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ACRONYMS

ACPC	African Climate Policy Centre
ADF	African Development Forum
AfDB	African Development Bank
AMR	Annual Ministerial Review
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ATPC	African Trade Policy Centre
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CEMAC	Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahel-Saharan States
CEPGL	Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries
Clim-Dev	Climate Information for Development in Africa
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DA	Development Account
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
EAC	East African Community
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ERA	Economic Report on Africa
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICE	Intergovernmental Committee of Experts
ICGLR	The Great Lakes Parliamentary Forum of Peace
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
KM	Knowledge Management
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RBM	Results-Based Management
RCM	UN Regional Consultation Mechanism
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SROs	ECA Subregional Offices
StatCom	African Statistical Commission
TTCA	Transit Transport Coordination Authority of the Northern Corridor
UMA	Maghreb Arab Union

UNCTs	United Nations Country Teams
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WTO	World Trade Organization

Introduction by the Executive Secretary

The present report, which is being submitted to the forty-second session of the Commission, covers the period between May 2008 and May 2009 and highlights the main achievements of the secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) during the past year. It provides a synoptic overview of the major activities, programmes, events and developments within the context of the mandates of ECA, highlighting the key accomplishments and challenges faced in the implementation of the work programme during the year.

The period covered in this report was one of progress for the Commission, as it sought to consolidate its activities and achievements in the context of the ECA repositioning, which began in 2006. In this regard, the Commission's work continued to focus on achieving results in its work of supporting member States in their efforts to achieve poverty reduction and sustainable development as well as addressing other emerging challenges in the context of the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

For the continent, the period coincided with the worst global financial and economic crisis since the Great Depression. The crisis could not have come at a worse time for Africa, as it undermines the significant progress made in recent years and worsens the impact of the food and fuel crises suffered by most African countries last year. As the crisis deepens, the impact on African countries is rapidly worsening, particularly in terms of rising unemployment and a widening external financing gap.

ECA reacted immediately to the threats posed by the global financial crisis to Africa, by organizing, together with the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), a Ministerial Conference on the impact of the crisis on Africa and the policy responses to cushion these impacts. In addition, ECA continues to play a key role in providing analytical and technical support to the Committee of 10 Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors in their meetings, and also provided technical inputs to Africa's position for the April G-20 Summit in London. Chapter 1 of the report provides an overview of recent developments related to the financial crisis, including its impact on Africa's long-term development.

This report also reviews ECA's performance over the past year to support its member States in pursuing their development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As the report demonstrates, ECA achieved some significant milestones in its programme performance during the past year. Chapter 2 of the report provides an overview of the most significant achievements and challenges, including lessons learned and corrective action taken during the course of the year. It focuses on the actual results and progress made during the past year in sectors and areas directly linked to the 10 substantive subprogrammes of the Commission, which are designed to address the specific needs and priorities of member States. The chapter also reviews the major achievements of the five subregional offices in the context of the implementation of the multi-year programmes agreed with the major regional economic communities in the subregions.

To draw attention to the essential linkages between gender equality and achieving sustainable and inclusive development in Africa, ECA, in collaboration with the AUC and the AfDB organized the Sixth African Development Forum in Addis Ababa in November 2008 under the theme "*Action on gender equality, women's empowerment and ending violence against women*". The Consensus Statement adopted at the end of the forum identified three key areas for urgent action

at the country level: ending violence against women; financing for gender equality and women's empowerment; and data collection on gender and violence against women and girls.

Another important achievement during the past year was the convening of the ninth annual meeting of the Regional Coordination Mechanism of United Nations agencies working in Africa, chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General. The meeting focused on two themes, namely climate change and the food crisis. The Mechanism has now been strengthened as an instrument for strategic coordination and decision-making in support of the African Union (AU) and its NEPAD programme. I am also pleased to note that significant progress was made by all the nine clusters of the Mechanism over the past year, ranging from identifying areas of common concern in their work to drawing up plans of action, mobilizing resources, aligning of clusters with the priorities of the AU and actual implementation of projects and activities. Cluster activities are having a tangible impact on the implementation of key elements of the regional development agenda and on the institutional landscape in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme.

The Commission continued to make progress in its work on climate change with the establishment of the African Climate Policy Centre, which enjoys significant funding support from a number of our bilateral partners. The Centre will serve as the policy arm of the AU/AfDB/ECA Climate for Development in Africa programme and provide capacity building support to member States in climate change mitigation and adaptation. Just this past week, the Third African Ministerial Meeting on Financing for Development was held in Kigali, Rwanda. The meeting, which was jointly organized by ECA, AfDB, the United Kingdom Department for International Development, the East African Community and the Government of Rwanda, brought together African finance and environment ministers to address the impact of climate change on growth and the MDGs in Africa, and identify the additional investment and financial flows needed to address climate change mitigation and adaptation challenges in Africa. The Conference estimated that about \$US1.2 billion would be required to meet current challenges, and over \$US10 billion by the year 2030. The outcome of the conference will contribute to Africa's common position in the negotiation of a new climate change regime in Copenhagen in December 2009.

The report also provides highlights of some of the Commission's major flagship publications that were prepared or launched during the past year. These included: the Economic Report on Africa; Assessing Regional Integration in Africa; the African Statistical Yearbook; the MDGs Progress Report (all of which were jointly prepared with the AUC); and the African Economic Outlook, jointly published with AfDB.

Partnerships have remained a constant theme in the Commission's work since the repositioning exercise began in 2006. The spirit of cooperation and partnership that underpinned our repositioning efforts was further strengthened during the past year as the Commission continued to intensify its efforts to undertake jointly activities with other organizations, particularly the AUC, the AfDB, the regional economic communities and a wide range of development partners. Many examples of such partnerships can be found throughout this report.

Chapter 3 of the report provides a summary of the activities of the Intergovernmental Committees of Experts of the subregional offices since the last session of the Commission, held in April 2008. The main decisions and recommendations of these bodies requiring the attention or action of the ECA Conference of Ministers are also highlighted.

Efforts continued in the past year to strengthen organizational and management processes in the framework of United Nations results-based management and budgeting, with a particular focus

on measures taken to enhance resource mobilization and management, including measures to strengthen human resources management for overall organizational performance and effectiveness. Chapter 4 of the report highlights major progress in these areas.

The Commission also embarked on a major new initiative during the year with the launch of the Coalition for Dialogue on Africa in March 2009. The Coalition is a joint initiative of AfDB, the AUC and ECA established to strengthen ownership of the African development agenda. It succeeds the ECA Big Table and the Global Coalition for Africa and aims to provide an independent forum for dialogue on Africa's emerging and pressing challenges. Its work is guided by an independent high-level Advisory Board, currently chaired by the former President of Botswana, Mr. Festus Mogae, with a number of other eminent and distinguished Africans as members. The Chairperson of the AUC, the Executive Secretary of ECA and the President of AfDB are ex-officio members of the Coalition.

It is of course impossible to cover everything that has been done during the year in a single report. The present report highlights only the most significant achievements of the year. To supplement the report, a more detailed account of the activities undertaken, together with the relevant outputs, can be obtained from the ECA website at <http://www.uneca.org>.

It is my hope that this annual report will prove useful to member States in assessing the effectiveness and impact of ECA's work and illustrate the value of ECA to member States.

Abdoulie Janneh
United Nations Under-Secretary-General and
Executive Secretary of the
Economic Commission for Africa

CHAPTER I: IMPACT OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS ON AFRICA AND RESPONSES

A. Introduction

1. The world economy is facing the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. The crisis has changed the international economic environment in which African countries conduct and implement policies. It is taking place at a time when they are slowly emerging from the effects of the food and energy crises, and threatens to reverse the gains made by the region in recent years. African countries have taken some measures to cushion the impact of the crisis on their economies. However, they are constrained by lack of fiscal space and need international assistance to ensure that the financial crisis does not become a regional humanitarian crisis.

B. Impact of the crisis on Africa

2. At the beginning of the crisis, the widely held view was that the impact on Africa would be limited because of the low degree of integration of the region in global financial markets. The events of the last three months have shown that this initial assessment is optimistic. The immediate effects of the crisis on African economies have been limited to weakening currencies and declining stock markets, especially for some of the major stock exchanges in Africa. For example, In Egypt and Nigeria the stock market indices fell by more than 60 per cent between March 2008 and March 2009. Significant losses have also been observed in Kenya and South Africa.

3. There has been a tightening of credit in domestic financial markets and an increase in risk premiums facing African countries in global capital markets. There is evidence that several countries in the region are experiencing difficulties in obtaining funds from international capital markets. For example, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania have cancelled plans to raise funds in international capital markets. The drying up of this source of external finance is a serious setback for development in the region because the money raised would have been used to finance infrastructure development and boost growth. The crisis is also affecting African economies indirectly through the decline in global economic growth. Most countries in the region depend on advanced economies for trade and investment, and the decline in growth in these economies has had a negative effect on traditional sources of development finance for Africa. For example, commodity prices, on which many African countries depend for foreign exchange, have taken a big hit. The price of crude oil fell by more than 50 per cent between February 2008 and February 2009. The prices of copper, coffee, cotton and sugar have declined by more than 20 per cent over the same period.

4. There is growing concern that pressures to recapitalize the banking sector and provide support for ailing industries may force developed countries to cut down on flows of official development assistance (ODA) to Africa. Given the importance of ODA in financing social infrastructure, this will be a major setback for the region. Other sources of development finance such as foreign direct investment, tourism, workers' remittances and exports have also declined since the onset of the crisis. The drying up of these sources of finance will threaten the ability of African countries to boost growth and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Preliminary estimates indicate that the crisis will reduce growth in Africa in 2009 by between 2 to 4 percentage points depending on the assumptions made about resource flows to Africa and the effectiveness of policy responses to the crisis by advanced countries.

C. Policy responses

5. African countries have taken several steps to mitigate the impact of the financial crisis on their economies. These include interest rate reductions, recapitalization of financial institutions, measures to increase liquidity to banks and firms, fiscal stimulus, trade policy changes and regulatory reforms. The measures adopted differ from country to country depending on available fiscal space as well as the degree of vulnerability to the crisis. For example, oil-exporting countries in the region have more fiscal space to conduct countercyclical policies because they accumulated huge foreign reserves during the recent oil price hikes. In the non-oil economies, however, the ability to adopt such policies is severely limited, and so the use of fiscal stimulus measures is not widespread in these economies. In addition to the above measures, some countries have set up task forces or committees to monitor the financial crisis and advise the government on how to respond. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Nigeria and Rwanda are of countries that have adopted this approach.

6. Some actions have also been taken at the regional level to enable African countries to deal with the financial crisis. For example AfDB has set up a US\$ 1.5 billion Emergency Liquidity Facility to help African countries weather the global slowdown. It has also established a \$1 billion Trade Finance Facility to support trade and investment in Africa. Regional organizations have also taken steps to facilitate consensus on how to deal with the crisis. In collaboration with the ECA, AUC and AfDB, organized a high-level forum on the financial crisis for Ministers of Finance and Planning and Governors of Central Banks in Tunis on 12 November 2008. In the communiqué issued at the end of the meeting, African Ministers called for the setting up of a Committee of 10 Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors to recommend measures to be taken at the national, regional and international levels to mitigate the effect of the crisis on African economies. The Committee had its first meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, on 16 January 2009. The second meeting took place in Dar es Salaam, the United Republic of Tanzania, on 11 March 2009.

D. The way forward

7. African countries are making serious efforts to mitigate the impact of the crisis on their economies, but are constrained by the lack of adequate finance. There is therefore a need for the international community to assist the region in weathering the global slowdown. The main areas where international action is needed include:

8. *The need for resources:* rich countries should meet their existing commitments to Africa, and in particular should organize front load of funds under these commitments to enable African countries to respond effectively to the global slowdown. There is a need for additional resources from the following sources: sale of gold from the International Monetary Fund (IMF); issue of new Special Drawing Rights; and setting up of a vulnerability fund to be financed through rich countries providing 0.7 per cent of their domestic fiscal stimulus packages.

9. *Increasing policy space:* the need for international financial institutions to move away from policy conditionalities into more outcome-based measures of aid delivery is important in the prevailing environment. This will increase access to finance and also the speed of disbursement. The Country Policy and Institutional Assessment used by the World Bank is an example of an aid allocation mechanism that limits the ability of African countries to adopt the development policies and paths that they deem appropriate given their national priorities.

10. *Reform of the international financial architecture:* the international community needs to take proactive measures to ensure that African countries are adequately represented in international organizations where decisions affecting the world economy are made.

11. *Debt sustainability framework:* African countries are concerned about the increasing use of this framework in aid delivery, given its methodological limitations as well as subjective judgements regarding what constitute good policies and institutions. There is a need for a redesign of the framework to in order to make it more objective and realistic..

12. Since the financial crisis began, ECA has taken several steps to help African countries understand the impact of the crisis on their economies as well as identify measures to be taken to cushion these impacts. These steps include the organization of a Ministerial Conference on the Financial Crisis, in collaboration with AfDB and the AUC; presentations at the AU Summit of Heads of State and Government provision of support to the Committee of 10 Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors; and presentations at other international meetings and conferences.

13. In addition, ECA prepared three background documents for the Ministerial Conference. It also played a key role in drafting the communiqué adopted by African Ministers and Central Bank Governors at the end of the Conference. The communiqué spells out actions that need to be taken by African countries to mitigate the potential negative impacts of the crisis on African economies.

