growth over the last years and what are the future growth plans?

ES: Currently, ECA accommodates more than 3,000 UN staff in over 20 buildings in the ECA compound and its 5 sub-regional offices. The Campus has over 12 hectares and 110,000 m² of buildings. In addition, FMS currently manages office spaces and leases of 20 agencies, funds and programmes, which covers a net office space area of over 20,000m² in the Congo, Niger and Zambezi buildings. This is in addition to almost 20 commercial retail leases that provide support to the staff and visitors.

In line with the current UN reforms that mandates the organization to address the office space requirements of the UN organizations in the region, FMS is working on immediate, short-term and long-term plans to address the additional space requirements. We currently have a waiting list with requests for office spaces for over 600 staffs of different seniorities from nearly 20 agencies. This includes additional space requests from the agencies who already reside on the campus along with new requests for entities such as WFP, WFP LO, UNHCR, UN HABITAT and UNCTAD, who are not currently residing on the campus. In addition, should funding for the Congo Building be realized, enough temporary office space for over 400 of those staff would be required within the Campus temporarily during the construction period. As a result, extra space is expected to be created through the TSP and FWS should we need it.

5. What are plans and timelines for implementation of the TSP and FWS pilot project, and which office facilities will be affected?

ES: Upon finalization of the consultations, we expect to propose an implementation plan in a sequential manner.

An initial plan (that was originally planned for July 2019) has been suggested as follows:

Level	Division/Section	Schedule
9	Communication & Media Relations Section (CMRS)	Q4-2019
	Partnership & Resource Mobilization Section (PRMS) + Communication & Media Relations Section (CMRS)	Remainder of the floor (TBC)
8	Macroeconomic Governance Division (MGD)	Aug-19
	UN Development Coordination Office (UNDCO)	Jul-19
	Strategic Planning Oversight & Results Division (SPORD)	Aug-19
7	Gender, Poverty & Social Policy division (GPSPD)	August/September 2019
	Swing Space (230m ²)	Sep-19
6	Private Sector Development & Finance Division (PSDFD)	August/September 2019
	Swing Space (270m ²)	Oct-19
5	African Center for Statistics (ACS)	Dec-19
	Swing Space (230m ²)	Nov-18
4	Technology, Climate change & Natural Resource Management Division (TCND)	Nov-18
	Division of Administration (DoA) Supply Chain Management Section (SCMS)	Sep-19
3	Regional Integration & Trade Division (RITD)	Jul-19
	Finance and Budget Section (FBS)	Complete
2	Human Resources Management Section (HRMS)	Complete
	Under Construction	Empty 2020
1	DoA- flexible Work Space (DoA, SCMS, PU, Inventory, ICTSS IMIS moved)	Empty 2020
	UNESCO, UNSSCA, UNEP, ICTSS, CODA	IT/Q4 2019
Ground Floor	ICTSS, UNDSS, SSS, SU, OSLA	IT/Q4 2019

6. What are some of the key highlights/ benefits of the new flexible working space?

ES: Upon the implementation of the FWS, we expect that the space allocations will be re-balanced to provide a more shared work and support space. The existing space allocation tends to emphasize private work over collaboration and departmental territoriality over functionality. In order to address the various environmental conditions required during working, a variety of ancillary spaces would be provided on each floor including focus booths, filing areas, small and medium size meeting as well as browser/touchdown areas for short-term work.

7. The Local Committee on Contracts (LCC) was reconstituted as per statutory requirements. There have been concerns raised that most members of the LCC belong to the Programme Support functions or to the Division of Administration implying that it may not be the best

way to ensure transparency and adherence to systems and processes in procurement. What is your response to this?

