



PUTTING AFRICA FIRST

**A Summary of the ECA Reform to Support Transformative
Development in a Renascent Africa**



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

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FOREWORD

The vision of an African renaissance and a continent on the rise is not a mirage. It is real! Tangible and encouraging progress has been made by many African Countries in reforming their economies, and putting in place appropriate policies and structures to ensure economic growth. Positive changes on the continent have been brought about by factors such as sweeping political and economic reforms, a decline in conflicts and a favourable investment climate. This is driving a new spirit of optimism about Africa's prospects and potentials. Since the 1990's the continent has experienced rapid economic growth at an average rate of five percent per annum, making the continent one of the fastest growing regions of the world. Changes are taking place in its demography; rapid urbanization is spreading, and the global demand for its wealth of natural and renewable resources is rising. A more robust regional institutional landscape has also emerged and the continent is making a global mark, for example through technology innovations. These are all assets that will help propel Africa's industrialization path.

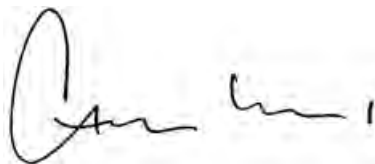
A new phase of globalization has also come into play. The world has become more interdependent and interconnected. Its features include, accelerated economic integration and global liberalization of trade and financial markets as well as a reconfiguration of economic powers. The emergence of the global South is proving to be an important actor on the global economic stage, particularly in service and infrastructure investment. This new landscape of multipolar partnerships has brought with it a new paradigm of engagement for Africa. It now reflects a cooperation in which partners see themselves as peers in mutually beneficial relationships which is a step away from the previous "donor-recipient" relationship. These changes present a huge opportunity for Africa to emerge as a global economic power. The overriding policy challenge however for the continent, is to meet the seven per cent minimum growth required to double average incomes and to sustain the current positive trend. There is need to drive inclusive, broad-based growth and sustainable development to achieve structural transformation and diversification.

The rapid and substantive changes in the regional and global landscape presents a new reality for the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). It has become necessary for the institution to restructure itself, to ensure that it responds to the evolving needs and demands of its member states regarding economic and social development in Africa. ECA has to be ready to take bold positions on policy issues of crucial importance to the continent and had to therefore be retooled and its programmes recalibrated to strategically position it as the "think tank" of reference on African development policy issues. The new direction will focus on generating robust statistics and data as well as using innovative techniques, including information and communication technologies to create a comprehensive common database to support ECA's policy research. It also means that the sub regional presence of ECA will be leveraged to support the collection and collation of data in member states, in order to generate informative and regularly updated country profiles.

This publication presents a summary of the rationale, scope and breadth of the participatory reform process that the ECA underwent. It maps out the key milestones and the end result of an intense seven month period that started in the fall of 2012. Extensive reflections and consultations were part and parcel of the journey involving a variety of configurations of staff members, Heads of State and Government, Ministers of Finance and Planning, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, African Ambassadors, partner organizations, including the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), as well as bilateral partners.

A new programme orientation was launched in March 2013, supported by administrative and business processes, and a new organizational structure. The ECA is now positioned to be a more purposeful organization poised to offer higher quality products and services to deliver greater results and impact. The overall objective of the new programme of work is to assist African countries to formulate and implement policies and programmes that will lead to sustainable economic growth and inclusive development. Particular emphasis will be placed on accelerating the continent's structural transformation using its comparative advantages (a) to strengthen the rigour and relevance of the knowledge produced by ECA an authoritative source of analytical insights and innovative ideas to support Africa's development; (b) to generate knowledge underpinned by robust and reliable statistics; and (c) to improve the packaging and dissemination of its knowledge products to core policy constituents.

This journey of renewal to reaffirm ECA's service and purpose would not have been possible without the unwavering support and conviction of ECA's Member States, partner organizations and bilateral partners. Nor would it have been possible without the active participation, courage and commitment of ECA's staff. ECA's mantra going forward will be 'Africa First'. This means putting the interests of this continent first in all we do. We present here the outcome of an intensive process of consultations that have influenced ECA's submission for the approval of member States



Carlos Lopes
Executive Secretary
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa



SUMMARY OVERVIEW

Background

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) was established in 1958 by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations, as one of the UN's five regional commissions. ECA's mandate is to promote the economic and social development of Africa; foster intra-regional integration; and promote international cooperation for Africa's development.

UN General Assembly (GA) resolutions 57/2 and 57/7 of 16 September and 4 November 2002 respectively endorsed the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the framework within which the international community, including the United Nations system should provide support for Africa's development. Resolution 57/7 also assigned to ECA the task of coordinating the United Nations support to NEPAD at the regional level through the Regional Coordination Mechanism, which brings together all the UN agencies working in Africa in support of the African Union and its NEPAD programme. In subsequent resolutions, the General Assembly reaffirmed the role of ECA in supporting NEPAD at the regional and subregional levels.

In recent years a number of important developments have taken place at the regional and global levels. Key among these is a new phase of globalization and global mega trends such as urbanization, shifting demographics and challenges of environmental sustainability that are shaping the world economy. Positive trends have also been taking place in Africa. At the turn of the century, Africa began to experience significant economic growth. Many African countries now feature amongst the fastest growing countries in the world. This has been influenced by a number of factors. These include, a demographic advantage which positions the continent as a market full of potentialities; a youthful population and the accompanying dividends associated with the youth bulge; as well as a burgeoning middle class with increasing purchasing power. Africa also has enormous natural resource wealth and a vast potential for renewable energy. There have been improvements in governance; improvements in the macro-economic fundamentals of most countries; a rapid process of urbanization; growing strength and dynamism of the local private sector; and an increased ease with which business can be undertaken on the continent.

In turn, the rates of return on investment in Africa are amongst the best in the world; rule of law and respect for private property rights are also spreading. Improvements are taking place in the financial sector with stock market activities having increased and cross-border transactions having been eased. In addition,

OF ECA'S REFORM

telecommunications has witnessed a revolution with African IT innovations taking the world by surprise. The continent has also witnessed the emergence of a new leadership at both the African Union Commission and ECA. A new vision for Africa has also surfaced with an agreement to articulate a common vision of Agenda 2063, a 50-year development framework.

All these factors combined are contributing to the continent emerging as a pole of global growth. At the international level, the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20); the consultations on a post-2015 development agenda; and the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR) are also generating significant implications for Africa.

There is consensus that Africa's growth trends must become a platform for broad structural accelerated transformation that responds to key priorities. These include, a strong focus on the economic advantages of the continent such as its natural resources endowment and its demographic advantage; significant and coordinated expansion of investments in infrastructure; achieving and sustaining higher levels of equitable and shared growth; investment in human development; improvement in access to education, health and infrastructure; employment creation; boosting agriculture and food security; speeding up the pace of regional integration; promoting trade, including intra-African trade; and enhancing state and institutional capacities for improved economic management. Ensuring gender equality, building national statistical capacities and resource mobilization remain a central for Africa in tackling these priorities.