14. ECA has been providing research support to the Committee of 10, and contributed to the Committee meetings held in Cape Town and Dar es Salaam.

15. ECA continues to provide technical assistance to enable African countries to build capacity for policy design and implementation, including deepening economic reforms. It will also help African countries to reduce their vulnerability to external shocks by providing support in the development of productive capacities, which will enable them to diversify their exports and production.

CHAPTER II: REGULAR PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS AND RESULTS IN 2008-2009

A. MAJOR PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2008-2009

16. This chapter highlights the major achievements of ECA under the 10 subprogrammes around which the work of the Commission was organized, including the main challenges and lessons learned during the past year. It also highlights the major achievements under the other programmes implemented by ECA, in particular the regular programme of technical cooperation; and the United Nations Development Account, and the progress made by the United Nations system in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme at the regional level.

1. Trade, finance and economic development

17. The objective of ECA's work under this subprogramme is to contribute to the achievement of higher and sustained economic growth through enhanced capacity for macroeconomic and sectoral policy analysis, international trade and finance.

18. A major accomplishment in the area of macroeconomic policy analysis was the timely preparation and publication of the 2009 edition of the *Economic Report on Africa*, the Commission's main flagship publication. The report, which was jointly prepared with the AUC, will be launched at the annual meetings of the AU-ECA Conference of Ministers in Cairo, Egypt, in June 2009.

19. As with previous reports, the 2009 report has two main parts. The first part provides an overview of recent developments in the world economy and examines growth performance in African economies in 2008 as well as prospects for 2009, with particular emphasis on the impact of the global financial crisis. It analyses trends and patterns in regional disparities and discusses factors behind the observed disparities in economic performance in general and growth performance in particular. This part also discusses progress and challenges in the area of social development in recent years.

20. The second part of the report supplements the traditional region-wide analyses of trends with a thematic focus on agricultural development. The report highlights the need for African countries to utilize regionally integrated value chains and markets in the context of wider economic development based on the premise that increased investment in agriculture and agriculture-related industries provides the best opportunities for Africa to accelerate and sustain broad-based growth for poverty reduction. The main purpose of the report was to provide tangible support to recent commitments made by African governments on agriculture and regional integration in the context of the NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), taking into consideration also the effects of the recent food crisis in Africa.

21. During the period under review, ECA also contributed to the preparation of the African Economic Outlook (AEO) for 2008/2009, providing substantive inputs to the analyses on the short-term and medium-term economic outlook. The 2009 Outlook has a special focus on innovations in information and communication technologies (ICTs). It concludes that despite low penetration rates for new technologies, innovative applications of ICT have been proliferating in areas such as e-banking, e-payments, e-agriculture, e-trade, e-government and e-education. Many of these new tools are helping to shape an improved business environment by contributing to

market development, overcoming traditional infrastructure constraints and reducing business costs. The Outlook which is jointly published with AfDB and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), was launched at the AfDB annual meetings in Dakar, Senegal, in May 2009.

22. In the area of trade, several policy inputs were provided to ongoing initiatives during the period under review. Key among these was an audit report on the interim Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with the European Union (EU) and a set of draft policy recommendations on the way forward for the EPA negotiations prepared by the ECA secretariat and submitted to the AU Conference of Ministers of Trade and Finance in April 2008. This resulted in the development of an African template on the EPA negotiations, jointly drafted with the AUC, and endorsed by the AU Ministers of Trade in March 2009. The Ministers recommended that the template should be utilized by the regional economic communities as guidelines for harmonizing their EPAs.

23. To strengthen awareness of emerging trade issues and help African countries to benefit from the Aid for Trade initiative, ECA undertook several activities on related topics during the period under review. The March 2009 Conference of African Trade Ministers reviewed and endorsed the recommendations of a major ECA study on the status of implementation of the initiative in Africa. The recommendations will also inform Africa's position at the second Global Review of Aid for Trade, scheduled to take place in Geneva in July 2009.

24. ECA's African Trade Policy Centre, a field project supported by the Government of Canada, expanded its trade-related capacity-building services in 2008. More than 20 African countries benefited from training in the period under review. In addition, the Centre collaborated with GAINDE 2000 (a Senegalese customs computer system which provides automated solutions for efficiency in trade and transport) in organizing the International Single Window Conference in Dakar, Senegal, in November 2008. A major outcome of the conference was the decision to establish of an African Alliance for Electronic Trade. The Alliance, which was launched with ECA support in March 2009, will seek to boost cooperation and initiate common projects among member countries in the implementation of single windows.

25. The Commission's work in the key area of financing for development was further advanced in the period under review through a number of activities. ECA helped to organize the Third African Ministerial Conference on Financing for Development (Kigali, Rwanda, May 2009), which focused on the theme of "Climate change, an additional challenge for meeting the MDGs". The Conference sought to enhance Africa's voice on climate change issues in future international negotiations and G-8 discussions, as well as to alert African governments to climate change risks and the urgency of mainstreaming adaptation measures into national development policies and programmes.

26. Through research support and advocacy, ECA contributed to an effective and constructive participation by African countries in the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, held in Doha, Qatar from 29 November to 2 December 2008. ECA also contributed to the review of commitments by African countries and made several presentations outlining Africa's views and concerns on the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus. In addition, the third African Economic Conference was jointly organized with AfDB in Tunis in November 2008, bringing together more than 300 economists and policymakers to discuss issues related to the theme of the Conference: "Globalization, institutions and economic development of Africa". The current international

financial crisis was also a key focus of attention during the Conference, as a special meeting of African finance ministers and central bank governors was convened at the same venue on the first day of the Conference to discuss Africa's response to the global financial and economic crisis. Several background documents were prepared by the ECA secretariat for the Conference, focusing on (a) the global financial crisis and its impact on African economies and policy responses; (b) the current financial crisis and the international financial architecture; and (c) a briefing note on the current financial crisis and its impact on African economies. Further, an expert group meeting on financing for development and fiscal policy in Africa was organized in collaboration with the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Abuja, Nigeria, in February 2009 to deepen understanding of the nexus between fiscal policy and domestic resource mobilization for purposes of development finance. In particular, the meeting provided an opportunity for experts and African policymakers to engage in dialogue on the challenges of as well as the prerequisites for successful mobilization of domestic resources, and the role that fiscal policy in this area could have for development finance.

2. Food security and sustainable development

27. The objective of this subprogramme is to strengthen the capacity of member States to formulate and implement policies, strategies and programmes that take into account the synergies between agriculture and environment with a view to fostering sustainable development in Africa.

28. During the period under review, ECA made significant progress in the preparation and implementation of its climate and development programmes, and provided member States with important support towards assisting them to respond effectively to the urgent challenges posed by climate change. The Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDev-Africa) programme, a joint AU-ECA-AfDB initiative developed in collaboration with the secretariat of the Global Climate Observing System, was also presented to and approved by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at its twelfth session, held in June 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa. ClimDev-Africa seeks to facilitate the development of policies, practices, services, observation networks and communication with stakeholders to enable effective climate change mitigation and adaptation in Africa. The operational design of the programme consists of two key elements, the African Climate Policy Centre and ClimDev-Africa Special Fund.

29. Against this background, ECA played an important role in organizing Preparatory Meeting on Climate Change for African National Focal Points and Negotiators and the African Conference of Ministers in Charge of Environment on Climate Change, which took place in November 2008 in Algiers, Algeria. Prior to the Algiers meetings, ECA actively participated in climate change negotiations which took place in Accra, Ghana, from 21 to 27 August 2008. The Accra meeting advanced work on a strengthened and effective international climate change deal under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well as work on emission reduction rules and tools under the Kyoto Protocol.

30. Jointly with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Drylands Development Centre and the Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, ECA organized the Third African Drought Adaptation Forum in September 2008. The Forum brought together some 80 policymakers, government officials, United Nations agencies, donors, practitioners from local and international non-governmental organizations and CBOs, the media and researchers from around Africa and the Arab States to exchange practical experience,

findings and ideas on how to adapt to the increasing threat of drought and climate change in the drylands of Africa.

31. In order to promote food security and agricultural development in Africa, ECA is carrying out activities to follow up its successful advocacy for articulating and strengthening the implementation of the AU/NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) around the development of the value chains for strategic food commodities within a framework of regional integration. Special emphasis in this work is placed on supporting agribusiness and agro-industry development, in close partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). ECA is collaborating with FAO to champion the development of major agricultural and food product value chains in East Africa, and with UNIDO to promote development in the agribusiness sector. ECA is also collaborating with the AU/NEPAD and AfDB for the establishment of an African common market for agricultural products. It also collaborated with the AUC in the organization of the recent Conference of African Ministers of Agriculture, held from 20 to 24 April 2009 at AU headquarters in Addis Ababa.

32. In order to enhance the capacity of African member countries to formulate and implement appropriate programmes, strategies and policies to move towards sustainable modernization of agriculture and rural transformation, ECA made progress in the implementation of the United Nations Development Account project in this area, and best practices for selected African strategic commodities were assessed in West Africa, Central Africa and Southern Africa. The value chain approach was used to capture success and its related determinants at each stage of the chain, as well as challenges and constraints. Commodities in focus for the assessment are palm oil and banana plantain in Cameroon, maize in Malawi, cassava in Nigeria, rice and tomato in Senegal and milk in South Africa.

33. ECA is promoting biotechnology uptake in Africa and helping the region to become a global partner in the development, transfer and application of the technology. It has developed a UN-Biotech/Africa website and embarked on the production of a newsletter, which now provides information on all issues related to biotechnology, and the United Nations system-wide contribution to biotechnology uptake in Africa. The website is linked to the website of UN-Biotech, the global forum on biotechnology for the development of all continents.

34. Within the framework of CAADP, ECA continued to play an important role in the implementation of the AU/ECA/AfDB Joint Initiative on Land Policy in Africa. The initiative aims to harness global and regional resources and build effective partnerships and synergies in support of Africa's quest to improve the management and governance of land and land resources. The initiative has raised the profile of African land issues at the subregional, regional and global levels. It also contributed input to influence a land bill under consideration in Kenya. It has led to the creation of effective partnerships between United Nations agencies and other institutions on land policy in Africa.

35. Following successful participatory subregional assessments and consultations on land policy in Africa undertaken as part of this initiative, a Pan-African Land Policy Framework and Guidelines in support of the implementation of the land and water management component of the CAADP programme has been formulated. The framework and guidelines were considered and adopted at a regional expert meeting and by the Joint Conference of African Ministers of Agriculture, Land and Livestock in April 2009. The framework is scheduled to be submitted for adoption at the AU in July 2009 of Heads of State and Government Summit.

3. Governance and public administration

36. ECA's objective under this subprogramme is to promote good governance practices for all sectors of society, including the civil service, the public sector, the private sector and civil society, and to support the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) process.

37. During the period under review, ECA expanded its project on "Assessing and monitoring progress towards good governance in Africa," which is designed to inform policymaking on governance-related issues. The project will culminate in the publication of the second edition of the African Governance Report later in the year. The Report aims to help African countries to develop, sustain and internalize the norms of good governance within the public and private realms, enhance analysis and disseminate information and best practices.

38. Building on the success of the first Report, published in 2006, the second will present analyses on the state of governance in 28 additional countries which have made impressive strides in building capable States on the continent. Other important outcomes of the study are the country profiles that are drawn from national country reports on governance. The national reports underwent several validation steps: national launch workshops, national stakeholders' workshops and subregional workshops. One of the unique features of the national governance reports and the African Governance Report (AGR) is the painstaking attempt to identify the institutional capacity deficits at the country, subregional and regional levels and to demonstrate the linkages between each country's capacity endowment or deficit and good governance.

39. The 2009 Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness was also published during the period under review. The report, which was prepared jointly by ECA and OECD in response to a request from the NEPAD heads of State and government, was launched at the twentieth Summit of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee in January 2009.

40. The main objectives of the report to authors were to gauge how far commitments made by Africa and its development partners have been delivered, whether they have produced the desired results, and what are the key future policy priorities. This process in general, and the report in particular, are now important mechanisms for tracking mutual accountability between African countries and development partners. They also provide a valuable basis for dialogue between the G-8, G-20 and Africa on the African development agenda.

41. Another important area of work has been the fight against corruption, where ECA seeks to promote a holistic approach including engaging major stakeholders – the judiciary, national anti-corruption institutions, parliaments and the pan-African association of national anti-corruption institutions in Africa. For this purpose, an International Conference on Institutions, Culture and Corruption in Africa was jointly organized with the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, in October 2008 in Addis Ababa. The Conference brought together over 100 participants from national anti-corruption bodies, research and academic institutions, the media, regional and international organizations and non-governmental organizations to discuss the issue from an African perspective and develop policies and strategies for addressing the problem. An expert group meeting was also convened in February 2009 to review ECA's latest study – "assessing the efficiency and impact of national anti-corruption institutions in Africa". The study presents a detailed examination of the work of national anti-corruption institutions across the continent, their efficiency and impact, including exploring ways of strengthening their

capacity. This was followed by the creation of a portal to promote knowledge and information-sharing on anti-corruption issues in Africa.

42. The ECA secretariat continued to assist member States in all the stages of the APRM process, by providing advice to the APRM Panel and Secretariat on the implementation of the APRM process; assisting member States to build and maintain a database of information, including providing access to data sources and sharing information and experience; and providing support to countries in their preparations for participation in the APRM.

4. Information and science and technology for development

43. ECA's work under this subprogramme aims at strengthening and sustaining an African information society, as well as developing capacity for the formulation, adaptation and implementation of appropriate science and technology policies and programmes.

