Economic Commission for Africa

Evaluation Policy

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Summary

The present document sets out the evaluation policy of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), which will enter into force effective [XXXXX].

The first ECA evaluation policy was approved in December 2014, in recent years, ECA has seen several significant changes including the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals, and the revised Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). The revised Evaluation Guidelines encapsulate the role and use of evaluation given these advancements and provide further clarity in implementing evaluation. They also reflect the ECA commitment to evaluation and the organization’s desire to improve the quality, credibility and usability of its evaluations, particularly for capturing lessons learned to ensure that future work is informed and strengthened by past implementation experience.

The present document outlines the purpose, status and scope of the policy; provides the definition and purpose of evaluation at ECA, as well as its guiding principles, norms and standards; presents the scope, focus and types of evaluation processes in place; highlights the resources used; explains the evaluation procedures and quality assurance mechanisms in place; delineates roles and related responsibilities; and lists dispositions for implementation, coordination and knowledge-sharing.

The policy establishes an ambitious corporate institutional framework for strengthening the overall evaluation system at ECA, based on the principles of functional independence, learning, accountability, transparency, utility and impartiality in evaluation practices, and oriented towards developing evaluation capacity.

The evaluation function at ECA has an important role to play in supporting the Commission’s effective achievement of its mission to deliver ideas and actions for an empowered, inclusive and transformed Africa through a systematic and objective assessment of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of its programmes and interventions. It will do so by ensuring that evaluation findings and recommendations inform programme design and implementation in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union, as well as by strengthening organizational learning and accountability.
I. Background

1. Since the adoption by ECA of its evaluation policy in 2014 and the subsequent development of its evaluation function, the environment in which ECA operates has changed substantially. In the face of significant developments at the global and regional levels, including relating to sustainable development (i.e., the 2030 Agenda) and the development for Africa (i.e., Agenda 2063), ECA has strategized and retooled itself to meet the requirements of the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, which emphasized the importance of strengthening national evaluation capacities and United Nations joint and system-wide evaluations. It is also designed to meet the requirements of General Assembly resolution 72/279, on repositioning the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, in which the Assembly stressed the need to improve monitoring and reporting on system-wide results. Together with efforts to strengthen the implementation of the reform agenda on repositioning the United Nations development system, the resolutions provide key guideposts for the scope of and approaches to evaluation in the future.

2. In 2018, ECA embarked on an assessment of its contribution to tackling Africa’s development challenges and of its progress in addressing the priorities and aspirations of its members States. It developed a new strategy to ensure that it could effectively implement its mandate and respond to the evolving needs of member States (E/ECA/COE/37/14). Within that strategic framework, evaluation at ECA provides evidence to help to identify and adopt optimal programme designs and implementation strategies that take into consideration economic, social and environmental dimensions, and that sharpen the focus of processes, products, services and tools to deliver results, with an abiding commitment to human rights and gender equality.

3. The revised evaluation policy establishes a common institutional basis for the ECA evaluation function, which is applied across all subprogrammes. The policy seeks to increase organizational learning and to support accountability, transparency, coherence and efficiency in generating and using evaluative knowledge for effective management and results delivery. The policy will be subject to an independent periodic review.

4. The policy responds to General Assembly resolution 59/250, in which the Assembly required the systematic evaluation of United Nations operational activities by assessing their impact on poverty eradication, economic growth and sustainable development. The policy also responds to Assembly resolutions 72/236 and 72/279, in which the Assembly called for independent system-wide evaluations of results achieved. The policy is aligned with the reform agenda for repositioning the United Nations development system (see A/72/684-E/2018/7) and with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation (hereinafter “Regulations and Rules”) (ST/SGB/2018/3).

5. The revised policy aims to promote internal self-evaluation as emphasised in Secretariat wide evaluation policy 2019 through capacity building of substantive office across the Commission, additional element to the policy is engagement with other UN agencies in thematic joint evaluations.
II. Definition

6. ECA uses the definition of evaluation formulated by the United Nations Evaluation Group:

An evaluation is an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of organizations and stakeholders.