ES: Local Committees on Contracts (LCC) were established by Office Away from Headquarters (OAH) to review and provide advice to the management on whether proposed procurement actions, including contracts that generate income to the organization are in accordance with UN procurement policies. The policy requires that the LCC be constituted comprising Finance Officers, Legal Advisers, General Service Sections Officers and Programme Management Section Officers. Nominated staff members are also required to undergo the Basic LCCL training upon nomination, followed by an advanced LCC training once the staff member starts to participate in committee proceedings. The present LCC membership, that was notified by the Director of Administration on 26 February 2019, is constituted as follows:

LCC Role	Name	Division	Section
Chairperson	Amos Homodza	PCKMD	ICTSS
Alternate Chairpersons	Almoustapha Cisse	PCKMD	ICTSS
	Mai-Ellen Russ Jarrett	DoA	FBS
Members	Irene Onyancha	PCKMD	KLSS
	Grace Fombad	DoA	UNHCC
	Halima Abukar	DoA	FBS
	Ereni Mohared	DoA	FBS
	Jaki Azmi	OES	SSS
	Ahmed Al-Awah	PCKMD	ICTSS
	Kingsley Gwei	PCKMD	ICTSS
	Charles Ndungu	PCKMD	PCMS
	Amboko Waymeo	OES	Legal
	Yacouba Dit Zonon Kone	DoA	FBS
	Raquel Santos Garcia	SPORD	SQAS
Ex-Officio	Ali Assad	DoA	SCMS
	Mari-Line Ezale	DoA	SCMS
Secretaries	Omega Asheber	DoA	SCMS
	Aster	Yitayew	RITD

Subsequently, on 29 April 2019, the Director of Administration wrote to Directors of the Programme Divisions to nominate staff members for membership of the LCC. The process is underway and has not been concluded yet.

Most of these perceptions are the result of the trust deficit in the house - a larger issue that needs to be addressed through more frequent interactions, communication and collaboration. I do not think that the intention is to avoid transparency and openness in critical administrative processes such as procurement. It is possible that more members from the programme support functions or DoA may have been nominated to the LCC – but the nominated members are also staff members just as any other staff members in the organisation. The LCC process provides for sufficient checks and balances, not just at the local level but also from HQ. Additionally, regular audits also help establish the levels of process-adherence. Therefore, it is important to have faith in the process. However, to allay concerns on this front, I have advised the Director of Administration to prepare the list of LCC members in strict accordance with the rules of procedure and also to publish the same so that all staff can be aware of the members of the committee. We are open to discussing how this body could be made more effective.

8. Can you share some details on the number of Individual contractors (ICs) that are currently engaged in ECA and where these ICs work? What is our approach on the engagement of ICs?

ES: We have a significant number of ICs who are engaged to support Divisions largely in administrative support areas. As on 26 June 2019, the distribution of ICs across various Division units is listed below”

Summary of ICs currently engaged in ECA by Division and Gender (as on 26 June 2019):

Division	Female	Male	Grand Total
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ACS	1	1	2
DOA-FBS	6	6	12
DOA-FMS	11	22	33
DOA-HRSS	8	6	14
DOA-SCMS	10	22	32
DOA-UNHCC	-	1	1
GPSPD	2	-	2
OES	1	-	1
PCKMD	45	38	83
PSDFD	-	1	1
RITD	2	-	2
SRO-CA	2	-	2
SSS	4	3	7
TCND	2	1	3
Grand Total	94	101	195

It is also important to keep in mind that ICs are not engaged for more than 9 months in a period of 12 consecutive months. They are also only reengaged after a mandatory break in service of three months after completion of the 9 months. But it should also be noted that the length of break in service between reengagement of ICs could be several years as it depends on the need of divisions.

The first year of engagement of ICs, as indicated in the table below, does not imply that the ICs had continuous services throughout the years. But the frequency of engagement of ICs can depend on the functional areas and work load of divisions. For instance, some functional areas such as Property & Assets Management, Facilities Management and Housekeeping required continuous engagement of ICs for over fifteen years to supplement the core functions performed by the regular staff. New projects such as ARMS (Archive and Records Management System) were introduced without allocation of additional resources to create positions from the regular budget the division had to engage ICs under Knowledge & Library Services Section.

Of a total of 195 ICs over the period 2001-2019, if we exclude 2001, we see that 11 ICs had their first engagement with us between 2002-2010. Between 2011 and 2014, this figure is 51. From 2016 to 2019 we now have 93.