44. During the period under review, ECA fulfilled its objective of improving member States' capacities to formulate, implement, coordinate and evaluate policies and strategies for information for development. Although the target was to increase the number of countries that have formulated policies and plans relating to national information and communication infrastructure and national spatial data infrastructure from 26 in 2007 to 30 by the end of 2009, 6 additional African countries have already initiated or completed a policy process in one or both of these areas (Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, the Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Swaziland). Two other countries (Benin and Mali) have developed sectoral strategies, and three regional economic communities, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) and ECOWAS have adopted ICT strategies and regulatory frameworks to put in place a harmonized enabling environment for the knowledge economy. Moreover, three new subregional initiatives on improving the availability and use of information for development were designed, bringing the total number to 27 pilot programmes. At the same time, three additional capacity-building programmes were implemented, increasing the number of such programmes to 27 as well. Overall, during the reporting period, 246 stakeholders, 20 per cent of whom were women, benefited from ICT training and capacity-building activities.

45. Driven by a growing concern at the potential vulnerability of networked societies, African countries requested ECA to initiate a programme on cybersecurity. In response to these requests and to recommendations made during the eTrade Initiative undertaken during the previous biennium, ECA launched an African Cyber Security Strategy programme in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique to strengthen member States' capacities to meet policy, legislative, regulatory and infrastructure requirements within the framework of the Global ePolicy Resource Network. In another groundbreaking initiative, ECA looked at the development of mobile phones for banking (m-banking) and other transactions in three countries (Kenya, Senegal and South Africa). M-banking was flagged as a very effective way for the poor to use ICTs in their economic endeavours.

46. As part of the recent ECA repositioning, more emphasis is being put on strengthening member States' capacity to harness the potential of science, technology and innovation for their socio-economic development, mainly through eight science-and-technology related programmes implemented in 2008. Through the Science with Africa Conference, more than 800 participants representing African governments, academia, the business community, the media, civil-society organizations, student bodies, the development partner community and international

organizations and business enterprises in the field of science and technology were given an opportunity to explore ways in which science, technology and innovation could be used to promote accelerated economic growth in Africa (www.uneca.org/sciencewithafrica). Mozambique benefited from ECA assistance to operationalize its Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy. ECA also initiated the development of an African Innovation Framework, which will become the centrepiece of the work of the subprogramme, thus helping member States to establish an enabling environment for innovation to flourish. The Framework should become a useful tool for policymakers which will bring together the elements of good practice required to foster innovation. It will provide a coherent analytical tool for handling the disparate processes of knowledge creation, distribution and use, as well as the ways in which these affect productivity, competitiveness, and economic and social development.

47. ECA organized in Addis Ababa, from 28 April to 1 May 2009, the first session of the Committee on Development Information, Science and Technology on the theme “Scientific development innovation and the knowledge economy”, which was attended by more than 600 policymakers and decision makers, scientists, lawyers and journalists. The Committee made key recommendations intended for both member States and ECA on scientific development, innovation and the knowledge economy; an enabling environment for innovation systems; and innovation and economic growth. Meanwhile 12 innovative projects from 10 African countries have won the 2009 Technology in Government in Africa awards in recognition of achievements that led to changes in the use of ICTs for public service delivery. The awards fell in four categories: public service delivery to citizens or communities; improved health services through the use of ICT; improved educational services through the use of ICT; and public-private partnerships in economic and financial e-services delivery.

5. Economic cooperation and regional integration

48. The objective of ECA under this subprogramme is to promote effective economic cooperation among member States and strengthen the process of regional integration in Africa through enhanced intra-African trade and physical integration, with particular emphasis on the development of infrastructure and natural resources.

49. ECA continued strengthening the knowledge and awareness of member States in the areas of intra-African trade for development and regional integration. With ECA’s support, two countries (Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania) have ratified a protocol to create a Central African corridor aimed at increasing intraregional trade in Central Africa. ECA’s coordinating role contributed to the conclusion of an understanding to create a common free trade area among three regional economic communities, namely COMESA, with 19 member countries), the Southern African Development Community (SADC, with 14 member countries) and the East African Community (EAC, with 5 member countries).

50. ECA provided technical support to COMESA under a programme spanning 2008 and 2009 for the organization of two meetings of national task teams on regional trade policy and sensitive products in April 2009 in Swaziland. Through these technical meetings, COMESA member States reached a consensus on a harmonized regional trade policy and lists of sensitive products that will pave the way for the successful establishment of the COMESA Customs Union.

51. To address key problems of intra-African trade, ECA, in collaboration with the Walvis Bay Corridor group, organized a regional workshop and a study tour on trade facilitation and

intra-African trade for the Eastern and Southern African subregions in February 2009 in Walvis Bay, Namibia.

52. In the transport sector, experts from 21 African countries and 8 African organizations involved in transport facilitation attended an African regional meeting held in June 2008 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the auspices of ECA to review the Almaty Programme of Action. Furthermore, ECA enabled three African countries to send representatives to a meeting on the Public-Private partnership Alliance Programme for Capacity-building in Infrastructure Development and Provision of Basic Services organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in February 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand. Moreover, ECA assisted the regional economic communities to promote greater coordination of their transport policies and programmes financed under Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Programme, by helping to organize the communities' transport coordination committee meeting in Addis Ababa.

53. In the energy sector, ECA in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) organized a regional forum in September 2008 in Addis Ababa on "Interconnections and electricity access for sustainable development" under the United Nations Development Account project on "Capacity-building for interregional electricity access and supply in Africa". The forum adopted a set of recommendations on how to expand electricity transmission lines and gas pipelines between African countries. About 30 policymakers and energy experts representing national power utilities, subregional power pools, river basin organizations, regional economic communities and e8(a group of 10 leading electric companies from G-8 countries) were in attendance.

54. During the period under review, ECA assisted African countries, through the AU Ministers responsible for mineral resources development, to develop an "African Mining Vision 2050", which was adopted by the AU Heads of State and Government at their February 2009 Summit in Addis Ababa. The Vision provides a framework for the promotion of transparent, equitable and optimal exploitation of mineral resources to underpin broad-based sustainable growth and socio-economic development in Africa.

6. Gender and women in development

55. This subprogramme aims at contributing to the achievement of women's advancement and gender equality in member States.

56. The Sixth African Development Forum was held in November 2008 under the theme "Action on gender equality, women's empowerment and ending violence against women in Africa". The Forum brought together over 800 participants, and provided an opportunity for the continent to take stock of progress made towards achieving gender equality and women's empowerment and ending violence against women; identify the challenges constraining implementation of policies and strategies; and articulate concrete actions to hasten the translation of African countries' commitments into reality. Three priority actions were recommended during the meeting: launching an Africa-wide campaign to eliminate violence against women and girls that involves a three-year campaign aimed at addressing the underlying economic and social causes of the vulnerability of girls and women, strengthening of the legal system and provision of supportive services; scaling up efforts to improve financing for gender equality; and strengthening the collection of reliable data on gender equality, women's empowerment and violence against women and girls.

57. Regarding the Gender and Macroeconomic Programme, agreements were signed with the Governments of Djibouti and Ghana for the conduct of time use studies that will generate data for use in developing the gender and macroeconomic dimension that will be used to influence the economic models used by countries so that they can take into account gender equality indicators.

58. More than 17 African countries participated in a High-level Policy Dialogue to assess the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and address the challenges ahead. They agreed to develop plans of action foster achievement of the objectives set forth in the resolution.

59. At the Conference of Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs held in August 2008, ECA launched an African Women's Rights Observatory that will serve as a comprehensive source of data on research findings and resources, institutions, developments and events related to women's rights in Africa. It will also track the progress of African countries in the area of women's human rights.

60. In partnership with UN-HABITAT and UNDP's regional gender programme for Africa, ECA embarked on a study whose aim is to assess progress achieved in the implementation of the MDGs in Africa, taking into account the gender dimension in all the indicators of these goals. The preliminary results of the study already show that the issue of gender equality is not limited to a single goal, but applies to all of them.

61. The Beijing Platform for Action is one of the key frameworks used by ECA in efforts to enhance member States' ability to implement and monitor the implementation of regional and global resolutions, conventions, instruments and protocols on women's human rights. In preparation for the review of the Beijing Platform for Action, ECA developed an evaluation process, which it presented to its subsidiary body, the Committee on Women and Development, in August 2008. The Committee adopted the proposed process and encouraged ECA to work with speed towards ensuring a successful review.

7. Development planning and administration

62. The objective of this subprogramme is to enhance national and regional capacities for the formulation and implementation of development policies and economic management strategies.

63. In spite of its persistent fragile financial situation, the African Institute for Development and Economic Planning (IDEP) continued to design and implement programmes that supported policymakers' priorities in the area of economic policy and to spearhead efforts in capacity-building. The Institute's technical and analytical skills training programme is structured around three main components, the 18-month Master of Arts degree programme in economic policy and management; short-term courses with a duration of one to six weeks; and tailor-made training programmes, which are designed and implemented at the request of IDEP's African stakeholders, particularly member States or their agencies and institutions. Ten trainees from eight countries graduated from the MA programme in April 2008, while 13 students from nine countries who started the programme in 2007 graduated in April 2009. The course content ranges from advanced quantitative techniques in economic theory to specific African issues such as regional integration, debt management and negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO). It is encouraging to note that IDEP continued to receive and process applications for the MA programme during the reporting period.

64. Five three-to-four-week courses plus a course in economic report writing in the areas of industrial policy, applied econometrics, debt management, regional integration and project monitoring and evaluation were successfully delivered in 2008. Two short courses in industrial policy and project evaluation and management were also offered during the reporting period. These short courses provided an appropriate tool to enhance the policy analysis skills of African officials in a wide array of topics of relevance to the development challenges of their countries or the region. For example, a bilingual session on industrial policy analysis in Africa which was organized from 21 April to 16 May 2008 for middle-level and senior or private-sector staff responsible for industrial issues in Africa contributed to developing a critical mass of middle-to-high-level policymakers and decision makers who will be better equipped to design and manage industrial development policies in Africa. The course was attended by 25 participants (14 French-speaking and 11 English-speaking) from 25 countries including 10 women. The course was fully sponsored by IDEP with technical assistance from UNIDO. In July 2008, IDEP also organized, in collaboration with ECOWAS, a short course on economic report writing for the benefit of National Coordinating Committees operating under the ECOWAS Multilateral Surveillance Mechanism. The course, which aimed at enhancing the capacity of Committee officials to produce quarterly economic reports, brought together 31 participants from eight French-speaking countries in the ECOWAS subregion, including officials of the ECOWAS Commission.

65. Besides five public lectures delivered by reputable experts, the trainees also participated in seminars in diverse areas of African development during the reporting period. IDEP continues to encourage female participation in all its training programmes and research activities.

8. Statistics

66. The objective of ECA's work under this subprogramme is to improve the production, dissemination and use of key demographic, social, economic and environmental statistics, including the MDG indicators, in accordance with internationally agreed standards and good practice, and in order to promote the implementation of the new Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity-building in Africa.

67. ECA continued to coordinate the work of the Statistics Cluster of the MDG Africa Working Group. Accomplishments during the period under review include designing a business plan for the Cluster, making recommendations to the MDG Africa Steering Group, which is chaired by the United Nations Secretary-General, and monitoring progress in the implementation of the business plan. In addition, ECA was involved in a study of discrepancies among national and international data arising from monitoring of work towards the MDGs in Africa. Together with AfDB, it produced a two-year programme of work aimed at reinforcing the capacity of African countries to report on the Goals.

68. Where knowledge management in the area of statistics is concerned, ECA published the quarterly African Statistical Newsletter as a medium for the exchange of knowledge, experience and best practice in statistics and statistical development. Articles for publication in the Newsletter are written by practising statisticians from different countries and organizations in and outside Africa. The Commission also continued to work with AfDB to publish the African Statistical Journal, an outlet for technical and research work on statistics in Africa.

69. The fourth Africa Symposium on Statistical Development, held in Luanda, Angola, from 9 to 13 February 2009, was used as the main vehicle for mobilizing support for and preparing African countries to fully participate in the 2010 round of population and housing censuses. Other activities included the preparation of an Africa Addendum to the Global Principles and Recommendations on Population and Housing Censuses, the preparation of a Guide on Census Planning and Management and a Guide on Census Data Processing and Dissemination, assistance in census cartographic work in a number of countries and the organization of workshops on census planning and implementation, data processing and analysis.

70. ECA followed up progress already made in creating awareness among statisticians about gender issues and the need to mainstream them into national statistical programmes. In this connection, a high-level policy dialogue on gender statistics was held in Kampala, Uganda in June 2008, a first regional workshop on gender statistics was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in December 2008 and a Global Forum on Gender Statistics and the first meeting of the Kampala City Group on Gender Statistics were held in Accra, Ghana in January 2009. Furthermore, a Gender Statistics Network was set up with the aim of promoting the exchange of information among stakeholders in the area of gender statistics.

71. During the reporting period, ECA organized a series of workshops focusing on the International Recommendations for Distributive Trade Statistics, the international economic and social classifications, review of the African Human Development Report, and crime statistics. These workshops were also used as a framework to present and discuss recent developments in statistics methodologies, and to review the quality of data provided by African countries, as well as the methodologies adopted and used by them. In its coordinating role, ECA provided substantive servicing for the first meeting of the Statistical Commission for Africa and the third forum on African Statistical Development, and organized two meetings on the design and elaboration of National Strategies for the development of Statistics, which all promoted the new Reference Regional Strategic Framework for Statistical Capacity-building in Africa.