The purposes of evaluation are to promote accountability and learning. Evaluation aims to understand why — and to what extent — intended and unintended results were achieved and to analyse the implications of the results. Evaluation can inform planning, programming, budgeting, implementation and reporting and can contribute to evidence-based policymaking, development effectiveness and organizational effectiveness.¹

7. As a strategic function, evaluation incorporates participatory evaluation approaches, methods, processes and applications as a means of enhancing stakeholder empowerment. This makes evaluation an important function in driving the economic and social transformations that are required in order to leave no one behind.

III. Purpose

8. In ECA, evaluation is conducted for three important purposes that together support the overall delivery and high quality of results:

- To demonstrate accountability to stakeholders (e.g., governing bodies, development partners, member States, sister United Nations entities and ECA beneficiaries) in managing for results;
- To provide credible and reliable evidence for decision-making to improve operational, strategic and development outcomes;
- To support organizational learning by contributing lessons learned from evaluations, including on the effective implementation of ECA activities, to the existing knowledge base.

9. Evaluation serves these purposes by providing reliable data, valid evidence, sound analyses and meaningful information to member States, intergovernmental bodies, the Executive Secretary, programme managers, staff and other stakeholders, on the outcomes and impact of ECA initiatives.

10. Evaluation processes also provide stakeholders, both internal and external to ECA, with feedback on results and lessons; inform regional, subregional and national policies and programmes; help to improve indicators to track progress; and provide strategic guidance to policymakers and programme implementers. As such, evaluations in ECA seek:

- To enable programme managers to measure, assess and report on performance;
- To identify where improvements can be made in the design and delivery of programmes and projects;
- To identify good practices and lessons for the future;
- To assess the impact of ECA activities on Africa’s transformational agenda at the national, subregional and regional levels;
- To provide independent assessments as a means of achieving accountability and transparency in the way that ECA implements its programme activities and uses its resources.

11. In addition to the foregoing supply-side description of purposes of evaluation, it is expected that greater attention will be paid to influencing the demand side of the equation, by spurring ECA subprogrammes and member States to request/conduct evaluations and to use evaluation-generated knowledge. To that end, the evaluation policy will help to strengthen knowledge-management systems, learning groups and communities of practice. This will, in turn, increase access to evaluation-generated knowledge and enhance knowledge-sharing, integration and innovation. Work in this area will be developed in collaboration with the ECA Publications, Conference and Knowledge Management Division.

12. The value added by evaluation in ECA will be demonstrated by: (a) the robustness of the evaluation design and methodological framework, tailored to various types of evaluations (i.e., strategic, programmatic, thematic and cross-sectoral); (b) the timeliness and usefulness of evaluations, as evidenced by the uptake of recommendations and lessons learned in programme design and implementation, as well as by the enhanced effectiveness and efficiency of business processes; and (c) the strategic nature of evaluation undertakings, which will strengthen organizational learning, transparency and accountability across the Commission.

IV. Guiding principles, norms and standards

13. Complementary to the self-evaluation principles of utility, transparency, independence and credibility stated in the Regulations and Rules, key evaluation principles for evaluation in ECA are as follows:

(a) Managing for results. Evaluation supports ECA in managing for results by assessing the extent to which ECA products, services and processes contribute to development results. This requires that evaluation planning be factored into programme designs, with clear and measurable benchmarks that can be tracked, documented and assessed. The evaluation function of ECA generates and reflects on evidence to ensure better-informed and results-oriented management and strategic decision-making.

(b) Organization learning. Institutional learning from evaluations is a primary principle upon which evaluation activities are based in ECA. Lessons will be identified from past experience and evaluations and incorporated into future programmes, projects and work
practices. This involves the timely dissemination of lessons learned from programme and project implementation; the implementation of relevant recommendations based on evaluation findings to improve operational efficiency; and the incorporation of evaluation findings and lessons into future programme design and programme implementation.

