

ECA's Office for Central Africa meets performance objectives for Q2 of 2020

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Yaounde, 27 July 2020 (ECA) – From successfully supporting member States in the formulation of national AfCFTA strategies and achieving consensus on a unique subregional diversification masterplan, through responding to the double jeopardy caused by COVID-19 on health and the economy, the Central Africa Office of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), met its performance objectives for the second quarter (April to June) of 2020.

This was disclosed during the Commission's accountability and programme performance review meeting held virtually recently.

Here are excerpts from main speakers from the Yaounde Office, which provide the highlights on its performance.

Adama Coulibaly, Section Head – Subregional Initiatives, ECA Office in Central Africa:

“This quarter, we have supported Cameroon in the formulation of its national AfCFTA strategy, provided member States with a succinct report on the role of mobile telephony in e-commerce, and supported countries with COVID-19 impact analysis and response strategies.

Our report on the role of mobile telephony in e-commerce in Central Africa is a major contribution towards the development of the sector in the subregion.

[#Accountability](#) and [#PerformanceReview](#) of [@ECA_Official](#) for Quarter 2, 2020. Gauging progress made by the Subregional office for Central Africa as Centre of Excellence on Economic diversification, through the lenses of [#Adama_Coulibaly](#) pic.twitter.com/Nmxfzk1gFa

— ECA SRO-CA (@ECA_SRO_CA) [July 21, 2020](#)

Jean Luc Mastaki, Section Head – Economic Diversification Policy and Reform, ECA Office in Central Africa:

“As the lead agency in the SDGs group in Cameroon, we have contributed to a better understanding of pathways to achieving the Goals in the country. Our proposals on Natural Capital Accounting for a couple of countries in the subregion are being reviewed. We have already had approval for that of Gabon to help it transition from a brown to a green economy.”

[#Revue #Redevabilité & #PerformanceReview](#) de la [@ECA_Official](#) pour le 2e trimestre 2020. Ici, [#Jean_Luc_Mastaki](#) mesure les progrès réalisés par le bureau sous-régional pour l'Afrique centrale en tant que centre d'excellence sur la diversification économique. pic.twitter.com/owxX4jJ6AE

— ECA SRO-CA ([@ECA_SRO_CA](#)) **July 21, 2020**

Antonio Pedro, Director, ECA Office in Central Africa:

“We are working within the framework of the ***Theory of Change*** for economic diversification in Central Africa which we formulated following the Douala Consensus reached during our 33rd session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Senior Officials and Experts (ICE) for Central Africa. We have methodically built on the Consensus to consistently drive policy dialogues and consensus on various facets of diversification from setting the ***Made in Central Africa agenda*** in 2017, through the ICE themes of ***financing industrialization*** in 2018, and the role of the ***digital economy*** in diversification in 2019. Our forthcoming ICE in 2020 will focus on ***building the crucial skills sets and competencies necessary for economic diversification***.

Our reputation as the **Centre of Excellence for Economic Diversification** is growing as reflected in the many requests for technical assistance coming from our member States and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to support the formulation of economic diversification strategies.

We are leveraging this work with a very coherent ***campaign approach*** through think pieces, policy debates, opinion editorials and systematic engagement with the media to imprint this topic on the agenda of the governments of our member States and other stakeholders.

You can gauge results of these from repeated statements by Government officials across the subregion underscoring the importance of resolutely pursuing economic diversification as the most credible path to breaking the cycle of booms and busts which plague the sub-region and fostering resilient, sustainable and inclusive growth and development.

Our next step is to bring all of this body of work and practice together to formulate a toolkit on economic diversification, which would prove useful not only for Central Africa, which we cover, but for the rest of the continent.”

Challenges and way forward

The challenge for the Office during the past quarter has been twofold: how to secure resources for attending to the increasing number of requests for strategic policy and technical support coming from our member States and the RECs and keep the high pace of delivery of services and engagement with our constituencies in the COVID-19 period, especially when we are confronted with staff vacancies.

Pedro made it clear that COVID-19 had also opened other avenues to deliver the work programme, including the virtual organisation of the 2020 ICE, whose momentum is already being built through the webinar on skills for economic diversification that the Office has organised in June 2020..

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