9. Social development

72. The objective of this subprogramme is to strengthen the capacity of member States to formulate policies and programmes for poverty reduction and for delivering equitable social services and integrating social dimensions in the development process, in line with internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs.

73. In collaboration with AU and the United Nations Population Fund, ECA has started the 15-year review of the implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in Africa, to assess progress achieved in the context of the MDGs, taking into account the recommendations of the 1999 and 2004 reviews. During the past year, in partnership with AU and, the Fund, ECA developed, the technical tools to facilitate the review. Forty-two countries have submitted national progress reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action, which are being consolidated for submission to the Ministers of Social Development and Population at their meeting in October 2009 for their endorsement, as well as recommendations as to the way forward to fulfil requirements identified in the Conference's Plan of Action.

74. In May 2008, ECA organized an international conference on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in collaboration with Leonard Cheshire International. The conference brought together around 500 participants from 58 countries, with

significant attendance by participants with disabilities from African countries. The conference resulted in the adoption of the Addis Ababa Call to Action, designed to help promote and protect the rights of all persons with disabilities in Africa and ensure that their concerns are mainstreamed in development policies. The conference participants also emphasized the need to initiate and consolidate partnerships between government and civil society for successful implementation of the Convention.

75. ECA produced two significant reports in 2008, aimed at informing and stimulating discussion about issues of employment and ageing. “Youth employment opportunities focused on promoting decent employment for young women through entrepreneurship training and microfinance, among others. The main findings of the report were discussed at an expert group meeting held in December 2008. Another prominent product in the past year was “The state of older people in Africa, 2007-2008: Regional review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing”, which drew attention to the issue of ageing as a major emerging challenge for Africa (the continent is projected to experience a faster rate of population ageing than any other region in the next 40 years). The report found gaps in national responses to the issue of ageing, and proposed specific policy actions for government intervention in collaboration with key stakeholders.

76. ECA’s monitoring and reporting efforts during the year culminated in a report on “Placing social integration at the centre of Africa’s development agenda”. The report notes that despite recent years of relatively high economic growth in Africa, chronic poverty remains persistent in many countries partly because governments and development partners do not pay adequate attention to socially excluded groups. The report concludes that social development issues, especially social integration and gender equality, need to be placed firmly at the centre of Africa’s development agenda.

77. ECA’s analytical expertise was also critical to another publication in the past year, “Assessing progress in Africa towards the MDGs, 2008”, which was jointly prepared with the AUC and presented to the AU Executive Council during the AU Summit in July 2008 in Sharm-El-Sheikh, Egypt. The analysis provided in the report will also inform discussions at the 2009 annual meetings of the AU-ECA Conference of Ministers.

78. To support interventions aimed at scaling up progress towards the targets of the MDGs, ECA prepared a major analytical report entitled “Mainstreaming health equity into the development agenda of African countries”. The report identified systemic inequities in access to health care in Africa and proposed measures to mainstream health equity concerns in national development plans and strategies to achieve the health-related MDGs. ECA also prepared two other reports on national health insurance schemes and the nexus of growth, poverty and inequality.

79. ECA is undertaking a study on MDG-based planning in 15 African countries out of the 40 that have adopted MDG-based poverty reduction strategies or national development plans, as a follow-up to a decision taken at the 2005 World Summit and five-year review of progress towards the targets of the MDGs. Furthermore, ECA has embarked on a study of four African countries to explore the contribution of subnational governments to efforts aimed at achieving the MDGs, in addition to ongoing studies on social protection and poverty reduction in Africa.

Challenges and lessons learned in the implementation of the work programme

80. This section highlights the major challenges and lessons learned in the implementation of the work programme, including measures taken to strengthen programme performance and overall organizational effectiveness.

81. *Strengthening partnerships with other organizations.* Substantial efforts have already been invested in developing partnerships with key organizations such as the AUC and AfDB. Learning from and building on those successes, ECA is scaling up and strengthening efficient collaborative engagements through partnerships with other organizations in the implementation of selected activities. This approach will contribute to ensuring coherence, avoiding duplication and improving the quality of outputs. Efforts to promote institutional coordination between the AUC, ECA and AfDB and strengthen linkages between the Regional Consultation Mechanism, United Nations Country Teams and the Regional Directors Team need to be enhanced.

82. *Measuring results.* The difficulty experienced in measuring results and assessing impacts in context of the results-based management is one of the challenges raised within the Commission. Efficiently capturing evidence-based results would enable the organization to genuinely differentiate successes from failures, document best practices and consequently improve planning and implementation strategies. Furthermore, it would enhance efficiency and effectiveness, strengthen accountability and sharpen the focus of some of the subprogrammes so as to better address the needs and priorities of member States. Evidence-based results for extrabudgetary projects, for instance, will strengthen credibility *vis a vis* donors and eventually lead to additional resources. In that regard, ECA has undertaken to finalize work on a tailored monitoring and evaluation reference framework to support the Commission's RBM strategies. As part of the effort, Quality assurance guidelines to improve the quality, sustainability, efficiency and cost-effectiveness of ECA's operations have also been developed. Furthermore, a policy note has been drafted to guide management in designing measures to support monitoring and evaluation interventions to ensure greater effectiveness in programme and project implementation.

83. *Improving interdivisional collaboration in ECA.* Collaboration and synergy among divisions and subregional offices is being strengthened. Experience shows that a more synergy-oriented and knowledge-sharing operational structure would foster consistency, efficiency and effectiveness and ultimately create an environment conducive to sustainable results. A number of measures are being explored to tackle synergy-related issues, particularly in implementing the multi-year programmes and producing ECA's flagship publications.

84. *Strengthening relationships with regional economic communities and member States.* Regional economic communities and member States are ECA's main clients, and as such need to be at the centre of the Commission's operational approach to provide constructive feedback, facilitate the measuring of impact and help shape ECA's programme of work. Experience shows that it is critical to strengthen existing relationships with regional economic communities and member States in implementing ECA's activities. To this end, the subregional offices have been called upon to take up a leadership role in strengthening subregional relationships and developing functional networks, through the implementation of multi-year programmes in each subregion.

85. *Fostering States leadership by member in tackling development issues.* Experience reveals that more than a buy-in is needed from local governments and stakeholders as they need to be in

the driving seat for development activities to have a lasting impact. ECA's strategy and approach in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2010-2011 take local leadership into account to determine expected results and impact. Moreover, ECA's activities have clearly established that the effective implementation of development agendas needs active collaboration between civil-society organizations and governments. Consequently, as spelled out in the PPB, ECA intends to strengthen partnerships between the private and the public sectors and civil society in the formulation and implementation of development policies and programmes.

86. Capacity-building in international trade. To judge by the results of the audit of the bilateral agreements signed under interim Economic Partnership Agreements, the negotiating capacities of the African countries regarding WTO and related agreements still require serious grooming. ECA is able to impart the required knowledge and skills to African governments in the area of trade negotiations, facilitation and legislation.

87. Capacity-building in statistical systems. Without duplicating parallel structures at the regional level, existing data systems and institutions need to be harmonized and upgraded through horizontal linkages between various data producer and user nodes at all levels (subnational, national and supranational). These efforts will also lead to improvements in data consistency, efficiency and cost-effectiveness in delivering assistance to countries and regional economic communities, as well as provision of indicators for monitoring progress towards regional integration.

88. Capacity-building in ICT infrastructure. ECA is assisting the countries of the region in the design and implementation of ICT frameworks, and the related policies and regulatory changes that promote an enabling environment remain crucial to enhancing the capacity of African countries to respond to the global challenges of the emerging knowledge economy.

89. Financial and administrative matters. The redeployment of staff together with a high vacancy rate has hampered the implementation of planned activities under some subprogrammes. However, the allocation of financial and human resources is being strengthened. In the context of RBM, efforts are being undertaken to ensure that key resource requirements are met through appropriate organizational arrangements and the related planning, monitoring and reporting processes.

90. Communication outreach and knowledge management. In terms of outreach, it has been noted that ECA's telecommunication links with the AUC and the regional economic communities are still not functioning properly. Progress in this regard will depend heavily upon the overall status of ICT (particularly communication networks) in the region. In recognition of ECA's comparative advantage in knowledge management, the need to enhance peer learning in different areas of ECA's work by strengthening the knowledge management initiative and establishing communities of practice to support the exchange of best practices within ECA and among development practitioners comes out as one area where much progress is expected.

91. Multi-year programmes. The multi-year programmes are the frameworks within which collaboration between regional economic communities as well as other intergovernmental organizations and ECA through its subregional offices is agreed upon and implemented. Generally, the major constraint that is faced by the subregional offices in the implementation of multi-year programmes has been resources, especially as regards adequacy, timeliness and predictability (to plan specific time lines for the various activities beyond a given biennium).

92. Experience shows that better outcomes and successes in the implementation of multi-year programmes necessitate the joint mobilization of resources and buy-ins of external partnerships; the inclusion of “generic multi-year programme elements” in the biennial budget, through timely calls for early consultations with regional economic communities; the inclusion of multi-year programmes in the next ECA business plan, to raise sufficient extrabudgetary resources; and the assignment of a focal point in each regional economic communities or intergovernmental organization to liaise directly with a corresponding focal point in the subregional offices.

B. KEY SUBREGIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

93. ECA continued to carry out its activities at the subregional level through its five subregional offices, located in Rabat for (North Africa), Niamey for (West Africa), Yaounde for (Central Africa), Kigali for (East Africa) and Lusaka for (Southern Africa). The activities were primarily aimed at strengthening the capacities of member States for regional integration, by spearheading the delivery of ECA’s operational activities targeted at the specific priorities of each of the five subregions, within the overall framework of the implementation of NEPAD and achievement of the MDGs.

94. During the period under review, the subregional offices continued to provide a vital link between ECA, member States and the regional economic communities, as well as other intergovernmental bodies. In support to ECA’s multidisciplinary approach to promoting regional integration and helping to meet Africa’s special needs and global challenges, the subregional offices provided guidance to ECA’s overall programme delivery and directed its competences for capacity-building and consensus-building to major subregional and international development agendas. In this context, they played a major role in strengthening partnership at the subregional and country levels to support policy advocacy, policymaking and implementation of subregional integration initiatives and programmes. They also continued to operate as subregional nodes for knowledge management and networking to strengthen ECA’s outreach. In tracking progress towards the achievement of the MDGs at the country level, the subregional offices continued to collaborate with other United Nations agencies through frameworks such as the Common Country Assessment, the United Nations Development Assistance framework and Delivering as One.

95. In the process of delivering their approved programme of work, the subregional offices organized meetings of intergovernmental committees of experts, including the policy organs of the major regional economic communities, and convened ad hoc expert group meetings, workshops and seminars. They also published advocacy papers and technical reports and provided advisory services on request to member States, regional economic communities and other subregional and intergovernmental organizations on institutional and sectoral issues in each of the five subregions.

96. As the first port of call for the regional economic communities, all five subregional offices have now developed extensive and elaborate multi-year programmes of support and collaboration with major regional economic communities in their subregions. To date, ECA has concluded multi-year programmes of support with CEMAC, the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), COMESA, EAC, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), ECOWAS, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), SADC, Community of Sahel-Saharan States and the Maghreb Arab Union (UMA). The major accomplishments of each subregional office during the period under review are highlighted below.

1. Subregional Office for North Africa

97. During the period under review, the Subregional Office for North Africa increased its operational activities through the delivery of technical advisory services to member States and finalized a comprehensive multi-year programme of support with UMA, the main regional economic communities in the subregion. Five missions were undertaken in one year, compared to a total of five during the biennium 2006-2007. These advisory services and other activities such as sectoral meetings and technical publications were geared towards enhancing the capacity of member States and UMA to formulate and implement harmonized macroeconomic and sectoral policies and programmes in response to key development challenges facing the subregion. In this regard, the Subregional Office organized an ad hoc expert group meeting on “Challenges facing small and medium-sized enterprises and industries in North Africa” in Rabat in March 2008. It provided an opportunity for the participants to share experience and best practices in promoting the role of small and medium-sized enterprises within the context of strengthening regional integration in North Africa.

98. In the search for appropriate ways of stimulating production capacity through research and development in North Africa, the Subregional Office, in partnership with the Hassan II Academy of Sciences and Technologies, organized a high-level expert group meeting on Promoting research and development in North Africa (Rabat, July 2008). The participants underlined the importance of preparatory and accompanying measures to the promotion of R&D in such areas as finance, intellectual property rights, innovation and technological development. Parallel sessions focused on specific areas such as agriculture, energy, new technologies and entrepreneurship. Scientific experts, research institutions, universities, decision makers, development partners and representatives of the private sector met in a round-table meeting to discuss the role of regional cooperation in promoting research in North Africa, and came up with a preliminary action plan on strengthening the role of research and development in promoting economic competitiveness, job creation and socio-economic development. The event also provided an opportunity for networking and partnership-building.

99. The Subregional Office also organized an international symposium on “Opening up and emergence in the Mediterranean” in Rabat in October 2008 against the backdrop of the the failure of the Barcelona Process, the difficulties encountered by the European Union’s MEDA Programme and the implementation of projects by the Union for the Mediterranean. This special event, which was organized in coordination with WTO and the Group for Economic Analysis and Theory, gathered experts from 15 countries to review approximately 60 papers addressing this issue. Several renowned speakers introduced and concluded the two-day proceedings. Furthermore, a political round table brought together decision makers and experts from eastern and southern Mediterranean subregions to analyse the conditions required for the region to become an area of peace and prosperity.