(c) **Accountability.** This principle is the basis for evaluations. Accountability is the obligation to explain (and report on) efforts made and results achieved, using planned objectives/targets as benchmarks for assessing performance. Evaluative evidence will therefore provide substantive accountability for the resources provided to ECA to implement its programmes. Results-based management requires that the organization evaluate its performance against its expected accomplishments. To provide accountability through evaluation, it is necessary to equip the ECA evaluation function with: (a) professional capacity; (b) institutional and management arrangements that allow for objective and unbiased evaluation and reporting; (c) sufficient resources to conduct rigorous analyses of policies, programmes and projects; and (d) self-critical assessment of the results achieved and the impact of ECA programmes. In addition, it is vital for evaluation findings to be reported to the appropriate levels of decision-making within ECA, to member States and partners, and to be disclosed fully to the public.

(d) **Innovation and reflection.** Evaluations will seek to identify innovations and unintended outcomes (positive or negative) in the work of ECA and its programmes. They will be linked to reflection processes that describe (the “what”), interpret (the “why”), consider the implications (the “what if”) and disseminate results to meet the needs of various potential users. Evaluations will apply innovative approaches and mixed methods to capture the complex and non-linear processes involved in achieving long-term outcomes through ECA programmes and partnerships. In addition, the evaluation function will carefully balance investments by promoting practical and cost-effective evaluation practices and by building on skills and resources available at the national and regional levels.

(e) **Participation and inclusion.** Evaluation processes will ensure that stakeholders participate in a meaningful, relevant and inclusive manner. Participatory approaches will be used throughout to promote stakeholder ownership, commitment and capacities, and to tailor evaluation designs to specific contexts and interventions. ECA evaluations will abide by universally shared values of equity, justice, gender equality and respect for diversity.

(f) **Adherence to international good practices.** The evaluation function will be consistent with internationally accepted evaluation norms, standards and good practices, and will be harmonized with the results-based management approaches being used throughout the United Nations system.

(g) **Ensuring professionalism.** Evaluations will be managed by staff with the requisite evaluation management competencies and training. Evaluations will be undertaken by qualified technical experts and evaluators.

(h) **Transparency and learning.** Evaluations will be conducted using a transparent and inclusive process, involving stakeholders as required, to ensure factual accuracy and full ownership. Evaluation findings and recommendations will be disseminated within ECA and to constituents, donors and partners concerned, in order to inform decision-making processes and support organizational learning.

(i) **Independence of process.** ECA will ensure the separation of responsibility for evaluation management from responsibility for programme and project management. It will select evaluators with a view to ensuring that there is no potential conflict of interest.
(j) **Gender equality and human rights.** Appropriate consideration of gender and non-discrimination (human rights) issues will be factored into evaluation design, analysis and reporting.

V. **Scope and focus**

14. Evaluation in ECA will provide an impartial and objective assessment of the Commission’s contributions to development results, by assessing ECA influence on policy formulation; the impact of capacity development, advisory and knowledge-management services; and the efficacy of technical assistance and partnerships.

15. Evaluation is complementary and related to, but distinct from, other organizational functions carried out in ECA, such as monitoring, audit, review, investigation and results-based management.

16. ECA aims to conduct strategic, policy, cross-sectoral and thematic evaluations, with the continuous involvement of, and regular feedback from, relevant staff, beneficiaries and partners.

17. The Evaluation Section at ECA also provides support for self-evaluations, with a view to progressively devolving these activities from the Evaluation Section to the relevant divisions, subregional offices and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP).

VI. **Types of evaluative processes**

18. In ECA, the categorization of evaluation types is consistent with that established by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and is divided into two broad categories: external and internal. This distinction is based on who conducts the evaluation.

A. **External evaluations**

19. In addition to, and distinct from, evaluations conducted by ECA on its own, ECA activities are also evaluated by the following oversight bodies:

   (a) The Office of Internal Oversight Services, which is mandated to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the programmes and legislative mandates of the United Nations;

   (b) The Board of Auditors, which is mandated to audit the accounts of the United Nations and its funds and programmes through performance audits (which is a type of evaluation);

   (c) The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), which is mandated by the General Assembly to conduct evaluations throughout the United Nations system.