These developments coupled with new demands from member states regarding ECA's services, have created a new reality for ECA. Prospects of a reascent Africa have led ECA to reassess itself and recalibrate its activities in order to respond and contribute to the transformative agenda of the continent. ECA is well positioned to make unique contributions to address the continent's development challenges. Its strength lies in the fact that it is the only UN agency mandated to operate at the regional and sub regional levels. It is therefore able to harness resources and bring them to bear on Africa's priorities. Made up of fifty-four member states, and serving a dual role as both the regional arm of the UN and a key component of the African institutional landscape, ECA will leverage its mandate to serve as the think tank of reference on African development matters.

The process of renewal

In the fall of 2012, the ECA embarked on series of participatory reflections and consultations to consider the changing dynamics at both the global and regional level. This was the starting point for ECA to reassess itself and its activities in order to respond to the emerging needs and demands of its member states.

Extensive consultations took place on the direction of ECA reform. These were facilitated over several months with various configurations of staff members including young professionals and female staff. Heads of State and Government, Ministers of Finance and Planning, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, African Ambassadors, partner organizations, including the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), as well as bilateral partners were also consulted extensively. The overarching principle that guided the reflections and consultations was that ECA must fashion a transformation agenda for Africa that puts “Africa First”. Through carefully unpacking the elements of the “African Moment”, the transformative development priorities of ECA’s member states was determined. This then led to the next phase of the reform, comprising of a comprehensive internal review of the programme of work to build consensus on how the ECA should retool itself, recalibrate its programme, as well as strategically position itself as the “think tank” of reference on African development policy issues.

The consensus reached was that ECA will leverage its comparative advantages to:

01

Strengthen the rigour and relevance of the knowledge produced by the ECA in order to become an authoritative source of analytical insights and innovative ideas to support Africa's development

Generate knowledge that is underpinned by robust and reliable statistics using innovative techniques including information and communication technologies to create a comprehensive common database to support ECA's policy research in different areas

02



03

Improve the packaging and dissemination of ECA's knowledge products to core policy constituents

Leverage ECA's sub regional presence to support the collection and collation of data in member states, to be used to generate informative and regularly updated country profiles

04

THE NEW programme orientation

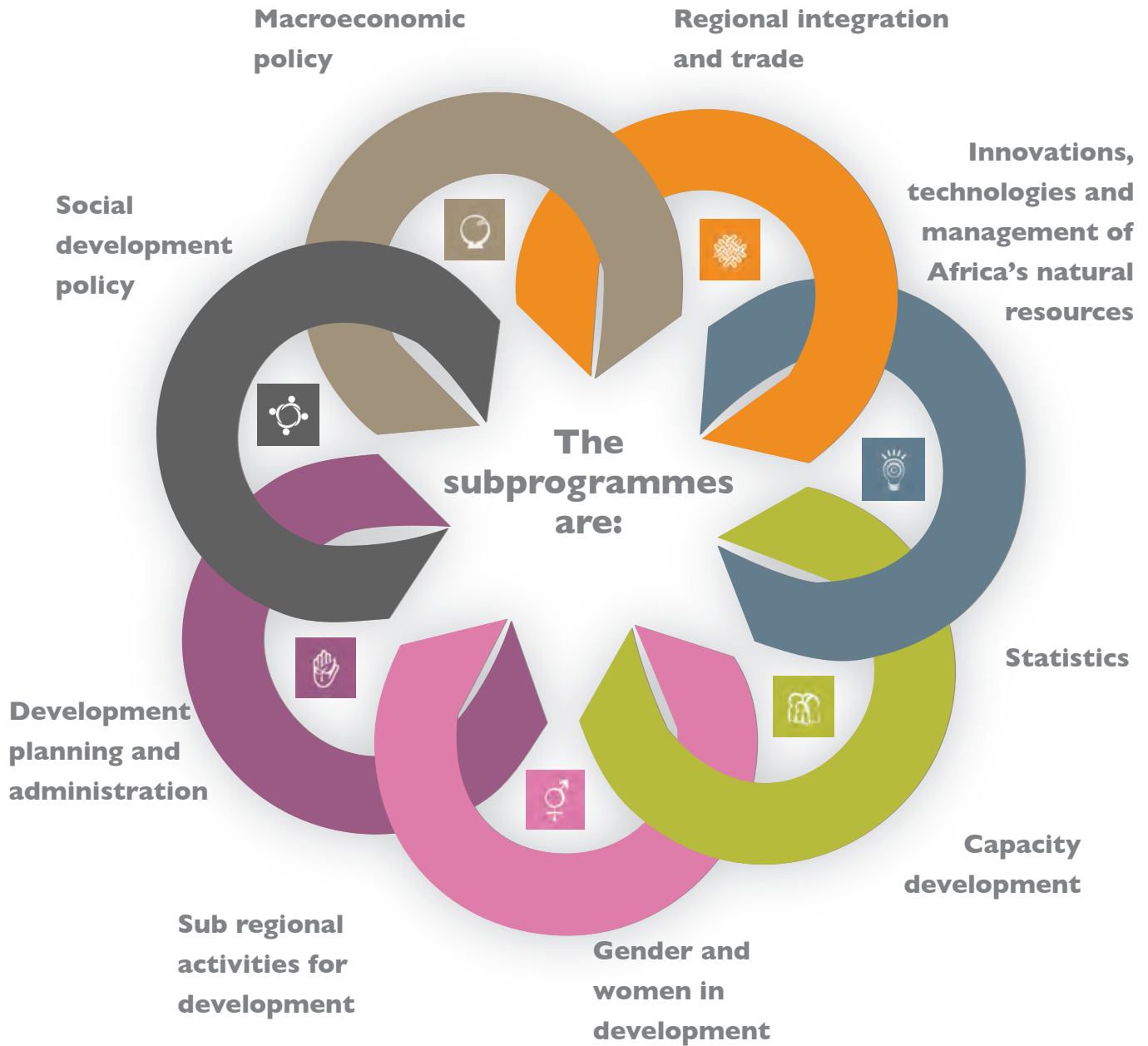
The process of extensive consultations and the thorough internal review of the programme culminated in the development of a new, bolder, and more strategic programme of work to leverage ECA's comparative advantage. The changes to ECA's programme orientation are supported by a new organizational structure, as well as business and administrative processes to support the programmatic changes. The new programme orientation took effect in March 2013.

The new programme orientation's focus is consistent with ECA's mandate of promoting the economic and social development of Africa while avoiding duplication of the programmes of specialized agencies. Emphasis is placed on accelerating the structural transformation of the continent, in line with the priorities of the member states as articulated in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as well as internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and in the outcomes of other major United Nations conferences and international agreements since 1992.