Summary of IC by Division and year of first engagement as Individual Contractor (as on 26 June 2019):

Division	2001	2002	2003	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Grand Total
ACS									1						1			2
DOA-FBS										1	4	1	2		3	1		12
DOA-FMS	18	1										2	8		3	1		33
DOA-HRSS	2	1		3	1				2	1					2	1	1	14
DOA-SCMS				1	1		1		1		17		4	5	2			32
DOA-UNHCC													1					1
GPSPD														1		1		2
OES								1										1
PCKMD	1	1	3	1	3	2	1	8	6	3	5	4	17	9	10	6	3	83
PSDFD	1																	1
RITD										1			1					2
SRO-CA															1	1		2
SSS									2				2	2		1		7

TCND						1						1		1			3	
Grand Total	22	3	3	5	5	3	2	9	12	6	26	7	36	17	23	12	4	195

9. Recruitments commenced late last year after a pause pending the finalization of the ECA reforms and restructuring. ES, could you tell us how far we have progressed with regard to recruitments in the professional and above category?

ES: Following the completion of restructuring exercise, we have commenced with recruitments and made considerable progress in the process.

To ensure that the Job Openings were circulated as widely as possible to attract as many geographically diverse candidates and female candidates, HR embarked on extensive outreach efforts. The Job Openings in Inspira were advertised in news outlets, magazines and newspapers such as The Economist, Le Monde, Jeune Afrique and African Banker. Other outreach efforts included the Global Development Women Leadership Career Fair, as well as online platforms such as Impactpool. The Job Openings were also disseminated through social media platforms such as LinkedIn and shared with the UN Family in Addis Ababa, other Regional Commissions, as well as Permanent Missions to the UN.

Given that we have vacancies at the senior levels including D2, D1 and P5s, we have rolled out recruitments at that level and are following up with recruitments triggered the other levels as well. I have asked the HR team to provide an update on where we stand with respect to “Professional and Above” category recruitments. The tables below provide a summary of the status of these recruitments. The first table pertains to the recruitments that have been completed and closed. The second table pertains to the recruitments that are currently underway.

Recruitment Stage (in chronological order)	D1	D2	P3	P4	P5	Total
Draft JO Review (HR)	1				1	2
PMF Clearance (HM & Budget)				1		1
Initiate JO (HM)				1	1	2
JO under review by Classification Office by NY			1			1
Job posting			1	1		2
Under Initial HR assessment			1			1
Evaluation of PHPs by HM		1	7	7	3	18
Awaiting results of Written Test				1	1	2
CBI Conducted. Finalizing Interview Report	2					2
Awaiting Interview Report			1			1
On Hold/TBD	1	1				1
Interview Report finalized – Case under review for submission to CRB	3					3
Total	7	2	11	11	6	37

Recruitment for the following Job Openings have completed and closed:

S No.	JO No.	Grade	Post Title	Division/ Section	Duty Station
1	100576	P2	Assoc. Geographic Information System Officer	ACS – Geo Information & Sectoral Statistics Section	Addis Ababa
2	99996	P2	Assoc. Statistician	ACS - Statistical Development Section	Addis Ababa
3	104909	P3	Environmental Management Officer	DOA - Facilities Management Section (FMS)	Addis Ababa
4	110911	P3	Administrative Officer	DOA - Office of the Director	Addis Ababa

5	100053	P2	Assoc. Social Affairs Officer	GPSPD - Urbanization Section	Addis Ababa
6	97057	P3	Legal Officer*	OSLA - Office of Staff Legal Assistance	Addis Ababa
7	103945	P2	Assoc. Librarian	PCKMD - Knowledge and Library Services Section	Addis Ababa
8	80936	P4	Economic Affairs Officer	RITD - African Trade Policy Center	Addis Ababa
9	107903	P4	Economic Affairs Officer	SRO-CA - Economic Diversification Policy and Reforms Section	Yaoundé
10	107782	P5	Chief, Sub-regional Initiatives	SRO-NA Sub-Regional Initiatives Section	Rabat
11	87252	P4	Economic Affairs Officer	SRO-SA Sub-Regional Initiatives	Lusaka
12	104060	P3	Economic Affairs Officer	SRO-WA	Niamey
13	66319	P4	Economic Affairs Officer	TCND - Natural Resources Management	Addis Ababa

*Recruitment conducted by OHR, onboarding by ECA

The following recruitments are in progress:

No.	JO No.	Grade	Post Title	Division/Section	Duty Station	Status in Inspira
1	Pending	P5	Chief of Section	MGD – Economic Governance and Public Finance Section	Addis Ababa	Draft JO Review (HR)
2	Pending	D1	Director (SPORD)	Strategic Planning, Oversight and Results Division	Addis Ababa	Draft JO Review (HR)
3	Pending	P5	Chief of Section	MGD - Macroeconomic Analysis Section	Addis Ababa	Initiate JO (HM)
4	Pending	P3	Disaster/Emergency Medical Officer	DOA - United Nations Health Care Centre (UNHCC)	Addis Ababa	JO under review by Classification Office by NY
5	116373	P4	Economic Affairs Officer	SRO-Western Africa	Niamey	Job posting
6	116711	P3	Economic Affairs Officer	PSDFD - Innovative Finance & Capital Markets Section	Addis Ababa	Job posting
7	110232	P3	Economic Affairs Officer	PSDFD - Energy, Infrastructure & Services Section	Addis Ababa	Under Initial HR assessment
8	107077	P3	Editor, English	PCKMD - Language Services Unit	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
9	110855	P3	Research Officer	AIDEP - African Institute for Economic Development and Planning	Dakar	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
10	108108	P4	Human Resources Officer	DOA - Human Resources Management Section (HRMS)	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
11	108205	P4	Human Resources Officer	DOA - Human Resources Management Section (HRMS)	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
12	112219	P4	Economic Affairs Officer	MGD –Economic Governance and Public Finance Section	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
13	108113	P4	Communications Officer	OES - Communications & Media Relations Section	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM

14	107876	D2	Deputy Executive Secretary, Programme	OES - Office of the Deputy ES - Programme	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
15	108122	P4	Programme Management Officer	OES - Partnership and Resource Mobilization Section	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
16	109354	P3	Information Management Officer	PCKMD - Knowledge and Library Services Section	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
17	108811	P3	Translator, French	PCKMD - Language Services Unit	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
18	110522	P3	French Translator	PCKMD - Language Services Unit	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
19	108822	P3	Telecommunication Engineer	PCKMD - Printing & Publishing Unit	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
20	109953	P5	Chief of Section	PSDFD - Innovative Finance & Capital Markets Section	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
21	108567	P4	Economic Affairs Officer	RITD - NEPAD (Section 11)	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
22	107775	P5	Chief of Section	SPORD - Corporate Policy, Planning, Monitoring & Reporting Section	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
23	99357	P4	Economic Affairs Officer	SRO-EA - Eastern Africa Regional Integration & AfCFTA	Kigali	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
24	113755	P3	Economic Affairs Officer	SRO-Eastern Africa	Kigali	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
25	107761	P5	Chief of Section	SRO-SA - Inclusive Industrialization Section	Lusaka	Evaluation of PHPs by HM
26	105640	P5	Chief of Section	SRO-NA - Employment & Skills for Balanced Development Section	Rabat	Awaiting results of Written Test
27	108537	P4	Social Affairs Officer	RITD - NEPAD (Section 11)	Addis Ababa	Interviews
28	109255	D1	Director (PCKMD)	Publications, Conference & Knowledge Management Division	Addis Ababa	CBI Conducted. Finalizing Interview Report
29	108991	D1	Director (PSDFD)	Private Sector Development & Finance Division	Addis Ababa	CBI Conducted. Finalizing Interview Report
30	107451	P3	Engineer/Civil Engineer	DOA - Facilities Management Section (FMS)	Addis Ababa	Awaiting Interview Report
31	109003	D1	Director (SRO-EA)	Sub Regional Office - Eastern Africa	Kigali	Interview Report finalised – Case under review for submission to CRB
32	103164	D1	Director (SRO-WA)	Sub-regional Office – Western Africa	Niamey	Interview Report finalised – Case under review for submission to CRB
33	109501	D1	Director (TCND)	Climate Change, Environment & Natural Resource Management Division	Addis Ababa	Interview Report finalised – Case under review for submission to CRB
34	105581	P4	Editor (English)	PCKMD - Printing & Publishing Unit	Addis Ababa	Evaluation of PHPs by HM

35	108971	P3	Economic Affairs Officer	TCND - Green Economy Innovation and Technologies Section	Addis Ababa	Selection
36	108998	D1	Chief of Staff	OES	Addis Ababa	On Hold
37	Pending	D2	Deputy Executive Secretary, Programme Support	OES - Office of the Deputy ES - Programme Support	Addis Ababa	TBD