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2 Evaluations by OIOS focus on entire subprogrammes or major components thereof, i.e., the work of ECA divisions, sections, specialist centres, subregional offices and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP).

3 General Assembly resolution 48/218B.

4 OIOS has responsibility for those United Nations entities that are part of the General Assembly-approved programme plan and priorities of the Organization.

5 General Assembly resolution 74 (I).

6 General Assembly resolution 31/192.
20. The main purpose of external evaluations is to ensure accountability to development partners, member States and other external stakeholders. These evaluations produce reports that are intended for use by intergovernmental bodies as well as by programme managers; and they often help to identify best practices and lessons learned. Evaluations performed by external entities are free of control or influence by those responsible for the design and implementation of programmes and projects.

21. The United Nations Evaluation Group has established a peer review process by which organizations can voluntarily seek an objective assessment of their evaluation policy processes against the norms and standards set by the Evaluation Group, with a view to strengthening the practice and utility of evaluation in the organization requesting the review. The peer review would consist of a panel of experienced evaluators (at the P5 level and above) from UNEG member organizations. It is expected that the peer review function will be applied in a range of thematic work areas in the future.

**B. Internal evaluations**

22. Internal evaluations are evaluations performed and managed within ECA. There are two main types of internal evaluations: mandatory and discretionary.

23. **Mandatory evaluations** and self-assessments are required for all programmes in the United Nations Secretariat and are governed by the Regulations and Rules, which state that all programmes shall be evaluated on a regular and periodic basis, and that, at the programme or subprogramme level, evaluation plans shall be linked to the strategic framework and shall be integrated with the programme budget cycle. Accordingly, divisions, subregional offices and IDEP are responsible for undertaking programme self-assessments at appropriate time intervals. The Evaluation Section within the Strategic Planning, Oversight and Results Division (SPORD) provides support and technical assistance in the form of guidance, tools and quality checks of programme self-assessments.

24. **Discretionary evaluations** are conducted by the Evaluation Section in the role of evaluation manager. The following subtypes fall within the discretionary evaluation category:

- **Strategic evaluations** focus on the implementation of and/or compliance with a strategy or policy; they analyse the design, coherence and long-term impact of a set of programmes within a particular framework;

- **Thematic evaluations** focus on a cross-cutting theme, fund, business model or service;

- **Subprogramme evaluations** concentrate on entire subprogrammes or major components thereof, including the work of divisions, sections, specialist centres and subregional offices;

- **Project evaluations**, including evaluations of development account projects, aim to provide programme managers with feedback on a specific project or cluster of projects, and to improve future projects;

- **Organizational performance evaluations** analyse the capacity of the organization as a whole for innovation and change and to efficiently manage its assets in order to achieve results; it involves examining its decision-making processes, business model, organizational structures and institutional capacities;
Other evaluations could take place on an ad hoc basis and focus on subjects of emerging interest or concern. Given their ad hoc nature, they would not necessarily be included in the ECA evaluation plan.

VII. Resources

25. Evaluations can be funded through various sources, but as a general rule:

   (a) The budget for mandatory external evaluations comes from the external entities implementing the evaluation, such as OIOS or JIU. Discretionary external evaluations may be funded by various entities (e.g., development partners, member States, other Secretariat entities or ECA). If ECA provides the funding, then extra-budgetary or regular budget funds will be allocated to the external entity that is to conduct the evaluation.

   (b) Internal evaluations will be budgeted centrally by ECA, using appropriate extra-budgetary and/or regular budget resources.