It provides targeted support to African countries to overcome identified gaps in planning, statistics and contract negotiations. It will also support adaptation to mega-trends. Sustaining positive trends in the continent will depend critically on a favourable international environment that supports Africa's special needs. In this regard, the ECA will play an important role in enhancing the continent's voice in key global decision-making forums and processes.

The new programme orientation is organized around nine interdependent and complementary subprogrammes that take into account the mandates of relevant intergovernmental bodies. The nine subprogrammes fall under the umbrella of two over-arching programmatic pillars, namely (i) policy research and (ii) knowledge delivery.

¹ See Annex 1 for the new organizational structure



With regard to knowledge generation the emphasis will be on specialization in areas in which ECA research can make a difference or have an impact. The new programme orientation puts the ECA at the frontline, to generate robust statistical information, credible and original data and knowledge. This will ground ECA's policy research and advocacy on clear objective evidence to promote policy consensus, offer meaningful capacity development, comprehensive analytical insights and a range of specialized advisory services to its Member states. Improved and innovative packaging and communication of its knowledge products serves to further strengthen ECA's partnerships. Closer collaboration will continue to be forged with the continent's pan-African institutions, the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB), as well as the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to ensure coherence and synergy with their programme delivery for the benefit of the continent.

Business and administrative processes

The programmatic changes have been accompanied by changes in administrative and business processes that introduce more business efficiency. In addition, Business Standards have been established to support a change in the institutional culture. These have been established through a participatory process involving ECA staff.



KEY MILESTONES IN THE RESTRUCTURING PROCESS AT A GLANCE

October to December 2012

A series of reflections were held with internal staff and external stakeholders

December 2012

A presentation of the results of the reflections was made to the Staff at large in a Town Hall meeting

December 2012 to January 2013

Regularization of the ECA Staffing table was undertaken

January 2013

An information circular was published to enforce a bilingual policy (French and English) to better serve member states

January 2013

1. 10 Business Standards were identified
2. 10 Business Standards Task Forces were set up to make recommendations on relevant internal policies that could be adopted to implement the standards
3. An Information circular was published to inform all staff on the establishment and criteria of membership of the Business Standards Task Forces

January to August 2013

1. Taskforces convened their individual open consultations on a monthly basis
2. A joint consultation was held between all Taskforces and the Executive Director every month

January 2013

ECA's proposal on its new strategic direction was officially endorsed by the African Union Summit of Heads of State and Government²

February 2013

Administrative processing of the new structure's requirements was undertaken

² Decision: Assembly/AU/Dec.450 (XX) on "Refocusing the Economic Commission for Africa to support the transformation agenda of the African Union"

March 2013

ECA's proposal was presented to and endorsed at the joint AU-ECA annual meeting of the Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

March 2013

The new structure was launched and took effect

April 2013

ECA's reform direction was presented to and endorsed at a retreat of the African group of Ambassadors (New York)

June 2013

ECA's reform direction was presented to and endorsed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)

June 2013

The revised proposed Strategic Framework/ Biennial Programme Plan, 2014-2015 Programme 15, Economic and social development in Africa - was presented and endorsed at the 53rd Session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC)

June 2013

ECA's reform direction was submitted to the UN Economic & Social Council

July 2013

ECA's reform direction was presented to and endorsed at a meeting with the African Group of Ambassadors (Geneva)

August 2013

A presentation on the evaluation of the results & recommendations submitted by all the Task Forces on Business Standards was made to Staff at large in a Town Hall meeting

September 2013

A ECA Senior Management Retreat was held to deepen discussions and build consensus on the remaining steps to implement the new programme orientation

A SNAP SHOT OF THE PAST AND THE PRESENT ECA REFORMS

The Economic Commission for Africa was established in 1958 to promote the economic and social development of Africa; foster intra-regional integration; and promote international cooperation for Africa's development. The mandate for the programme derives from Economic and Social Council resolution 671A (XXV), by which the Council established the Economic Commission for Africa. This mandate has been further elaborated in a number of resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council as well as in resolutions 718 (XXVI), 726 (XXVII), 779 (XXIX), 809 (XXXI) and 844 (XXXIX) of ECA.

In pursuit of this mandate, the ECA has periodically scanned the development environment to ensure that it remains relevant to the needs and aspirations of its member states. In so doing, it has instituted reforms in the past to consistently position itself to respond to Africa's emerging needs and challenges.

The first two reforms were operationalized under two consecutive business plans. The first wave of reforms was undertaken in the late 1990s to respond to the dire economic prospects facing the continent that were characterised by poor economic growth, worsening social indicators and prevalent political conflict. The second wave of reforms then followed in 2006, with the underlying objective of aligning its programme of work with Africa's changing institutional landscape and to improve service delivery. The 2006

repositioning reforms led to the realignment of the ECA's programme of work with that of the AUC to further Africa's development.

General Assembly resolution 68/246 of 27 December 2013 which adopted the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 also endorsed the recommendation of the Committee for Programme Coordination (CPC) on the revised ECA strategic framework for the biennium 2014-2015. ECOSOC resolution 2013/2 endorsed the refocusing and restructuring of the ECA programme of work

The current reforms took effect in 2013. Seven years after the last reforms, there have been rapid and substantial developments at the global and regional levels. As a result the landscape in which ECA operates has changed rapidly and substantively. The overall objective of the ECA's current programme of work is to assist African countries in formulating and implementing policies and programmes that will lead to sustainable economic growth and inclusive development. Particular emphasis will be placed on accelerating the continent's structural transformation. This is in line with the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, as well as the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and in the outcomes of other major United Nations conferences and international agreements since 1992.

A CHANGING LANDSCAPE: THE RATIONALE BEHIND THE REFORM

The world is changing and Africa too is changing. As a consequence a new reality has been created for ECA. It has become necessary for it to restructure and recalibrate itself to ensure that it responds to the evolving needs and demands of its member states regarding economic and social development in Africa.

A new global economy

Among the changes affecting the world is a new phase of globalization. It is characterized by accelerated economic integration and driven by the phenomenal growth of information and communication technology (ICT). It has also been accompanied by global liberalization of trade and financial markets, with implications for national economies, particularly in developing regions like Africa. Such developments have led to higher value addition from knowledge produced

and provoked the emergence of global industrial value chains.

A second particularly important dimension is the reconfiguration of economic powers and increasing South-South flows. Several countries in the global South have become key players in the world economy due to their economic weight and participation in global finance, investment and trade flows. The importance of emerging markets is demonstrated by the fact that in 2012, their collective Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased by 7.4 per cent to \$29.1 trillion, compared to the combined output of \$33 trillion in the G-7. Yet, only five years ago, the G-7 output was twice the size of that of emerging markets³.

The third dimension is key global mega trends that will reshape the global economy in unprecedented ways and impact Africa's transformation.

³ Emerging economies are now part and parcel of the G-20, which replaced the G-7 as the generally accepted forum for shaping global economic policy.