100. In June 2008, as a follow-up to the 2006 Africa-Latin America Summit in Abuja, the Government of Morocco hosted a Ministerial Trade Conference of African and South American countries, for which the Subregional Office was called upon to assist with the conceptualization of a dynamic knowledge-sharing tool to be presented during the event. Since then, the Subregional Office developed a knowledge management platform and trained six civil servants from the Moroccan Ministry of Trade on the use of the platform. Furthermore, using the knowledge management network on trade, the subregion was instrumental in creating a Community of Practice and initiating an e-discussion on the “Role of the Global System of Trade

Preferences in reinforcing South-South cooperation”. Both the Knowledge management platform and the recommendations of the e-discussion had been presented during the Summit to enhance its deliberations.

101. As a result of the Subregional Office’s increased operational activities, several networks were created and partnership agreements signed relating to the North Africa trade network, a research and development network, a network of small and medium-sized enterprises and a network on violence against women in North Africa. The recent relocation of the Office to Rabat has helped to stimulate partnerships at the subregional and country levels. This has enabled the Subregional Office to play an effective part in the day-to-day activities of the United Nations Country Team in Morocco as well as in other countries of the subregion.

2. Subregional Office for West Africa

102. The Subregional Office has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the ECOWAS secretariat which provides a framework for a multi-year programme to be developed with ECOWAS. The broad objectives to be reflected in the multi-year programme are to support the capacity-building efforts of the ECOWAS Commission in line with its vision and strategic plan, and to strengthen cooperation and joint activities between the two institutions in support of regional integration and economic cooperation in West Africa.

103. Under its approved programme of work, the Subregional Office prepared and disseminated several publications containing economic and social information on the subregion. These included a progress report on the implementation of regional and international agendas. At the regional level, the report notes that the issue of how the NEPAD framework can be used to translate ideas into effective and concrete actions remains a concern. On international agendas, the report concludes that West Africa is not on track to meet a large proportion of the MDG targets by 2015, and that completing the activities required for an interim EPA would not be development-oriented. A report on “Harnessing research and development in support of the transformation of agricultural systems and development of agro-industries in West Africa” (November 2008) presents the Subregional Office’s response to the persistent food crisis in the subregion, with a focus on rice and with special reference to gender imbalances. Another widely disseminated report was on the “Status of implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision, with particular emphasis on air transport security in West Africa” (December 2008), which makes recommendations for improving air safety and security in the subregion, in accordance with the Standards and Recommended Practices of the International Civil Aviation Organization. In addition, the Subregional Office published what has become a reference report on “Options for instituting mechanisms for autonomous financing of regional integration institutions in West Africa” (December 2008), together with a prospectus on “Regional integration in West Africa”, which was prepared in collaboration with the AUC and the AfDB. All these reports were submitted to ad hoc expert group meetings to seek the collective advice of teams of specialists on the issues covered.

104. Under the provisions of its ongoing multi-year programme with the ECOWAS Commission, the Subregional Office took an active part in a number of joint undertakings, notably in preparing for and servicing the second West African Business Forum and preparing a joint “Report on economic and social conditions: tracking progress in West Africa”. This report highlights the contrast between the subregion’s economic results and its huge natural and human resources and argues that West Africa could meet its own needs better if it exploited its enormous potential judiciously. The report puts forward recommendations which the principal partners

within the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts, the Forum of intergovernmental organizations, businessmen and civil-society institutions can discuss and expand on to help identify investment opportunities and risks as well as improvements to development policy and programmes at the country and subregional levels. The Subregional Office also prepared its major technical publications jointly with the ECOWAS Commission. In addition, as a prelude to the launching of the Forum of the Association of West African integration institutions, the Subregional Office organized in Niamey in June 2008 a consultative meeting of experts from regional economic communities, the AUC, the NEPAD secretariat and United Nations agencies on the implementation of NEPAD programmes in the subregion. The meeting identified areas of cooperation and joint undertakings among regional institutions, recognized the urgent need for coordinated approaches to the financing of regional integration, and called for assistance from ECA for a study on a self-financing mechanism to that effect.

105. The Subregional Office also provided technical assistance and advisory services on request to selected member States, the ECOWAS Commission, the APRM secretariat and the West African intergovernmental organization Forum on macroeconomic and sectoral policy issues. Of particular importance was the Office's active role in the elaboration of an action programme for climate change adaptation in West Africa. It also organized online discussions on emerging development challenges facing West Africa, thus increasing ECA's visibility in the subregion. Enhancing its role as a subregional knowledge node, the Office continued to strengthen regional economic communities, intergovernmental organizations and networks of non-governmental organizations, particularly on knowledge-sharing on the MDGs and climate change adaptation policies. The establishment of these networks has been welcomed by other United Nations agencies, especially within the framework of the United Nations Resident Coordinator system, under which the Subregional Office has taken the lead in the work of the United Nations Country Team in the Niger and six other countries in the area of bio-energy and wealth creation.

106. The Subregional Office's initiative on the food crisis and agriculture transformation led to capacity-building for a coordinated response by the regional economic communities, intergovernmental organizations and member States in the field of policy formulation in this area. A key achievement is the field project on "Governance system and African wealth creation and retention strategy", aimed at strengthening the role of intergovernmental machinery at the subregional level through improved networking among key stakeholders involved in the subregional development agenda, including member States, regional economic communities, civil society organizations, other subregional entities and the private sector. The first initiative launched under this project has led to the development of the "Step-by-step guide on the creation of rice co-enterprise" as West Africa's collective strategy for addressing food security and environmental sustainability.

3. Subregional Office for Central Africa

107. During the period under review, the Subregional Office strengthened its partnerships at the subregional and country levels to support policy advocacy, policymaking and implementation of subregional integration programmes in Central Africa. Since the signing last year of the multi-year programme between the Subregional Office, ECCAS and CEMAC, the Office has devoted much effort and resources to providing support to member States and the institutional strengthening of the two major regional economic communities. The multi-year programme, which covers the period 2007-2010, reflects the commitment of ECCAS and CEMAC to work as one and to coordinate together with the Subregional Office implementation of activities aimed at

fostering regional integration in Central Africa. The programme centres on three main thematic areas: support for the consolidation of peace, security and stability and the strengthening of regional integration; support for the consolidation of macroeconomic performance; and promotion of infrastructure and ICT, water and energy services. A mid-term assessment of the programme implementation was submitted to an ad hoc expert group meeting in April 2009. A summary of key programme achievements in selected areas appears below.

108. Supporting the consolidation of peace, security and stability and the strengthening of regional integration, the Subregional Office undertook six major advisory missions at the request of ECCAS and CEMAC and organized and serviced five seminars on the challenges, instruments and mechanisms of regional integration. At the request of the General Secretary of ECCAS, the Office also undertook a study on the improvement of the air transport network in Central Africa. In September 2008 the recommendations of this study were submitted to a ministerial meeting on air transport, which adopted an action plan for the period 2008-2015 on the improvement of air transport in Central Africa.

109. Another notable contribution to advancing the regional integration agenda in the subregion was the publication of a study on “Harmonization of and management of the self-financing mechanisms of regional integration in Central Africa”, which addresses the shortcomings and difficulties experienced in the implementation of the two regional economic communities’ financing mechanisms, namely the CEMAC Integration Community Tax and the ECCAS Integration Community Contribution. The study offers the member States policy options for improving the performance of these instruments, harmonizing rules and practices in the management of the levies and defining the legal conditions for coexistence between the levies and the free trade area under negotiation with the European Union. The subregional office also published a “Prospectus on the state of integration in Central Africa” in 2008 and 2009. These were submitted to the 2008 and 2009 meetings of the Committee of Experts. In addition, a quarterly news bulletin called “Les Echos d’Afrique Centrale” and a weekly newspaper called “Highlight” are regularly published by the Office in order to enhance ECA’s outreach in the subregion.

110. After assessing the macroeconomic performance of the subregion, the Subregional Office provided in the 2008 and 2009 editions of its flagship publication “Les économies de l’Afrique centrale” an analysis of economic and social changes in the subregion. These reports were produced with the financial support of ECCAS. At the request of CEMAC, the Office also developed a macroeconomic forecasting model as well as a quantitative evaluation of the impact of the CEMAC regional economic programme on several economic variables. The model is being used for the formulation and monitoring of economic policy actions related to the programme. The Office also carried out a study on “Facilitation of the creation of enterprises”, which helped to improve understanding of support mechanisms for opening businesses such as one-stop shops, incubators of small and medium-sized enterprises and support centres for the management of such enterprises.

111. In the field of promotion of infrastructure and ITC, water and energy services, the Subregional Office launched the second phase of its e-employment project in the Congo in November 2008. It also carried out a study on the integrated management of water resources in Central Africa. A working document on a water policy and the institutional framework proposed by the Office have been validated by the Council of Ministers in charge of water issues in Central African countries.

112. At the operational level, the Office provided various advisory services to ECCAS, CEMAC and member States in the areas of transport, water resources, ICT, financing of regional integration, trade policies, free movement of people and food security. At the request of national administrations, the Office also carried out capacity-building activities through seminars on regional integration for experts and officials of member States. The recommendations of these seminars led to initiatives for the creation of national commissions for regional integration, which will act as powerful advocacy instruments in the implementation of subregional programmes.

113. The Office strengthened its partnerships at the national and regional levels through the organization of statutory and ad hoc expert group meetings and active participation in statutory meetings of Central Africa's regional economic communities and intergovernmental organizations. In particular, the office enhanced its partnership with ECCAS, CEMAC and the Central African States Development Bank for the development of transport infrastructure. In the context of the implementation of the Central Africa consensual transport master plan road map, joint activities undertaken with ECCAS, CEMAC and the Bank, resulted in the adoption of 55 high-priority projects. Furthermore, partnership among the four institutions continued with the preparation of a paper for the first round table of donors for funding the transport programme, which will take place in the course of 2009.

114. In the field of collaboration with other United Nations agencies, the Subregional Office participated in following up the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Cameroon, and contributed to the Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Equatorial Guinea. It also started consultations with other United Nations agencies to establish a subregional mechanism to coordinate their support for the AU/NEPAD Programme in Central Africa.

4. Subregional Office for East Africa

115. During the period under review, the Subregional Office continued to focus much of its policy support and operational activities on the formulation and implementation of harmonized macroeconomic and sectoral policies and programmes as the means to achieve the development objectives of regional integration in Eastern Africa. The implementation of the Subregional Office's work programme provided a platform and opportunities to work closely with member States and major regional economic communities and other subregional organizations in addressing development agenda priorities, encompassing food security and sustainable development, ICT development, gender promotion, implementation of NEPAD and the attainment of the MDGs within Eastern Africa.

116. Under its work programme, the Office undertook a series of activities aimed at streamlining its collaboration with East African countries and regional economic communities. These included the organization and servicing of the twelfth and thirteenth sessions of its Intergovernmental Committee of Experts, held in March 2008 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and in April 2009 in Mahe, Seychelles. The Office also held expert group meetings which enabled teams of specialists to peer-review its technical publications. These publications covered such issues as reforms in the financial sector in East Africa, harmonization of national development policies and ICT programmes, implementation of NEPAD programmes in the subregion, assessment of the Subregional Office and regional economic communities' multi-year programmes.

117. To support the development priorities of East African countries, the Subregional Office has concluded bilateral multi-year programmes with no less than five regional economic

communities and intergovernmental organizations namely EAC, IGAD, CEPGL, the Indian Ocean Commission and the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). The Office has received many requests from member States, regional economic communities and intergovernmental organizations for technical assistance on specific projects identified under these multi-year programmes, among them Burundi, the Comoros, Djibouti, Kenya and IGAD. Other advisory services provided to member States (Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Djibouti) and regional economic communities as well as intergovernmental organizations (EAC, ICGLR and the Transit Transport Coordination Authority of the Northern Corridor) covered institutional and sectoral issues such as democracy and good governance, economic development and integration, microfinance, financial reforms, transboundary development basins and food security, transport policy and strategic planning. In December 2008 the Office undertook a major study to assist the secretariat of IGAD in formulating a strategic “Minimum integration plan”. The study ultimately aims at strengthening the capacity of the IGAD secretariat to assist its member States with the development issues of peace and security, trade and macroeconomic policies, natural resources management, social development policies, transport and infrastructure, the industrial sector and ICT.

118. With regard to strengthening its subregional partnership through undertaking policy research and analysis and convening a regional forum, the Subregional Office is launching a Regional Integration Observatory that will serve as a permanent platform to measure progress made in the regional economies, as well as peace-building and security policies within the subregion. The Observatory will create an interactive website providing information and data on regional integration, establish networks between institutions such as COMESA, IGAD, CEPGL, EAC and the Organization of the Islamic Conference facilitate the establishment of a regional database on the methodology, tools and instruments for data collection, and facilitate knowledge-sharing and training opportunities. In furtherance of its knowledge management and peer learning programme, the Office organized a regional workshop to promote better awareness and ownership of ECA’s knowledge-sharing portal on the part of member States, regional economic communities and other intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, civil society, academia, etc. This was followed by the provision of a number of advisory services on institutional capacity-building at the national and regional levels to promote better use of the system. At the request of one United Nations Country Team, the Subregional Office also included the One UN programme for Rwanda in its knowledge management portal.