26. In principle, pursuant to the revised ECA evaluation policy:

   - All programmes/projects that have received funding of more than $1 million in non-post resources will be systematically evaluated;
   - All programmes/projects that have received funding of less than $1 million in non-post resources will be evaluated at least once during their life cycle;
   - ECA will conduct evaluations upon request by donors and/or the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

27. Resource allocation for meeting these evaluation requirements will be integrated into the overall planning and budgeting process. The recommended minimum level of investment in evaluation is at least 3 to 5 per cent of the total plan/programme budget.

28. It is the responsibility of programme managers in the divisions, subregional offices and IDEP to ensure that the required budget is secured during the preparation of programme budgets and extra budgetary allocations.

VIII. System-wide evaluations and partnerships

29. ECA will endeavour to collaborate with other United Nations entities directly and through the United Nations Evaluation Group, and will explore possible areas for joint evaluations. With a view to leveraging purposeful partnerships, ECA will engage with major stakeholders, including evaluation bodies of member States, United Nations agencies, and regional and global evaluation associations. ECA will continue to actively partner with member States to develop their national evaluation capacity. In this vein, ECA will proactively engage with other United Nations agencies to strengthen national capacity to evaluate national development agendas and progress made in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, along with a focus on promoting initiatives to build capacity to mainstream evaluative thinking and practice into voluntary national and local reviews among member States.
IX. Evaluation procedures and quality assessment

30. Evaluations can contribute to organizational learning and enhanced accountability only if related findings and recommendations are disseminated, discussed and acted upon. ECA management plays an important role in that regard. ECA policy on the use of evaluation and review findings is explained below.

A. Strategic planning

31. In contrast to the standard strategic framework, which establishes the direction of United Nations entities, including ECA, for a given quadrennial period (with specific annual work programmes during that period), the ECA strategic evaluation plan will cover the full four-year period and be updated annually for submission along with the programme budget to United Nations Headquarters. The evaluation plan identifies and budgets for evaluations in a transparent and consistent way. It also provides an overview of planned evaluations so that all stakeholders can prepare adequately. Pursuant to the plan, all large evaluations, whether external or internal, will be carried out during two consecutive biennial programme cycles. It will also include a proposal to strengthen the Evaluation Section by progressively refocusing the Section’s work away from project performance evaluations towards more strategic evaluations, including policy impact, thematic and business strategy evaluations.

B. Management responses and action plans

32. ECA management is represented by the Executive Secretary of ECA in the case of external evaluations and in respect of internal evaluations managed by the Evaluation Section. The role of management is to sign off on evaluations and, in coordination with the Evaluation Section and other key stakeholders, such as heads of divisions, SPORD, subregional offices and IDEP, prepare a formal management response for inclusion in the published evaluation report. The Evaluation Section will monitor the corresponding follow-up actions stemming from the evaluation and the related management response.

33. ECA management and the evaluators will sign off on the report after the management response and follow-up actions have been incorporated. In the case of evaluations managed by the Evaluation Section, the Section will issue the final evaluation report containing the management response.

C. Implementing recommendations

34. SPORD, divisions, subregional offices and IDEP are responsible for ensuring that actions are implemented in a timely manner. To that end they:

- Incorporate actions for which they are responsible in their annual work, project work and project monitoring plans;
- Include general and specific requirements in the performance appraisals of relevant staff to ensure that they implement the assigned evaluation follow-up actions in a timely manner;
- Update the status of the evaluation follow-up actions and associated documentary evidence in a central intranet-based log.
35. The Evaluation Section plays a key role in coordinating and monitoring the implementation of follow-up actions by:

- Entering the follow-up actions into a central intranet-based log to record and track the status of their implementation;
- Preparing updates on the status of implementation.

36. The Chief of the Evaluation Section ensures the development and implementation of management responses and action plans corresponding to corporate evaluations and presents those responses and plans to relevant intergovernmental bodies.

D. Quality assurance

37. In close collaboration with the Standards and Quality Assurance Section of SPORD, the Evaluation Section will strengthen quality assurance processes to address the full range of evaluation functions, from design to implementation, documentation, analysis, sharing and application. For the Evaluation Section, areas of specific interest under quality assurance will be the validity, reliability and consistency of systems for reflecting on and rating projects and programmes.