Historical poverty reduction in the global South and a rising middle class

Rapid urbanization

Acceptance of limits to current consumption patterns and a shift to environmental sustainability

Emergence of a global civil society movement

Shift in demographic profiles

Mega

trends

A Renascent Africa

In this changing global context, Africa has been experiencing significant changes that impact on its future prospects. The continent has made remarkable progress in advancing economic and social development in recent years. For eight years prior to the financial and economic crisis, real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew consistently at an average rate of five percent per annum, making the continent one of the fastest growing regions of the world. There has also been a great improvement in governance on the continent, trending towards an increased prevalence of peace and constitutional governance under the auspices of the AUC. The continent's swift and relatively strong recovery from the global financial and economic crises, coupled with the progress on the social and political fronts are driving a new spirit of optimism about Africa's prospects and potentials. The institutional landscape of the continent also continues to improve, with the absorption of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) into the programmes and structures of the AUC; the adoption by African leaders of Agenda 2063, a 50 year development framework for Africa; the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) as well as the consultations on a post-2015 development agenda.

The factors attributable to growth

Continent's youthful population

Growing middle class

Enormous natural resource wealth

Improvements in governance and macroeconomic fundamentals

Growing strength and dynamism of the private sector

Massive urbanization process

All these developments have led to more positive assessments of Africa, with visible changes from attitudes of Afro-pessimism to Afro-optimism to now the current spirit of effusive Afro-enthusiasm. There is hope that strong growth rates will translate into jobs, incomes and irreversible human development gains. Africa's enormous wealth can be used to foster equitable and inclusive growth and generate opportunities for all. There are also aspirations that economic transformation and social progress will drive further improvements in democratic governance and accountability as the middle class grows and demand more of their leaders and service providers. Real gains have been made and Africa has an unprecedented opportunity to sustain economic growth, share prosperity and reduce poverty. A nascent Africa is emerging as a pole of global growth.

Challenges facing Africa

The overriding policy challenge facing the continent is to sustain the current positive trends to drive inclusive, broad-based growth, sustainable development, as well as accelerate structural transformation and diversification. The high unemployment rates, inequality and persistent poverty on the continent are attributable to a number of factors key amongst which are:

1. Quality and sustainability of growth;
2. Massive degradation of production structures;
3. Deficits in State capacity;
4. Changing policy dynamics, partly as a result of the unsatisfactory results of more than 20 years of structural adjustment programmes that saw inequality worsen;
5. Global economic and financial crisis of 2008 that showed the limits of unregulated markets and the important role of the State in managing economic volatility;
6. Lack of availability of credible statistical data.



1

ERADICATE
EXTREME POVERTY
AND HUNGER



2

ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL
PRIMARY EDUCATION



3

PROMOTE GENDER
EQUALITY AND
EMPOWER WOMEN



4

REDUCE
CHILD MORTALITY

The priorities that need to be addressed therefore include:

- 1) Achieving and sustaining higher levels of equitable and shared growth;
- 2) Investment in human development, including improving access to education, health and infrastructure;
- 3) Enhancing state and institutional capacities for improved economic management;
- 4) Resource mobilization;
- 5) Employment creation especially for the youth;
- 6) Boosting agriculture and food security;
- 7) Speeding up the pace of regional integration;
- 8) Promoting trade, including intra-African trade;
- 9) Ensuring gender equality;
- 10) Building national statistical capacity.

While the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have provided some policy space to African countries, going forward, Africa's experience with the MDGs must be taken into account in the post-2015 development agenda. It should also take full account of and align with the outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference, including the proposed sustainable development goals. Enhancing the continent's voice in key global decision-making forums and processes is therefore imperative.



SETTING THE AGENDA FOR THE REFORM & THE PROCESS OF RENEWAL: **RESTRUCTURING ECA**

In setting the agenda for the ECA reform, extensive consultations took place on the direction on the reform. These were facilitated over several months with various configurations of staff members including young professionals and female staff. External consultations were also undertaken and included quarterly Ambassadors briefings, monthly meetings with strategic partnership institutions like the AUC and its NEPAD coordination agency, the AfDB and development partners. Informal meetings with key African Ministers of Finance and Planning for advisory purposes and Inter-governmental bodies of the ECA also took place.

Agenda for the reform

- 1) The overarching principle that guided the reflections and consultations was that ECA must fashion a transformation agenda for Africa that puts “Africa First”. It has become imperative for Africa to use its current growth as a platform for broad structural transformation. In order to do so, Africa should be empowered to tell its own story while development policy should put “Africa First”. The underlying principle is that growth must work for Africans and be driven by their own priorities. It must also have a strong focus on the use of Africa’s economic strengths, scaling up infrastructure, creating productive and modern jobs, domestic entrepreneurship, as well as food and nutritional security alongside viable social policies.
- 2) There are gaps to be overcome. Despite ongoing efforts, African countries face the perennial challenge that statistical data needed to support development requirements and make policy decisions, is either not collected, or compiled, or disseminated in a timely manner. Gaps that must be overcome are not limited to statistics, but also in planning and contract negotiations.
- 3) There is need to accelerate Africa’s transformative agenda to promote sustainable and inclusive growth underpinned by human development, regional integration, technological adaptation and innovation. Africa needs structural transformation not structural adjustment. This entails a substantial change in the sectoral composition of the Gross Domestic Product,

with a larger proportion of productive activities such as industry and manufacturing shifting from the primary sector to the secondary sector.

- 4) There is need for ECA to engage with a wide range of partners from within and outside the UN system in order to maximize the impact of its work.
- 5) The continent's voice must be enhanced in key global decision-making forums and processes. It must also be ready to respond to mega-trends such as urbanization, shifting demographics and challenges of environmental sustainability, including promoting green economy policies and improving natural resources management for the development of Africa. Sustaining Africa's current trends will also depend critically on a favourable international environment that supports the continent's special needs, particularly in climate change, international trade.
- 6) ECA has to be ready to take bold positions on policy issues of crucial importance to the continent and had to therefore be retooled and its programmes recalibrated to strategically position itself as the "think tank" of reference on African development policy issues.

A comprehensive internal review of the programme of work and priorities was undertaken, culminating in a revised strategic orientation for the ECA, involving changes to its programmes, organizational structure, business and administrative processes.

CONSULTATIONS CONDUCTED BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY:

Internal consultations which included:

- 13 Monthly Senior Management Team meetings
- 4 Meetings with Staff Union
- 6 Town hall meetings
- 23 Consultations with staff at large in various configurations such as with young professionals, Female staff and the various ECA divisions
- 10 Monthly meetings with all the taskforces that were set up

External consultations which included:

- Quarterly Ambassadors briefings in Addis Ababa
- Meetings with African Ambassadors in New York and in Geneva
- Monthly meetings with strategic partnership institution like the AUC and its NEPAD coordination agency & AfDB
- Regular meetings with Development partners
- Informal meetings with key African Ministers of Finance and Planning for advisory purposes
- Meetings with Inter-governmental bodies of the ECA

ECA's New PROGRAMME ORIENTATION

In line with its mandate, ECA has taken steps to reposition itself and refocus its programmes to make them more responsive to the transformative agenda of the continent. The new programme encompasses the thematic areas related to Macroeconomic Policy, Regional Integration and Trade, Natural Resources, Innovation and Technology, Gender and Governance. These reflect the substantive priorities of member states and those of the NEPAD programme.