119. In order to streamline its collaboration with East African countries and the regional economic communities, the Subregional Office organized in November 2008 a workshop on IGAD’s Minimum Integration Plan, which aimed at providing specific policy recommendations and guidelines for the preparation of the Plan, as requested by the twelfth Summit of IGAD Heads of State, held in June 2008. The workshop, organized in collaboration with the IGAD secretariat, was attended by experts from East African countries and IGAD partner institutions. The implementation of the Plan will help to revitalize IGAD and enable it to carry out its mandate as a regional integration organization and a building block of the AU.

5. Subregional Office for Southern Africa

120. A major priority in the work of the Subregional Office related to the multi-year programme of cooperation lies in providing technical assistance to member States and regional economic communities aimed at building capacity in policy formulation and harmonization and programme implementation. During the period under review, the Office’s main programme focus was on key activities related to regional priorities aimed at advancing the SADC regional agenda.

These included the launch of the SADC Free Trade Area and the COMESA Customs Union. Key achievements included the successful organization of a forum in Lusaka, Zambia, on the theme of “Progress and prospects in the implementation of protocols and treaties”, which reviewed country preparedness by assessing the progress made in the implementation of protocols and treaties. The forum concluded that the launch of the Free Trade Area and the Customs Union should be underpinned by granting an enhanced role to the private sector and regional business organizations, particularly in trade and business development.

121. This would require moving expeditiously on a number of fronts, including strengthening the development of an implementation framework for the protocol on facilitation of movement of persons, in close consultation with all stakeholders, creating a Project Preparation and Development Unit one within SADC and strengthening the same in COMESA, and developing mechanisms to operationalize the COMESA Fund and the Development Fund for SADC, the forum urged the subregion to provide comprehensive development support to the transport sector, and strengthen mechanisms for constructing and maintaining transboundary infrastructure, harmonizing road user charge guidelines and practices and speeding up their implementation.

122. An expert group meeting to review a framework for the ICT Development Strategy (e-Strategy) for SADC (e-SADC Initiative) was held in April 2008, Johannesburg, South Africa. The e-strategy would address convergence issues and harmonization of ICT infrastructure, services and indicators and promote ICT usage for regional economic integration, enhancement of connectivity and access to ICT services among and within the member States. The outcome of the expert group meeting was enriched by the full participation and contributions of member States and some cooperating partners including the AU, Cisco Systems Inc., COMESA, and Communications Regulators’ Association of Southern Africa, NEPAD, SADC-PF and Southern African Telecommunications Association.

123. Ongoing work by SADC, the African Centre for Gender and Social Development and the Subregional Office on the development of a Regional Gender Monitoring Tool was the subject of an expert review held to validate the instruments and modus operandi of monitoring, tracking and reporting progress on various regional and international protocols and conventions on gender and development to serve as basis for the production of a biennial SADC Gender and Development Report. Also, using a framework for the harmonization of mining policies, standards, legislative and regulatory framework in southern Africa, an implementation plan designed to translate the framework into an operational programme of activities was developed. Current work involves auditing national mining policies to determine their conformity with the approved framework. A report assessing progress was prepared and presented to an ad hoc expert group meeting held in May 2009.

124. Capacity-building activities constituted a major area of intervention through workshops, seminars and training and the provision of advisory services, especially in the area of policy harmonization as the framework for regional integration. In this regard, the Subregional Office provided technical assistance to the Eduardo Mondlane University in organizing the First International Conference on Regional Integration and SADC Law in Maputo, Mozambique, from 23 to 25 April 2008, as well as in developing frameworks on mainstreaming regional integration in national development plans and mainstreaming regional integration in the university curriculum, with the aim of establishing a regional Centre of Studies on Regional Integration and SADC Law. With respect to training, seminars and workshops, the focus has been on macroeconomic convergence issues and ICT-related development.

125. Significant progress has been recorded with respect to joint undertakings through partnership-building involving institutional collaboration as an important aspect of the Office's delivery mechanism. Joint AfDB-AUC-ECA undertakings include: collaboration between the Subregional Office with the AU Southern Africa Regional Office and AfDB in organizing a seminar, in Lusaka, Zambia, in December 2008, on water and sanitation in SADC - innovative approaches to resource mobilization and policy implementation as well as a southern African stakeholders' consultative and preparatory meeting for Africa's participation at the fifth World Water Forum, held in December 2008 in Lusaka. An ECA/ILO/IOM/SADC workshop on population, migration and regional integration facilitated a deeper exchange of perspectives with regard to population dynamics and harmonization of related social and economic policies. Also, SADC and the Subregional Office are working to identify "SADC Gender Champions", celebrating the contributions of individuals and institutions in promoting gender equality, women's empowerment and development.

126. In August 2008 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Executive Secretary of ECA and the Executive Secretary of SADC to further facilitate cooperation between SADC and ECA in addressing regional integration and the special needs of Southern Africa.

C. OTHER PROGRAMMES

1. Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation

127. The Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation, funded from the United Nations regular budget, continued to serve as an important instrument for helping to build the capacities of member States in addressing clearly defined policy and technical challenges in various development sectors, with particular focus on meeting the MDGs and evolving priorities of member States within the context of NEPAD.

128. During the period under review, funding from the Programme was used to meet the needs of member States for specialized advice and training in such areas as the design and implementation of MDG-based poverty reduction strategies and programmes, integrated water resources management, trade capacity-building and trade negotiations, statistics, gender mainstreaming, including enhancing women's legal and human rights, harnessing ICTs for development, and support in the implementation of NEPAD. The programme also provided ECA with the means and operational flexibility to respond to some new and emerging development challenges such as climate change.

129. As part of its effort to promote policy change and strengthen institutional capacity, ECA fielded 57 advisory missions to 23 member States and organized 11 workshops and seminars involving over 500 participants. A total of 38 countries directly benefited from regional training activities for government officials with policymaking responsibilities in various sectors. These activities contributed to strengthening the capacity of member States in policy formulation, implementation and programme monitoring. Some notable achievements under the Programme in the past year are highlighted below.

130. Workshops and advisory services on ICT policy formulation contributed to an increase in the number of countries designing and finalizing plans and strategies relating to national information and communication infrastructure from 31 in 2007 to 42 in 2009. A number of countries have taken steps to advance their implementation process in this field with the adoption

of strategies and approaches for mainstreaming ICTs in various key sectors, such as e-government, e-security, e-health, e-commerce, e-learning and e-agriculture.

131. The first meeting of the Committee on Development Information, Science and Technology, which was held in Addis Ababa from 28 April to 1 May 2009, and which received support from the Programme, attracted more than 600 delegates from 51 countries and generated a number of policy recommendations on scientific development, innovation systems and the knowledge economy.

132. In the area of trade, ECA provided technical backstopping to the WTO African Group in Geneva on WTO-related issues of importance to African countries within the framework of the Doha Round. Assistance provided by the ECA Geneva office in 2008 facilitated the adoption of an African common position on sensitive products and special products. Partly as a result of ECA's support, the number of WTO bodies chaired by representatives of the African Group also increased from 2 in 2005 to 8 in 2008. The Programme also contributed to strengthening the capacity of regional economic communities in the ongoing negotiations under economic partnership agreements with the European Union. Considerable appreciation for the activities of the Geneva office has been shown by the WTO African Group, as reflected in various letters sent to the ECA Executive Secretary.

133. Notable results were also achieved in strengthening capacity for gender mainstreaming, including strengthening frameworks to enhance women's legal and human rights. Various capacity-building activities undertaken by ECA helped to promote awareness among policymakers and development planners of the link between gender equality and the achievement of national development goals, including the MDGs. The Programme was also instrumental in creating awareness and understanding of women's rights, including women's rights to education. Services rendered enabled the formulation of gender-sensitive policies and programmes, and helped in promoting and replicating best practices on enhancing the role of women in development.

134. Advisory services provided in the area of water resources development and management strengthened the institutional and technical capacities of member States and river basin organizations for the sustainable development and efficient management of water resources within the framework of the African Water Vision 2025, the MDGs and NEPAD priorities. Several activities were undertaken in support of the elaboration and implementation of the Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDev-Africa) programme, which resulted in the establishment of the African Climate Policy Centre.

135. In the area of statistics and statistical development, activities undertaken under the Programme during the biennium contributed to strengthening the framework for statistical capacity development and the capacities of national statistical systems in Africa, resulting in an increase in the number of countries with a national strategy for the development of statistics. Advisory services and workshops have also helped increase awareness and knowledge of internationally recognized standards and best practices in statistics for tracking the MDGs.

Challenges and lessons learned

136. Notwithstanding these achievements, further efforts are required to enhance the impact of regional advisory activities and make them more responsive to the needs of African countries. In this regard, further steps were taken during the period under review to strengthen results-based

management, monitoring and reporting of activities under the Programme. Each subprogramme is now directly accountable for defining expected accomplishments, determining the appropriate indicators of achievement and ultimately the achievement of results. ECA has also developed new guidelines to strengthen the management of regional advisory services and enhance oversight, performance evaluation and reporting on the use of Programme resources, including enhancing the role of the Subregional Offices in the delivery of technical assistance at the subregional level. Improved programmatic collaboration with other partners is also being pursued to achieve greater impact in the delivery of technical assistance.

2. United Nations Development Account

137. The United Nations Development Account constitutes a second funding window for ECA's technical cooperation activities. The Under-Secretary-General in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs acts as programme manager of the Account. Overall guidance on its use is provided by the General Assembly. Projects submitted for funding must adhere to criteria established by the General Assembly and be in conformity with a theme proposed for the specific tranche.

138. ECA has steadily increased its participation in projects funded under the Development Account. During the period under review, three projects were approved for funding under the seventh tranche, to be implemented during the 2010-2011 programme cycle: facilitating the effective integration of developing countries in the global economy through aid for trade schemes; capacity-building for integrated shared water resources management in Southern Africa; and mainstreaming climate change into agricultural policies for achieving food security and poverty reduction in West Africa.

139. The Commission will also be involved in five other interregional projects, one of which is concerned with strengthening social protection and two others with facilitating climate change mitigation by addressing the energy-environment linkage and enhancing energy security, as well as two capacity-building projects covering statistics for monitoring progress towards the MDGs and climate change mitigation for poverty alleviation. These projects are aimed at providing support to member States in addressing key global development challenges to further the achievement of internationally agreed development goals through collaboration at global, regional and national levels.

140. During the period under review, ECA was also involved in two ongoing Development Account projects which address needs in key areas such as capacity-building on gender statistics to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, and sustainable agriculture and rural transformation. Both projects, which are nearing completion, are expected to achieve their objectives.

141. Also during the period under review, ECA successfully completed a project initiated in 2005 on poverty reduction strategies and the MDGs through knowledge-sharing. The project contributed to raising awareness at the national and subnational levels of the challenges of and opportunities for designing and implementing MDG-based poverty reduction strategies, and provided an electronic platform for enhanced continuous engagement among national practitioners around issues related to poverty reduction strategies and the MDGs. Other notable products of the project include the MDG Mapper, a knowledge-sharing platform which was commended by the United Nations Secretary-General at the inaugural annual ministerial review at the Economic and Social Council in 2007, and which has consistently received positive

feedback ever since, pointing to a measurable impact on the capacity of member States to assure economic and social policy formulation and management.

3. United Nations support to the African Union and its NEPAD programme

142. In recent years, the United Nations system has emerged as one of the major pillars of international support for the African Union and its NEPAD programme. The nature and scope of that support has broadened in the past year, encompassing a variety of activities including technical assistance for institutional development, capacity-building, project development, resource mobilization and advocacy.

143. The regional consultation meetings among United Nations agencies working in Africa, convened by ECA, are the mechanism for providing support at the regional and subregional levels. The regional consultations have established nine thematic clusters around which United Nations support for the AU and its NEPAD programme is organized. These clusters, which broadly correspond to the policy priorities of NEPAD, are: advocacy and communications; agriculture, food security and rural development; environment, population and urbanization; science and technology; social and human development; industry, trade and market access; infrastructure; peace and security; and governance. The work of the regional consultation meetings, their clusters and subclusters is guided largely by the AU's 10-Year Capacity-building Programme, which is the framework for cooperation between the United Nations and AU based on the priorities identified by the AUC.

144. At the global level, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa based at United Nations Headquarters undertook several information-sharing and advocacy activities in the past year to help mobilize international support for the NEPAD agenda. Many of the activities were carried out in close cooperation with ECA and the United Nations Department of Public Affairs. For example, the Office coordinated the preparation of the Secretary-General's report entitled "Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward", which was submitted to a high-level meeting of the General Assembly on Africa's development needs in September 2008. Among other recommendations, the report urged support for Africa's efforts to build human and institutional capacity and drew attention to essential areas of United Nations support for the AU and its NEPAD programme that needed to be reinforced. An Inter-Agency/Departmental Task Force on Africa has been established to monitor the follow-up to the high-level meeting.

145. On the regional front, United Nations joint action through regional consultations is meant to enhance coherence, coordination and cooperation among its agencies, through increased joint activities and programmes to ensure maximum results. In keeping with its mandate to coordinate United Nations activities at the regional level in Africa, ECA has convened nine meetings of the annual consultations to date and achieved considerable progress in securing agreement on a work programme and collaborative arrangements through the nine thematic clusters established for that purpose. Over the past year, significant progress was made by all nine clusters, ranging from identifying areas of common concern in their work to drawing up plans of action, mobilizing resources, working with African regional and subregional organizations and actual implementation of projects and activities. Cluster activities are having a tangible impact on the implementation of key elements of the regional development agenda and on the institutional landscape in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme.