38. ECA will continue to expand its various toolkits and guidelines to ensure that a harmonized evaluation regime and approach is applied across the Commission. In this vein, guidelines will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. There will be a renewed focus on developing a regime for promoting and strengthening self-evaluation functions.

X. Roles and responsibilities

A. Leadership

Executive Secretary

39. The Executive Secretary is accountable for ECA results and is the main champion of evaluation within ECA. She or he provides the political will and enabling environment for enhancing the evaluation culture. She or he is responsible for safeguarding the impartiality of the Evaluation Section by appointing a competent Chief of Section and ensuring that the Section is adequately staffed and resourced to fulfil its role. The Executive Secretary approves the corporate evaluation plan.

Strategic Planning, Oversight and Results Division

40. The Director of SPORD supports and advises the Executive Secretary on the overall direction, priorities and policies in strategic planning, monitoring, evaluation and operational quality assurance. SPORD coordinates reporting on the implementation of all ECA subprogrammes, using a results-oriented framework to ensure organizational effectiveness. The Chief of the Evaluation Section reports to the Director of SPORD.

Senior Leadership Team

41. The Senior Leadership Team, comprising the Deputy Executive Secretaries and the Directors of divisions, subregional offices and IDEP, will champion the application of lessons
learned from all evaluations within ECA and ensure that the financial and human capacity required for a fully effective and efficient evaluation function is made available. Members of the Team are responsible for creating an enabling environment to strengthen the evaluation culture in the areas under their oversight. It is the responsibility of programme divisions, subregional offices and IDEP programme managers to ensure that the required budget is secured during the preparation of programme budgets and extrabudgetary allocations.

42. The Senior Leadership Team is ultimately responsible for the use of findings, recommendations and lessons learned from the evaluations commissioned by their respective offices and from other corporate evaluations and other relevant evaluations. The use of evaluations to improve performance will be included as a key element in the performance appraisals of senior managers.

B. Technical specialists

Evaluation Section

43. Under the recent restructuring of ECA, the evaluation function remains the responsibility of the Evaluation Section within SPORD. The Chief of the Evaluation Section reports directly to the Director of SPORD, who is accountable to the Executive Secretary.

44. The mandate of the Evaluation Section includes:

- **A normative function.** This involves setting minimum requirements for developing and improving ECA-specific evaluation policies, strategies, guidelines, frameworks and tools;

- **An oversight function.** This relates to ensuring oversight of ECA evaluations by maintaining the adequacy, accuracy and credibility of the evaluation system. It does so by providing capacity-building services as needed to foster the ability of other ECA units to conduct project evaluations. The Evaluation Section provides support to programme divisions, subregional offices and IDEP in developing evaluation plans and carrying out self-evaluations. It also ensures that external evaluations respect the norms and standards mentioned above.

45. The main responsibilities of the Evaluation Section include:

(a) Establishing effective corporate evaluation systems, and helping to develop an evaluation policy along with appropriate guidelines and tools;

(b) Developing a corporate evaluation plan and conducting internal evaluations;

(c) Providing technical support to divisions, subregional offices and IDEP in conducting self-evaluations;

(d) Providing technical advice on programme evaluability for internal evaluation section consumption and the evaluand;

(e) Developing an annual evaluation report and presenting strategic evaluation results to the Executive Secretary;
(f) Alerting senior management to significant process or outcome-related issues arising from evaluations;

(g) Developing key support elements for the evaluation function, including guidance related to planning, analysis and reflection, disclosure, management responses, action plans and knowledge management;

(h) Promoting the use of evaluations, and stimulating commitment to evaluation and demand for high-quality, significant and useful evaluative knowledge products;

(i) Using evaluation outcomes to promote innovation, knowledge generation, and knowledge-sharing on what works in facilitating Africa’s transformational agenda;

(j) Building and maintaining a public repository of resources to facilitate the sharing of knowledge that ECA has gained from the evaluation of programmes designed to influence policy formulation and promote social change;

(k) Developing and maintaining a roster of African experts in the field of evaluation.