Emphasis is placed on :

1. Generating knowledge to strengthen the rigour and relevance of knowledge produced;
2. Generating robust statistics and data to inform evidence-based policy research, policy formulation and to provide support to monitor and evaluate internationally agreed goals;
3. Generating analysis to position ECA as the authoritative source of analytical insights into Africa's development so that its policy research and advocacy is grounded on clear and objective evidence;
4. Repackaging communication of ECA knowledge products to core policy constituents using innovative techniques, including information and communication technologies;
5. Leveraging ECA's sub regional presence to support the collection and collation of data in member states, to be used to generate informative and regularly updated country profiles.

The nine interdependent and complementary sub programmes are clustered under the umbrella of two over-arching programmatic pillars, namely (i) policy research and (ii) knowledge delivery .The nine sub programmes and their foci are as follows.

1

Macroeconomic policy:

Its focus is to underscore the continued importance of increased growth in Africa based on the design of sound economic policies, the promotion of private sector development, the mobilization of resources and improved economic governance. In addition, emphasis will be given to forecasting and long-term perspective planning and projections.

The subprogramme will:

- Conduct research and normative work to support African member states in transforming their economies from low to middle income status;
- Conduct applied research to provide sound macroeconomic-policy to member states to achieve high-level and sustainable growth, employment creation and poverty reduction;
- Focus on economic governance including contract negotiation of the extractive industries, regulation of markets as well as policies to prevent rent-seeking activities.

2

Regional integration and trade:

Its focus is to emphasize the central role of regional integration in African development by promoting the nexus between trade, industry, agriculture, land, infrastructure and investment and supporting African countries to boost intra-Africa trade and participate effectively in international trade.

The subprogramme will:

- Conduct analytical research in the areas of:
 - 1) Industrialization and infrastructure;
 - 2) Investment;
 - 3) Food security;
 - 4) Agriculture and land; and
 - 5) Trade.

The research will focus on regional approaches to tackling the challenges in these areas so as to promote regional integration as a strategy for economic development. In this regard, the frameworks of the Accelerated Industrialisation Development for Africa (AIDA), the Agribusiness and Agro-business Development Initiative (3ADI), Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) will guide the subprogramme in undertaking research on how the economies of African countries could be transformed from the current low income to middle income levels.

3

Innovations, technologies & management of Africa's natural resources:

Its focus is to nurture and harness new technologies and innovation to support African development, promoting the green economy and addressing the challenges of climate change. It will also promote the implementation of the African Mining Vision and the outcomes of the VIII African Development Forum.

The sub programme will:

- Undertake research and analytical work on the use of innovations and technological systems as an engine of economic growth;
- Support gender sensitive strategies for building and sustaining the African Digital Economy and create an enabling environment for the knowledge economy through evidence-based research;
- Within the framework of NEPAD priorities, mainstream technology and innovations in national and sub-regional development policies and strategies;
- Support implementation of the outcomes of Rio+20, financing sustainable development in Africa; Technology development, transfer and deployment; and capacity and institutional strengthening for sustainable development in Africa. New emphasis will be placed on cross-sectoral issues and inter sectoral linkages;
- Conduct research and analytical work on mineral resources development, green economy as well as strengthen the capacity of African countries to participate more effectively in international climate negotiations.

4

Statistics:

Its focus is to generate data for evidence-based policy research and policy formulation. It will also support the monitoring and evaluation of progress in achieving the MDGs and other internationally agreed goals while ensuring the availability of high quality data to guide policymaking.

The sub programme will:

- Increase the use of modern technology to collect, compile and use quality, comparable and harmonized statistics;
- Support African countries improve their statistical operations, including conducting censuses and surveys and making the data and information products available to users promptly;
- Give attention to the efficient use of administrative data necessary for producing gender-disaggregated and gender-responsive statistics, evidence-based service delivery procedures and monitoring and reporting of progress towards internationally agreed development goals;
- Implement the African Charter on Statistics;
- Improve the quality of data working with National Statistical Offices (NSOs) to implement modern data collection practices using hand-held devices and other modern ICT based tools and methodologies.

5

Capacity development:

Its focus is to ensure that the key policy findings of ECA research are used to support policy implementation at national, sub regional and continental levels, by strengthening the capacity of Member states, regional economic communities and AUC to implement their development priorities. It will also incorporate NEPAD into AUC structures.

The subprogramme will:

- Strengthen the capacity of member states, regional economic communities and the African Union to implement their development priorities and advancing the African Union's agenda of continental integration;
- Strengthen the capacities of African countries and their development organization in formulating and implementing appropriate policies and programmes for achieving the internationally agreed development goals;
- In collaboration with the sub regional offices of ECA, jointly undertake multi-year programmes and activities with the regional economic communities;
- Scale up its assistance to member states in the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism, pin building and maintaining a credible database on relevant information as well as supporting the governance architecture of the African Union.

6

Gender and women in development:

Its focus is to continue to address emerging issues that impact on African women. It will promote mainstreaming of gender empowerment and gender equality into national policies and programmes of Member states, using credible evidence and data.

The subprogramme will:

- Focus on gender inequality and persisting gender gaps and their challenges to development in Africa
- Address the systemic socio-cultural barriers and their impact in limiting the capacity of member states to put in place legislative, policy, and institutional changes that promote gender equality and women's empowerment
- Enhance its work on Ending Violence Against Women
- Support the efforts of Member states to mainstream gender and development in national programmes
- Partner with Statistics sub programme to collect and collate gender statistics to determine the impact of programmes on gender equality and women's empowerment
- Address the gender dimensions of trade and climate change.

7

Sub regional activities for development:

These are to be delivered through the five sub regions, namely Central, East, North, Southern and West Africa. The focus is to enhance the capacity of Member states to formulate evidence-based plans and policies and produce and disseminate quality and timely statistics for periodic country profiles and risk analysis to inform policy and decision-making. It will also promote the design and implementation of sub regional development initiatives.

The subprogramme will:

- Strengthen the capacity of member states to formulate evidence based plans and policies in the respective sub-regions through the production and dissemination of quality and timely statistics to produce periodic country profiles and risk analysis to inform policy and decision-making;
- Promote the design and implementation of sub regional development initiatives.

8

Development planning and administration:

Its focus is to be the locus for training activities to improve public sector management centered on economic policy formulation, analysis, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It will also improve and strengthen national visioning and development planning in Member states.