4. Ninth meeting of the Regional Coordination Mechanism

146. The Ninth meeting of the United Nations Regional Consultation Mechanism took place in October 2008 in Addis Ababa, chaired by the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General. The meeting attracted 197 participants, including the Chairperson of the AUC and a good number of AU Commissioners, Regional Directors and Heads of United Nations agencies and organizations, the Head of the NEPAD secretariat as well as representatives of regional economic communities and other African regional and subregional organizations. The meeting focused on two important topical issues, namely the food crisis and climate change. The main outcomes were: increased United Nations coordination and support in addressing the food crisis and climate change in Africa; strengthened coordination and collaboration between United Nations agencies and African organizations and among United Nations agencies at the regional and subregional levels to deliver as one; institutionalization of subregional coordination of United Nations support to the AU and its NEPAD programme; and mobilization of resources and enhancement of capacity. The Participants also reiterated the importance of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the mechanism and its cluster system in providing multisectoral and coordinated support to the African Union and its NEPAD programme.

Challenges and lessons learned

147. In spite of the progress made, the United Nations system faces a number of challenges and constraints in providing support to NEPAD at the regional level. First, an increased financial commitment by the United Nations system for NEPAD programmes will much depend on whether the agencies receive additional resources for these programmes. Second, if further progress is to be made, increased commitment and institutional leadership are essential to sustain the existing momentum and intensify support to AU and its NEPAD programme for maximum impact. Participating United Nations agencies and African regional and subregional organizations should make the mechanism sustainable by showing more commitment to the process and ensuring that desirable outcomes and impact are registered. And the smooth integration of NEPAD into AU structures and processes would ensure continuity and better coordination in the implementation of cluster activities. The mechanism and its clusters should play a role in facilitating the smooth transition.

5. ECA support to the African Union and its NEPAD programme

148. In addition to the collective activities undertaken by United Nations entities in support of NEPAD, specific assistance was offered by individual entities to advance the work in the various thematic clusters. ECA supports the implementation of NEPAD priorities, most of which are at the core of its mandate, through its analytical work and technical assistance in different areas, with particular focus on socio-economic development and political governance issues. ECA's achievements in support of AU and its NEPAD programme are many and have been well articulated in other parts of the present report.

149. ECA has provided extensive technical and material support to the APRM Panel of Eminent Persons, the APRM secretariat and the participating countries at each of the five stages of the review process, ranging from country support missions to the drafting of background documents, country review visits, the drafting of country reports, the final country report and the National Programme of Action and publication of the country review reports and the National Programme of Action. ECA has also been supporting participating countries in mobilizing

stakeholder participation and fostering peer learning among APRM countries by identifying best practices in the APRM process and promoting their replication. In addition, it has provided technical assistance in integrating the APRM with existing national development strategies.

150. ECA also supported the APRM process by reviewing APRM-related documents (country self-assessment reports and country programmes of action) and contributing to the preparation of documents (country profiles, background papers, issues papers and final review reports). It has also collaborated closely with United Nations agencies and other partners, in particular AfDB and the regional economic communities, in supporting NEPAD infrastructure development.

CHAPTER III: ISSUES ARISING FROM THE MEETINGS OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEES OF EXPERTS OF ECA'S SUBREGIONAL OFFICES

151. This chapter provides an overview of the main outcomes of the meetings of the Intergovernmental Committees of Experts of the subregional offices which have been held since April 2008. In particular, the chapter highlights key issues and developments requiring attention or action by the 2009 session of the Commission.

A. Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the Subregional Office for North Africa

2008

152. The twenty-third meeting of the Committee was held in March 2008 in Rabat, Morocco, with a special focus on the development of small and medium-sized enterprises. The participants reviewed the major achievements of the Subregional Office as outlined in reports on economic and social conditions in North African countries in 2007; follow-up to regional and global development agendas; the outcomes of two workshops on sustainable development and capital mobility organized by the Office during the year; activities undertaken in the biennium 2006-2007; the programme of work and priorities for the biennium 2008-2009; and a proposed strategic framework for the 2010-2011 programme of work.

153. The Committee recognized the role played by small and medium-sized enterprises in economic and social development and requested ECA to widely disseminate to ministerial departments, the private sector, professional associations and the academic world the outcome and specific recommendations of the workshop held from 10 to 13 March 2008 in Rabat on small and medium-sized enterprises as agents of sustainable development for follow-up and implementation.

154. In considering economic and social conditions in the region, the Committee encouraged member States to provide the Subregional Office with the oil-producing-country data needed to conduct a detailed analysis of the degree to which fuel prices impact national economic and social performance. The study should reflect the weight of the petroleum sector in the structure of GDP and the effects of nominal increases in petroleum prices against significant depreciation of the United States dollar (the principal petro-currency) and the strong pressure of taxes on oil products in importing countries. In the meantime, member States should continue to diversify their national economies in order to offset the adverse effects of globalization and minimize their vulnerability to external factors such as climate change and global prices. The Subregional Office was requested to compile summary indices in order to facilitate comparison of North Africa's performance with that of other regions and economic groupings within or outside Africa. The Committee further recommended the harmonization of concepts and definitions used in estimating employment and unemployment. More broadly, the Office was requested to undertake an in-depth analysis of issues such as investment returns, capital attraction and the possibility of establishing a subregional stock exchange and developing a subregional investment code.

155. The Committee called upon member States to strengthen the economic and social cooperation between UMA and other North African countries in order to improve the level of integration in the subregion. They were further encouraged to take an active part in the implementation of regional infrastructure projects under NEPAD, in collaboration with the regional economic communities, while ECA was invited to develop a mechanism for briefing

member States on NEPAD and its various programmes, especially those relating to the environment and the knowledge society.

2009

156. The Committee's twenty-fourth meeting was held in Rabat from 6 to 9 May 2009. The main theme was "Education and capacity-building for job creation in North Africa". The participants reviewed the main accomplishments of the Office in 2008, including reports on economic and social conditions in North Africa in 2008; North Africa and the international and regional development agenda for development; the MDGs and the implementation of NEPAD in North Africa; promoting research and development in North Africa; the implementation of the 2008-2009 work programme; proposed themes and priorities for the 2010-2011 work programme; and progress in the establishment of an observatory on integration.

157. The Committee adopted the programmes for 2010-2011, and decisions and recommendations on the following subjects: (a) development of instruments for risk management, short-term and medium-term monitoring of economic forecasting and impact assessment, for prevention of crises and their effects; (b) continuation of consultations to determine the best way for North Africa to be represented in the new arrangements for global financial governance; (c) recognition of the adequacy of the education-employment-training nexus in economic and social development and provision to concerned stakeholders (including government departments, workers and employers' associations and regional and international organizations) of the recommendations of the workshop on education and capacity-building for job creation; (d) encouragement of long-term prospective studies in education, training and new skills to meet market needs; (e) expansion of regional consultations in the context of major regional and international conferences on development, to strengthen the North African countries' position as strategic partners and key actors in decision-making at the global level; (f) recognition of the importance of research and development in the development process and knowledge creation, and the need to continue to give this domain the necessary attention, even in times of crisis; (g) continued strengthening of partnership with the Maghreb Arab Union, as defined in the multi-year action plan, and preparation of a regional programme of cooperation for the 2010-2011 biennium; (h) continued consultations with all stakeholders, and particularly United Nations agencies and organizations, to establish a subregional coordination mechanism; and (i) submission of the Subregional Office's report on activities in 2008, the draft work programme for 2010-2011 and the Committee's report to the ECA Conference of Ministers for final approval.

B. Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the Subregional Office for West Africa

2008

158. The eleventh meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for West Africa was held in June 2008 in Niamey, the Niger, with the theme "Harnessing Africa's resources: what strategies for developing the biofuel sector in West Africa". The participants reviewed the major achievements of the Subregional Office as reflected in the 2007 report on economic and social conditions in West African countries; a paper on follow-up to regional and global development agendas, including NEPAD and the MDGs; a thematic report on strategies for developing the biofuel sector in West Africa and related initiatives; a public lecture entitled The African strategy for wealth creation and retention; a report by the Subregional Office on activities undertaken in the biennium 2006-2007; and its programme of work and priorities for the

biennium 2008-2009. The final report of the meeting has been published to serve as reference material on the subregion's socio-economic development effort. The Committee made recommendations regarding public finance reforms, macroeconomic reforms, agriculture and agro-industry, water management and peace and cooperation.

159. Owing to the precarious state of public finance in several countries of the subregion, which continue to face problems of insufficient resources and ineffective expenditure control and allocation, appropriate financial reforms in the field of revenue recovery, fraud and corruption, rationalization of expenditure and redirection of spending to priority sectors were recommended. Member States should continue to aim to achieve sound public finance in order to improve the business climate and their image to attract investment, and to strengthen their poverty reduction programmes.

160. Since water is one of the key factors affecting the economic performance of the member States, particularly as irrigation systems are still in their infancy, and the agriculture sector depends heavily on rainfall, policymakers in the subregion should therefore seriously review the situation and West African countries must move resolutely to control their water resources, in order to fully realize their agricultural potential, enhance productivity and the well-being of the people and reduce poverty. In addition to water management, a refocus on agriculture, especially food crop production, extension services, commercial farming partnerships with foreign operators, etc. were the areas identified as deserving the special attention of the member States.

161. In direct relation to the above finding, the participants also concluded that West Africa's agricultural potential can be developed to produce biofuels, which have economic, social and environmental multiplier effects. Countries in the subregion must therefore ensure that they make the right choices in terms of their agricultural comparative advantage, determining the risks involved and countering obstacles. In this regard, issues raised concerned the appropriate legal, regulatory and fiscal framework, the establishment of a subregional biofuel financing mechanism, a biofuels development strategy through public-private partnership, a strategy for producing and marketing biofuels, etc.

2009

162. The twelfth meeting of the Committee, scheduled to take place on 2 and 3 July 2009, aims at providing current information on West African economies, initiating broad dialogue on recent economic trends and making recommendations for appropriate action to accelerate the development of the subregion. The specific objectives of the meeting are stated in the reports. The report on economic and social conditions in West Africa in 2008 and prospects for 2009 finds that growth outcomes for 2009 in West Africa are expected to vary significantly across countries, depending on their reliance on external flows and bank lending to finance investment, trade links to the deeply affected high-income countries and the degree of participation by foreign banks in the domestic financial sector. Moreover, policy responses to the crisis will play a large role in shaping the near-term economic outlook in the subregion. Reductions in inflows of foreign capital are likely to slow growth further in countries that need to finance already large current account deficits, and there is some threat of potential balance-of-payments financing problems. The Committee will also have before it a progress report on the implementation of regional and international agendas, including NEPAD, the MDGs and other special initiatives in the subregion, and a proposed programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011.

163. On 30 June and 1 July 2009, as a prelude to the twelfth meeting, the Subregional Office will organize an ad hoc expert group meeting on the Office's response to energy-related insecurity in West Africa. The experts will examine energy demand and adequacy of supply in West Africa in order to single out the causes of the low quality of service and prescribe solutions.

C. Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the Subregional Office for Central Africa

2008

164. The 2008 session of the Committee of Experts was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, under the theme: "The role of primary commodities in the socio-economic development of the Central African countries". The objectives were, to examine the economic evolution of Central African economies in 2006-2007 and the forecasts for 2008; social development issues in Central Africa; the state of the regional integration process in Central Africa; the proceedings of an ad hoc expert group meeting; the implementation of regional and international agendas, including NEPAD, the MDGs and other initiatives, in the subregion; and a review of ECA activities from April 2007 to March 2008.

165. The Committee pointed out the high level of dependence of the Central African Economies on exports of raw materials – the highest rate in the world, at 85 per cent. It stressed the need to increase capital expenditure to finance public investment in infrastructure and promote expenditure for the production of public goods like health and education. Another key recommendation was related to the activation of redistribution mechanisms and the implementation of countercyclical macroeconomic policies to mitigate the cyclical volatility resulting from fluctuations in international commodity prices.

166. The Committee recommended the launching of a special programme to accelerate the operationalization of the regional market, including the rapid removal of obstacles to the free movement of people, the implementation of harmonized instruments of trade policy, greater promotion of goods from the subregion and extension of the process to other instruments and mechanisms of regional cooperation. While pointing out the strategic importance of the relations between the subregion and the European Union, through economic partnership agreements the Committee, stressed the risk of threats to certain provisions of the regional treaties and the amplification of smuggling practices resulting from signing separate interim agreements with the European Union.

167. The Committee drew the attention of Central African decision makers to the fact that strong dependence on primary commodities should result in the establishment of a socio-economic framework aimed at achieving two key goals: the creation of favourable conditions for economic diversification and the promotion of industrialization, and the creation of conditions enabling basic commodities to contribute positively to long-term development.

2009

168. The 2009 session of the Committee, held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in March and April 2009, brought about knowledge-sharing on policies and programmes and contributed to the adoption and implementation of some of these policies. The participants carried out a thorough analysis of the evolution of the main macroeconomic indicators in the subregion in the context of the current global financial and economic crisis. Particular emphasis was put on the extent to

which the subregion is exposed to exogenous shocks potentially related to this crisis, owing to the very strong dependence of Central African economies on exports of primary commodities. Some strong economic policy measures were formulated, including: maintenance of the effort to stabilize the macroeconomic framework while mitigating the effects of the crisis on the most vulnerable countries; the recycling of the reserves accumulated by oil-exporting countries into programmes for diversification of sources of growth, including agriculture; special measures to support companies in difficulties, particularly in the mining sector, or promotion of a development strategy for subregional industrial pools.