46. Evaluation Section staff take an active role in evaluations, in consultations with other divisions on specific evaluations, in tendering processes (including preparing terms of reference and vetting consultants) and in evaluation management, training and capacity-building.

C. External stakeholders

Member States

47. In addition to the secretariat, member States have a number of critical evaluation functions, including:

- Requesting ECA evaluation reports for specific ad hoc evaluations;
- Approving information on ECA programme budget and performance (for the annual plan) and the mid-term programme framework (for the quadrennial plan), thereby approving the results framework that forms the basis for the ECA evaluation function and evaluation plan;
- Responding to evaluation reports by introducing substantive and procedural changes to the ECA work programme;
- Bearing responsibility for evaluating commitments made by member States, for instance in the context of ECA intergovernmental forums, including Commission resolutions.

XI. Implementation, coordination and knowledge-sharing

48. As part of its contribution to regional knowledge-sharing and capacity development, the Evaluation Section will work in collaboration with the Publications, Conference and Knowledge Management Division to support learning mechanisms for partners and other practitioners (such as selected consultants). This may include:

- Participating in communities of practice focused on common programming challenges among ECA partners and beyond;
• Utilizing existing subregional meetings and networking channels to reflect on evaluation outcomes and knowledge-sharing with relevant stakeholders including donors and other UN agencies

A. Links with knowledge management

49. The ECA knowledge management strategy clarifies how the Commission will acquire, share and apply knowledge, consistent with programme/project evaluation systems and tools established by the Evaluation Section. As a knowledge organization, ECA will ensure that its constituents draw lessons from evaluations and internalize evaluative knowledge in programming and knowledge-sharing efforts.

50. The Evaluation Section will organize and/or contribute to consultative and information-sharing events, such as the annual Senior Leadership Team retreat, to bring the past year’s learning into focus and produce insights and recommendations to take forward as part of the Commissions think-tank role. Among other sources of information, retreat participants would be able to examine and reflect on findings from ECA evaluations conducted in the preceding year. The relevant divisions would then incorporate the lessons learned into practice in the year ahead.

B. Dissemination, communication and follow-up

51. To promote organizational learning and ensure accountability, evaluation findings will be disseminated in accordance with the following principles:

• Making all evaluation reports (including the management response thereto) fully available internally, including on the ECA intranet, and externally, in particular on platforms such as that established by the United Nations Evaluation Group;

• Conducting internal briefings for ECA management and staff to highlight important evaluation findings and recommendations, in particular where they are of strategic importance;

• Ensuring that evaluation reports are circulated to parties that requested and/or funded the evaluation, such as project or programme partners;

• Conducting quarterly sessions on evaluation findings during accountability and programme performance review meetings;

• Formatting evaluation findings to support the comprehensive and widespread sharing of evaluation initiatives (e.g., reports, synthesis papers, policy briefs, events and tools) within and outside ECA.

52. The executive summary of all evaluations will be translated into English and French. The aim is to facilitate the widespread use of evaluation findings and to address concerns about data reporting and communication. This, along with the recently developed ECA communication strategy, will help to consolidate the image of ECA as a world-class think tank.
### XII. Risk and mitigation measures

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<th>RISKS</th>
<th>MITIGATION MEASURES</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Lack of resources</td>
<td>3 – 5 % of programme/project allocation for evaluation made mandatory</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Programme/Project preparedness to</td>
<td>Undertake evaluability assessment(^7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be evaluated</td>
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<td>3 Lack of data trust</td>
<td>Quality assurance prior to evaluation, triangulation of data during evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Limited physical access to</td>
<td>Complement through</td>
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<td>stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Lack of ownership of evaluation</td>
<td>All stakeholders taken on board before evaluation till the closure. Evaluation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>reference group established for all evaluations(^8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Lack of follow-up – evaluation</td>
<td>Management response prepared in consultation with the evaluand. Improved tracking</td>
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<td>recommendations</td>
<td>system for follow-up</td>
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<td>7 Competency of evaluators</td>
<td>Selected through a competitive process</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Independence and credibility of</td>
<td>Evaluation is lead and managed by evaluation section, evaluand role is only in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evaluation</td>
<td>support</td>
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\(^7\) Evaluability assessment tool developed by evaluation section  
\(^8\) ToR exists for evaluation reference group
### Annex
#### Evaluation coordination and management: roles and responsibilities