The subprogramme will:

- Offer a range of courses including on economic management, policy analyses, monitoring and evaluation, and development planning
 - Be the leading hub of the organization for capacity-building workshops and expert group meetings of all the sub programmes of ECA
- Recruit the participation of non-state development actors in Africa;
 - Intensify training-of-trainer activities to strengthen the availability of in-house resource persons in strategic development institutions;
 - Facilitate intra-African development learning and experience sharing;
 - Target specific capacity development programmes at younger officials and female professionals pursuing careers in economic management, policy analyses, and development planning;
 - Increasing the provision of tailor-made courses designed to meet the specific needs of requesting governments and institutions, including the regional economic communities that constitute the building blocks of the African development agenda.

9

Social development policy:

Its focus is to mainstream human development and concerns such as employment, population, social protection and youth issues into regional and national policies and strategies. This will be complemented by promoting a better understanding of the delivery of social services in urban planning and management.

The subprogramme will:

- Undertake work on accelerating the process of achieving the goals set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20);
- Undertake work in population movements, including internal and international migration, population displacements and redistribution, and their linkages to economic and social development, as well as the opportunities and challenges of urbanization.

The mandate for the changes

The mandate for the changes was provided by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its 20th ordinary summit (Assembly/AU/Dec.450 (XX)) held in January 2013. The AU Assembly in turn called upon the United Nations Secretary-General to provide the required support for ECA to enhance its work in accordance with Africa's priorities. In addition, the changes were also endorsed and mandated at the forty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Africa Resolution (908 (XLVI)), held in March 2013 as part of the 6th Joint Annual Meetings of the AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance as well as the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

A revision of the intergovernmental machinery

A revision of the intergovernmental machinery has taken place to ensure that the subsidiary bodies are congruent with the new programme priorities and structure. This required that some of the Committees to be abolished or merged with others. New ones also had to be created for more coherence and to achieve cost-effectiveness. The intergovernmental machinery is now closely aligned with the structures of the African Union and listed as follows:

- i. Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and its Committee of Experts
- ii. Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of ECA sub regional offices
- iii. Committee on Social Development
- iv. Committee on Women and Development
- v. Committee Sustainable Development
- vi. Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration; and
- vii. Committee on Statistics (Statcom-Africa)

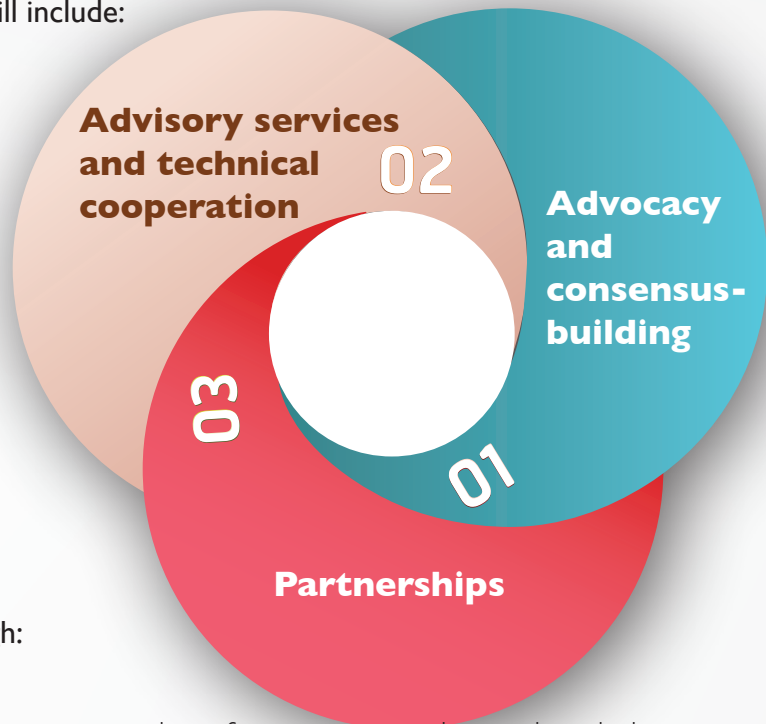
The gains to be made by ECA's programme restructuring

- a) ECA's programmatic focus is now concentrated in the areas of its specialization and comparative advantage in economic and social development. This will ensure that ECA's work will not duplicate activities that are better undertaken elsewhere including in the African Union or in UN specialized agencies;
- b) ECA's programme now feature a relatively greater emphasis on social development in accordance with its mandate;
- c) A realignment of activities both within and across sub programmes has taken place to ensure coherence and complementarities in the programme. It has also created convergence between closely related thematic issues or priorities by clustering them together. This is expected to result in better synergies and effective programme delivery. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of sub-programmes from ten to nine;
- d) Greater emphasis is placed on supporting African countries to overcome identified gaps in planning, statistics, contract negotiations and supporting them to adjust to global mega-trends;
- e) A new Division has been created that is dedicated to servicing, coordinating and delivering capacity development support as well as providing demand-driven advisory services to member states, the AUC and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs);
- f) To enforce linkages between policy research and policy practice; knowledge generating activities will be complemented by training and other capacity development activities, including knowledge networking. Accordingly all training activities will now be undertaken under the auspices of the ECA African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) keeping in line with the principles of specialization and a clear division of labour;
- g) With regard to knowledge generation the emphasis will be on specialization in areas in which ECA research can make a difference or have an impact. The new programme orientation puts the ECA at the frontline, to generate robust statistical information, credible and original data and knowledge. This will ground ECA's policy research and advocacy on clear objective evidence to promote policy consensus, offer meaningful capacity development, comprehensive analytical insights and a range of specialized advisory services to its Member states.
- h) Improved and innovative packaging and communication of its knowledge products serves to further strengthen ECA's partnerships. Closer collaboration will also continue to be forged with the continent's pan-African institutions, the AUC, the AfDB as well as the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to ensure coherence and synergy with their programme delivery for the benefit of the continent.

The modalities for implementation

The modalities of implementation will include:

**Policy
research to
generate
knowledge**



ECA services will be delivered through:

- Economic and social analyses, preparation of reports to monitor and track the progress of Africa on global and regional commitments;
- Formulation of policy recommendations, guidelines and standards to support policy dialogue;
- Organization of policy dialogue to facilitate consensus-building and adoption of common regional positions on key issues;
- Providing technical assistance and capacity-building in the form of advisory services and training to disseminate best practices.

The high quality and impact of its outputs will be ensured by strengthening its quality assurance processes.

ECA Policy dialogue and exchange of country experiences will be strengthened through:

- Fostering policy dialogue among member states through the Conference of Ministers and other conferences and seminars in order to distil policy best practices for wider replication in the region. In addition, new activities corresponding to issues emerging from recent global and regional conferences will be undertaken in such areas as natural resources development and management, promoting sustainable energy, promoting green economy policies, industrialization and urbanization.

Capacity development and technical assistance will be streamlined with a view to responding to the enhanced role of the regional commissions²⁴ to:

- Focus on the specific needs and priorities of Africa's least developed, landlocked and island developing countries, as well as countries emerging from conflict or natural disasters. A coherent strategy to identify the needs of these countries and to determine activities responding thereto will be adopted to increase the chances of such countries to graduate to middle-income status.
- Ensure technical assistance will be demand-driven, is results-oriented and evaluated. It will be provided for both individual countries and groups of countries.

Gender disparities in development will be addressed through:

- Placing emphasis on mainstreaming gender into national development policies and strategies. The full implementation of the Beijing declaration and Platform for Action will remain a major area of focus.
- Actively promoting the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in political, economic and social spheres. It will also integrate a gender perspective into the expected accomplishments of each sub programmes.

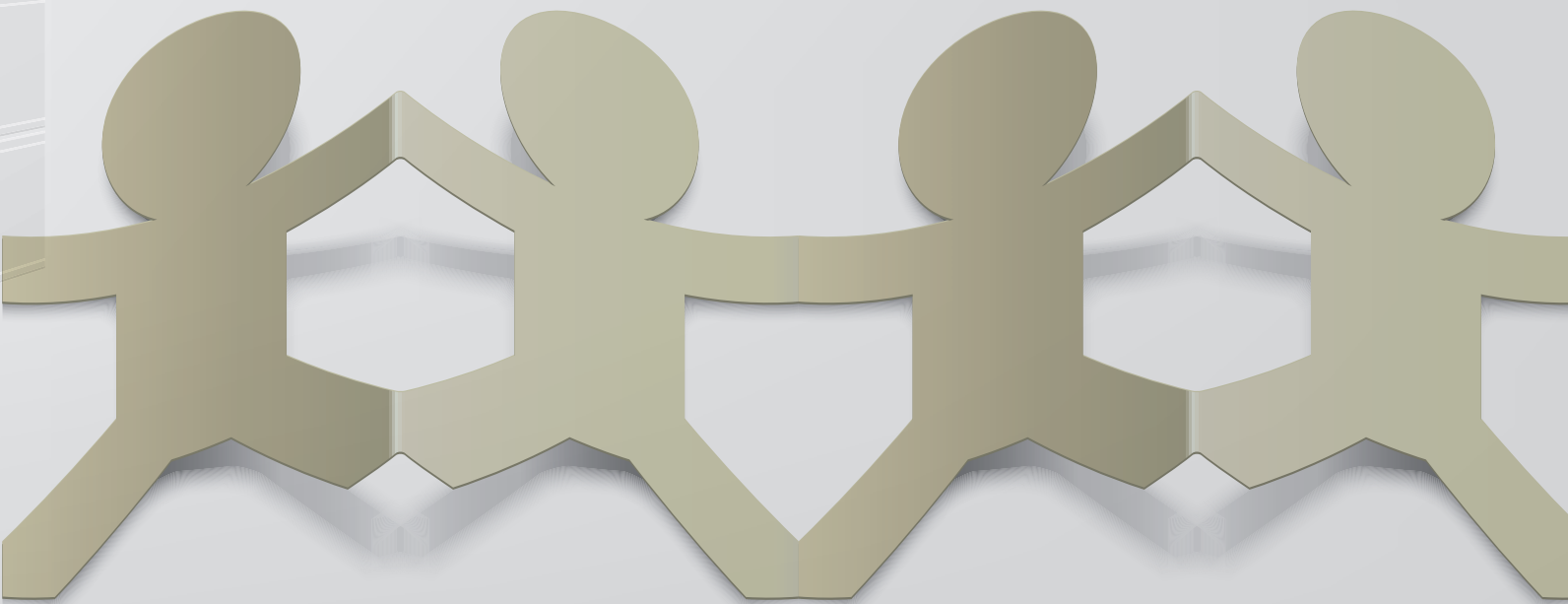
4 Resulting from the new mandate on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review

Partnerships:

Partnerships from within and outside the UN system will be engaged to leverage ECA's comparative strengths in implementing the programme. To this end the ECA will:

- Continue to be involved in the work of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, as the main vehicle for ensuring policy and operational coherence in UN development activities, as well as enhancing collaboration with United Nations Development Group entities;
- Build on its existing partnerships with the African Union and strengthen its collaboration with the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) as a technical body of the African Union to strengthen its capacity to implement its programmes within the context of the UN Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the African Union;
- Build on its existing partnerships with the African Development Bank and other regional organizations, as well as with African civil society and private sector organizations;
- Accompany its member states in their effort to maximize South-South cooperation, e.g. in their policy engagement and negotiations with the BRICS;
- Strengthen and convene interagency coordination and collaboration among UN agencies working in Africa through the Regional Consultation Mechanism of United Nations agencies in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme at the regional and sub-regional levels. Accordingly a Regional Development Assistance Framework will be developed that is aligned with the strategic priorities of the AU. The timing of the Regional Consultation Mechanism-Africa annual meetings will also be adjusted to take place in the margins of the AU-ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to improve the alignment of the work of various UN agencies supporting the AU to a common agreed results framework.
- Work closely with other regional commissions to develop joint initiatives and inputs towards strengthening the regional dimension in global development;

- Work closely at the national level with the UN Resident Coordinator system to exploit the inherent strengths of the funds and programmes at that level;
- Enhance its growing partnership with the private sector and civil society, including private foundations, academic and research institutions as key stakeholders in Africa's development in order to maximize their contribution to the continent's transformative development;
- Internally, the ECA will give priority to internal programme management questions and mechanisms to strengthen coordination and synergies among the different divisions and sub-regional offices; assessment of programme performance and impact; and efficiency in resource utilization to ensure organizational effectiveness and accountability, including putting emphasis on feedback from member states.



KEY ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUSINESS PROCESS TO SUPPORT THE PROGRAMMATIC CHANGES

The programmatic changes have also been accompanied by changes in administrative and business processes, including:

1. More business efficiency through:

- Fewer and more productive meetings with a sharper focus and a reduction in outputs and activities of marginal utility;
- Streamlining workshops and delivering through the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), thus allowing the substantive Divisions at ECA headquarters to concentrate on conducting policy research that will inform the capacity development activities;
- Reducing the number of publications. A number of recurrent publications and reports will be dropped; others will be converted to non-recurrent publications; there will also be an increase in the dissemination of information to the public through electronic means for all ECA publications, including through social media;
- The consolidation of programme planning, budgeting and evaluation in one office to enhance ECA's focus on results.

2. The introduction of new ways of doing business through ten new business standards to foster changes required in ECA's institutional culture. They are expected to result in a more purposeful organization with better quality products and services that are better delivered for greater results and impact.