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Evaluation type</th>
<th>Evaluation scope</th>
<th>Division, subregional office and IDEP responsibility</th>
<th>SPORD responsibility</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>External evaluations conducted by oversight bodies</strong></td>
<td>Requested by member States or other stakeholders and undertaken by independent United Nations oversight bodies, such as OIOS, the Board of Auditors or JIU. Evaluations are broad in scope and commonly analyse strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations for improving effectiveness, efficiency, impact and relevance.</td>
<td>Provide external evaluators with relevant information, data, and input for the inception reports and data repositories of clients, stakeholders and partners. Provide input to the corporate management response.</td>
<td>The Evaluation Section prepares a formal management response for inclusion in the published evaluation report. The Evaluation Section monitors follow-up actions stemming from the evaluation and the management response.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Internal evaluations: mandatory</strong></td>
<td>Linked to the strategic framework and integrated with the programme budget cycle. Required for all United Nations Secretariat programmes and framed by programme and budget documents. Reported on through annual and quadrennial performance reports. Focus on measuring the extent to which expected accomplishments were achieved, using the collection of indicators of achievements, and based on data-collection methodology and means of verification as defined in the programme plan and budget.</td>
<td>Carry out programme self-assessment at any appropriate time interval during the quadrennial programme period.</td>
<td>Provide support and technical assistance in the form of guidance and tools for programme self-assessments. Provide guidance in the selection of data, collection methodology, evaluation approach, means of verification and self-evaluation criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal evaluations: discretionary</strong></td>
<td>Managed pursuant to criteria defined in the evaluation policy. Focus on relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of programmes and business strategies. Serve the primary purpose of organizational learning and are particularly useful to programme managers in testing their theories of</td>
<td>Based on previous programme performance reports, provide input to corporate evaluation plans. Ensure that the required budget is secured during the preparation of programme budgets and extra-budgetary allocations. Provide external evaluators with relevant information, data and input to inception reports.</td>
<td>The Evaluation Section is the evaluation manager. External consultants and specialists will be contracted for the exercise to ensure the impartiality of the evaluation process. Coordinate and manage evaluation processes. Alert the Senior Leadership Team about significant process- or outcome-related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Actions</td>
<td></td>
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<td>------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>After-action reviews</td>
<td>Corporate after-action reviews are based on data from feedback surveys. Feedback surveys are conducted as part of programme-based after-action reviews.</td>
<td>Responsible for programme-based events.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other evaluations</td>
<td>Managed by an external funding partner. Applies to extra-budgetary programmes, with ECA being one of several project/programme implementing agencies.</td>
<td>Coordinate corporate input to inception reports, data collection and evaluation methodologies, and the selection of evaluation criteria. Provide support as needed to prepare the management response that will be included in the external evaluation report.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Types of evaluations that fall under this category include strategic evaluations, thematic evaluations, subprogramme evaluations (including those of ECA policy centres), project evaluations (including those of development account projects) and evaluations of organizational performance.

- Ensure the use of findings, recommendations and lessons learned from evaluations.
- Use evaluations to improve performance and as a key element in performance appraisals.
- Maintain a public repository of resources to facilitate the sharing of knowledge gained by ECA from the evaluation of programmes designed to influence policy formation and promote social change.

- Provide external evaluators with relevant information, data and input for the inception reports and data repositories of clients, stakeholders and partners.

- Corporate after-action reviews are based on data from feedback surveys.

- Responsible for corporate events, such as the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development.