The 10 Business Standards

1. Enhanced support to Member states and pan-African institutions through focused capacity development intervention.
2. A collective approach to implementing key initiatives.
3. Ensuring that the ECA policy centers are governed by a similar set of rules
4. Establishing one common data bank for ECA that is also accessible to all Stakeholders
5. Ensuring improved and monitored messaging and branding of ECA work
6. Establishing and maintaining a disciplined calendar of annual activities
7. Significantly reducing the present preponderance of service delivery through workshops and seminars
8. Establishing and implementing ambitious gender parity policies
9. Re-profiling of staff skills and capabilities to carry out new programme Priorities
10. Working assiduously to reduce carbon footprint of ECA

The key milestones of the participatory process to establish the Business Standards were:

- The establishment of a Taskforce for each of the ten Business Standards;
- The Task Forces were set up to recommend internal policies, targets and performance indicators of the Business Standards;
- Each Taskforce developed its own Terms of Reference based on guidance provided on the expected result. They were comprised of ECA staff representing a mix of all levels, professional backgrounds, gender and Staff Union representation. A convener, rapporteur and schedule of meetings for each was established and communicated in an information circular to all staff;
- Each Task Force was required to hold monthly consultations using an open, transparent, inclusive and consensus building approach;
- The final reports and recommendations of all the Task Forces were reviewed and evaluated by the Executive Secretary and his findings were shared with all staff. Recommendations that were relevant and implementable were adopted. For those that were not accepted, the rationale for not accepting them was shared. More than eighty percent of the recommendations were adopted.



Results of the Task Force's recommendations

In line with the Task Force's recommendations and following the ECA Senior Management Team Retreat in September 2013, actions to implement the recommendations endorsed are already well under way.

1. The following strategic documents have been developed to complement the restructuring efforts:
 - Capacity Development Strategy;
 - Partnerships Strategy;
 - Knowledge Management Strategy;
 - IT Strategy;
 - Communication Strategy;
 - Data Management Protocol to guide the collection, processing and use of data;
 - Template for the Country Profiles to be produced in 2014.

2. The following administrative circulars will take effect:
 - On Re-profiling and Training
 - On incentives for professional category staff involved in knowledge generation
 - On Rules of engagement for ECA key initiatives
 - On HR management policies on Gender Parity Targets
 - On a ECA Green Policy

The new ECA

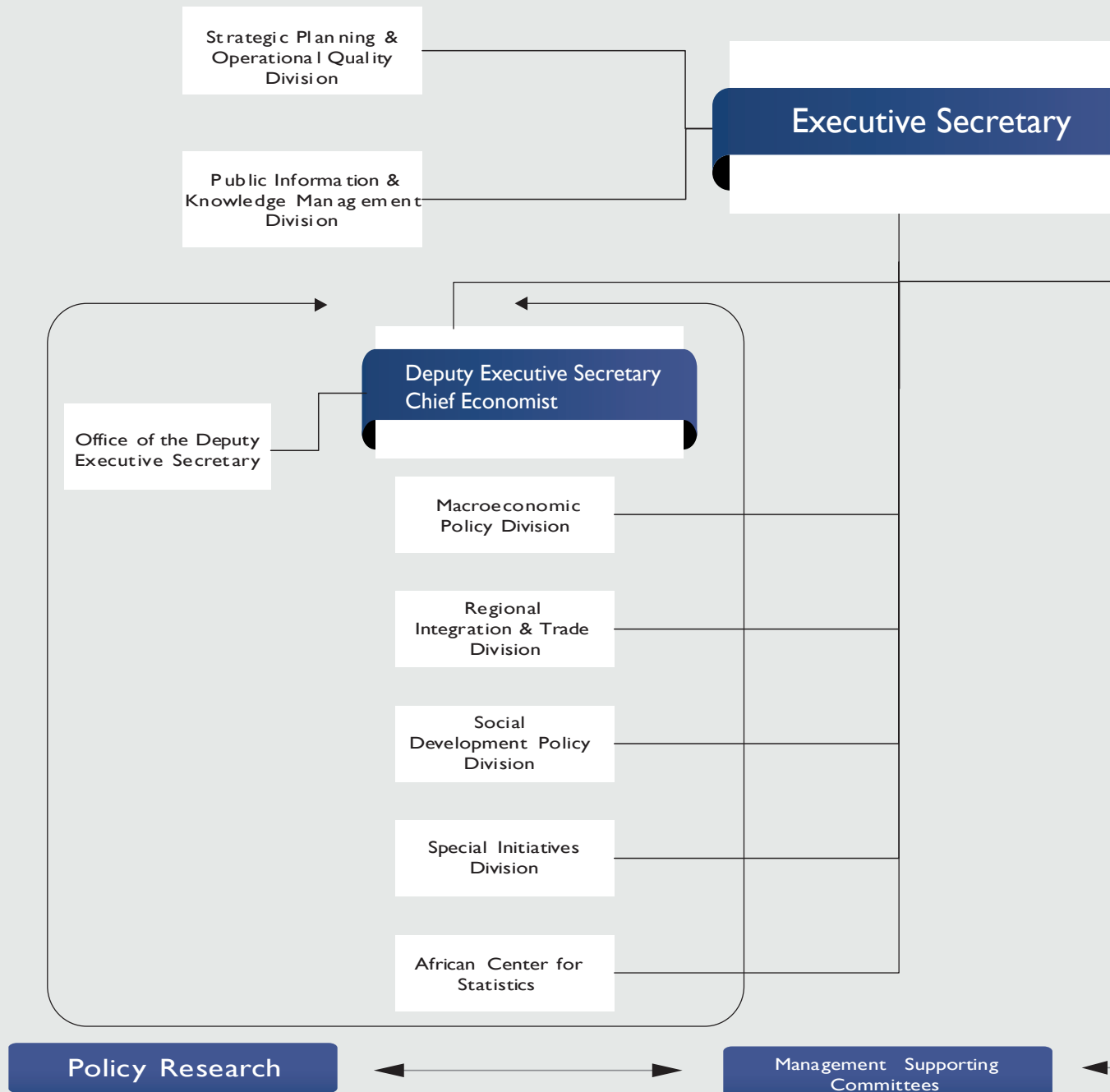
The new ECA is now recalibrated and better positioned than ever to serve as:

- i. The prime institution of the United Nations mandated to bring Africa's development vision and concerns to the global system;
- ii. The think tank of reference on African development policy issues that respond to the needs of its member states regarding economic and social development in Africa. ECA now places a special focus on collecting up to date and original regional statistics in order to ground its policy research and advocacy on clear objective evidence; promoting policy consensus; providing meaningful capacity development; and providing advisory services in key thematic fields. This will also help African countries to own their development efforts and narrative.
- iii. The provider of technical advisory services to African governments, intergovernmental organizations and institutions; and
- iv. The provider of specialized regional advisory services and meaningful capacity development support to member states provided in the following priority areas:
 - Promotion of industrialization
 - Design and implementation of macroeconomic policy
 - Design and articulation of development planning
 - Supporting mineral resources contract negotiations
 - Promoting the proper management of natural resources for Africa's transformation





Annex I



ECA Organisational Chart