169. In view of the poor progress made towards the achievement of the MDGs, the Committee recommended that member States should reinforce support to social sectors, particularly through effective financing mechanisms for social protection, improvement of the quality of public expenditure, optimization of the existing interactions and synergies between the MDGs, and political and institutional stabilization.

170. The review of the regional integration process revealed that the CEMAC countries have recorded good performances in the implementation of their economic convergence agreement and the multilateral supervision mechanism, the progressive activation of the instruments of ECCAS Peace and Security Council and the first budget allocations from the regional development funds. However, the other areas of regional cooperation - transport, energy and agriculture, recorded slower advances. There has even been a setback in the project for a common market in Central Africa. The Committee made the following strong recommendations to States and regional integration institutions: deeper involvement by the highest authorities in the process of rationalization of the programmes of regional cooperation institutions in Central Africa; accelerated implementation of the Regional Programme for Food Security; renegotiation of the CEMAC common external tariff and the proposed ECCAS common external tariff with a view to the establishment of a single customs union in Central Africa and the signing of a partnership agreement; and upgrading of the legal and technical features of the two instruments for financing integration, namely the ECCAS Integration Community Contribution and the CEMAC Integration Community Tax.

171. A round table on fiscal policies and resource mobilization highlighted the need for Central African States to achieve fiscal positions which are less dependent on export earnings from primary commodities. Some strategies for action were formulated, aiming particularly at broadening taxable income through a more rigorous review of tax exemptions, the promotion of fiscal incentives for production and investment, the simplification of tax laws and capacity-building in the national tax authorities.

172. Finally, the experts acknowledged the need for regular follow-up of the recommendations from one session to another. It was agreed to include in the agenda of future sessions a review of the implementation of the recommendations made.

D. Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the Subregional Office for East Africa

2008

173. The twelfth session of the Committee was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in March 2008 with the theme: "Meeting subregional challenges in the twenty-first century: regional integration towards the achievement of the MDGs". The meeting reviewed the major achievements of the Subregional Office under the following agenda: report on economic and social conditions in

Eastern Africa; follow-up to regional and global development agendas including NEPAD and the MDGs; report on United Nations system-wide support to the AU and NEPAD programme; presentation on assessing financial sector reforms in Eastern Africa — the case of EAC and CEPGL; reports of the state of regional integration in Eastern Africa — progress and prospects; report on activities undertaken in the biennium 2006-2007; programme of work and priorities for the biennium 2008-2009; and launch of the Subregional Office knowledge management portal. The final report of the session has been published to serve as reference material on the subregion's socio-economic development effort. The Committee emphasized the importance of the Subregional Office's programmes related to good governance, regional integration and national policies.

174. As financial reforms already undertaken by the countries have not yet adequately addressed the issue of poverty reduction, appropriate resource allocation should fully reflect this priority, and encourage pro-poor productive investment. While the Subregional Office's MDG report was highly appreciated, the availability of more detailed MDG indicators on each country was recommended. Recognizing the importance of the human capital dimension of MDGs (involving women), the Committee strongly urged governments to allocate public expenditure accordingly, while adopting proactive strategies for the attainment of the MDGs. Also, identifying the lack of peace and security as one of the major constraints on economic development and poverty reduction, it was recommended that countries should focus on conflict prevention.

175. In order to harmonize policy convergence on regional integration, it was recommended that an appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanism should be established within the regional economic communities, and that ECA should assist the regional economic communities in rationalization and harmonization of monitoring and evaluation, including monitoring and evaluation of their projects and programmes. The crucial role of the Subregional Office's projected observatory on regional integration was accepted by all, and the need for wide-ranging consultations with all the stakeholders concerning its expansion and further development was emphasized. The Committee also stressed the importance of ICT in banking operations, the strengthening of regulation and the supervision of financial institutions using the Basel II standards.

176. The capacity of the regional economic communities as building blocks for regional integration, should be strengthened. The regional economic communities and other organizations should emphasize the promotion of intra-African trade. The private sector and the business community should also be widely involved in the formulation and implementation of the regional economic communities programmes and projects on trade facilitation.

2009

177. The thirteenth session of the Committee was held in Mahe, Seychelles, in April 2009 with the theme of "Tracking progress in implementing ICTs for development in Eastern Africa". The Committee reviewed the major achievements of the Subregional Office as reflected in the reports on economic and social conditions in Eastern Africa; follow-up to regional and global development agendas, including NEPAD and the MDGs; United Nations system-wide support to the AU and NEPAD programme; the state of regional integration in Eastern Africa — contributions of regional economic communities and prospects; activities undertaken by the Subregional Office during the reporting period; reforms of the financial sector in the subregion and their impact on economic development in the member States, and the related

debate with particular reference to the theme of the forthcoming ECA/AU joint Conference of Finance Ministers on “Enhancing domestic resources mobilization through fiscal policy”; an ad hoc expert group meeting on ICT and economic development; and an ad hoc expert group meeting on the multi-year-programme. Other accomplishments during the session included two parallel training workshops on the implementation of ICT in the areas of e-government and e-trade and on “developing strategies on comprehensive action plan for national information and communication infrastructure”. The Committee emphasized the need to adopt appropriate integrated strategies and policies involving all national, regional and international actors, public and private, as well as to develop appropriate institutional mechanisms.

178. In view of the identified obstacles to achievement of the MDGs within the planned time frame, governments need to define clear proactive strategies, including how to mobilize domestic resources for investment and acceleration of regional integration through intraregional trade facilitation and complementarities and the role of the regional economic communities in fostering regional integration so as to accelerate the attainment of poverty reduction goals and the MDGs. Governments were urged to adopt innovative mechanisms for mobilizing both international and domestic resources for investment and accelerating regional integration.

179. The Committee stressed the need to adopt and harmonize policies arrived at building a regional information and knowledge economy in which ICTs can play a catalytic role for economic growth and sustainable development. On the basis of the report of the ad hoc expert group meeting on assessing multi-year programmes, the Committee identified the way forward towards implementation of multi-year programmes of cooperation, Subregional Office and the respective regional economic communities.

E. Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the Subregional Office for Southern Africa

2008

180. At its fourteenth meeting held in Lusaka, Zambia in June 2008 under the theme: “Achieving free trade area and customs union: emerging challenges and opportunities for Southern Africa”, the Committee made major recommendations regarding the simplification and harmonization of customs and immigration procedures, reinforcement of technological, human and financial capacities in border management, information-sharing and sharing of resources, etc.

181. Member States should establish an efficient information management system in the trade facilitation process to ensure experience-sharing among member countries and the secretariats of the two regional economic communities. Member States should embrace the use of technology for facilitating domestic and international trade as well as integrating markets in order to reduce the cost of doing business and contribute to the integration of markets. Integrated border management committees should be established or strengthened and empowered by developing the ICT infrastructure needs for border operations, incorporating these in regional ICT policies and providing resources for implementation and resource management systems. The indispensable role of statistics in comparing progress requires member States to harmonize statistics on trade and regional integration.

182. COMESA and SADC should focus more on domestic resource mobilization through the operationalization of their Development Fund. There is also a need to create a Project Preparation and Development Unit within SADC, and strengthen the Unit in COMESA, and to prepare the

business plan for programme implementation with identified deliverables, responsibilities, budgets and time frames. There is also a need to develop a well-organized private-public partnership to participate in conceptualizing, designing and adopting integration programmes and providing human and financial resources for regional projects, thus generating wealth to stimulate growth and finance regional projects. The partnership can be strengthened or supported by facilitating the formalization of cross-border trade, enhancing the role of the private sector and regional business organizations in regional integration and in particular in trade development, and developing a system of accreditation of enterprises (transport companies and clearing agents) by national authorities within the region in order to facilitate cross-border trade.

183. For regional integration efforts to succeed, all stakeholders need to have access to information and share best practices. Accordingly, the application of ECA's knowledge management programme has relevance to all, including the private sector, civil-society organizations and research institutions, as it facilitates linkages for information-sharing. Considering the multisectoral nature of regional integration, and therefore the need to involve all ministries in the implementation of the regional integration programme, the value of knowledge management in linking various government departments and agencies should be explored by member States. This will encourage a harmonized policymaking process that takes into account all the concerns of all government stakeholders, thus ensuring a coherent and sustainable approach to regional integration.

2009

184. The Subregional Office will organize the fifteenth meeting of the Committee from 23 to 25 June 2009 in Lusaka, Zambia, around the theme "Enhancing domestic resource mobilization: challenges and opportunities for Southern Africa".

185. The fifteenth meeting will bring together experts from government ministries, departments and institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations and development partners and will thus offer an opportunity to examine the challenges that Southern Africa faces in mobilizing financial resources for its development, and particularly to meet the MDGs. It will emphasize the need to approach external resource mobilization, mainly in the form of foreign direct investment and official development assistance, in a complementary form rather than as supplanting domestic resource mobilization. The Committee will make a strong case for an enhanced domestic resource mobilization effort that embraces private savings and investment, mobilizing and utilizing domestic resources through the public sector the effective use of natural resources and improving exports on the international market and containing capital outflows and improving remittances as a mutually reinforcing approach to addressing the challenges and opportunities related to enhancing domestic resource mobilization for regional development. As a starting point, the region must develop the political courage to implement a regional protocol on liberalizing the movement of people to enable the most efficient use of human resources, and to usher in policies that encourage intercountry investment and capital flows. Protocols on the sustainable management of shared resources, most notably shared water, fisheries and forestry resources, should be implemented forthwith to enable the management and harvesting of these resources to benefit all citizens as the owners of public resources. The success of these reforms would emphasize the important role of the private sector (formal and informal) as an engine of economic growth, and a supportive environment is needed to encourage labour absorption while generating tax resources for attainment of the MDGs.

CHAPTER IV: MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

186. Efforts continued in the past year to strengthen organizational and management processes centred on the implementation of results-based management in all aspects of ECA's work. This chapter highlights the performance of the ECA secretariat in building a more transparent, accountable and results-based organization, with particular focus on measures to enhance resource mobilization and management. It also describes the measure taken to strengthen human resources management for enhanced performance and effectiveness.

A. Mobilization and management of financial resources

187. Efforts at resource mobilization received a significant boost in 2008 with the establishment of 19 new posts approved by the General Assembly under the United Nations Development Pillar. In addition, the General Assembly approved 15 new posts for ECA in the context of the consideration of the programme budget for the 2008-2009 biennium, bringing the total number of additional posts to 34 in 2008-2009. As a result, the total number of established posts at ECA now stands at 558, an increase of over 6.5 per cent compared to the 2006-2007 biennium. This was the highest level achieved in regular budget growth in the recent history of ECA and the biggest growth in post resources of any United Nations Secretariat entity. The bulk of the additional resources provided to ECA has been allocated to the subregional offices, in line with the strategy to strengthen the delivery of services directly to member States through these Offices; and the African Centre for Statistics, whose capacity has been increased by nearly 50 per cent with an additional 6 posts. Overall, the good performance reflects the renewed interest of member States and their commitment to support ECA's work following the repositioning exercise.

B. Mobilization of extrabudgetary resources

188. While mobilizing adequate resources to fund the core programme of work remains a top priority for ECA, supplementary resources from multilateral and bilateral partners, in the form of trust funds, pooled funds and earmarked resources, are also important as they allow the Commission to fully implement the work programme approved by the General Assembly, for which regular budget resources are insufficient. Enhanced partnerships with many of the Commission's traditional partners and some new ones have played a significant role in mobilizing additional extrabudgetary resources over the past few years.

189. During the period under review, a majority of partners increased their support or maintained the same level in the context of the implementation of the ECA Business Plan for 2007-2009 and subsequent years thanks to improved management and financial monitoring of related extrabudgetary projects. In the past year, ECA has continued its work within the existing partnership agreement with the Pooled Fund Partners (PFP) represented by Denmark, Sweden and the United Kingdom, which provided additional support of US\$ 2.5 million. A new donor partner, Norway, joined the PFP with additional support of US\$ 1million. The support of the Partners will continue to be instrumental in funding activities related to gender, governance, the MDGs and follow-up to the sixth African Development Forum. Other substantial contributions to the work of ECA in 2009 came from the United Kingdom (US\$ 5.4 million); Sweden (60 million kronor) for the implementation of the newly approved project for the African Climate Policy Centre ; Canada (US\$ 1.6 million) to support ongoing work in the context of the African Trade Policy Centre; Finland (3.8 million euros) in support of ECA's work in harnessing ICTs for

development; and Spain, which contributed for the first time in support of the Sixth African Development Forum (US\$ 125,000).

190. ECA also continued to receive support from other donors such as France, Italy, Switzerland and UNDP. Negotiations are currently under way with the African Capacity-Building Foundation, Germany in respect of good governance, the World Bank in respect of the Fragile States Initiative, and the European Union in the area of ICTs for development.

191. During the period under review, ECA continued to deepen its efforts to improve the management of extrabudgetary resources, and maintained transparency through regular review meetings and periodic partner forums, which serve as a platform for sharing information with partners on strategic issues regarding the use of resources made available to ECA. The Commission is also striving to strengthen existing guidelines and tools for effective project monitoring, evaluation and reporting, in order to ensure a more integrated approach to regular budget and extrabudgetary resource planning and use.

192. Other measures currently being implemented include the development and customization of a flexible Technical Cooperation Management System (e-TC), which is aimed at improving internal planning, management and reporting on trust fund management and technical cooperation services. When operational, the new system will allow authorized clients to access all information regarding project cycle management, implementation and disbursement, and the results achieved.

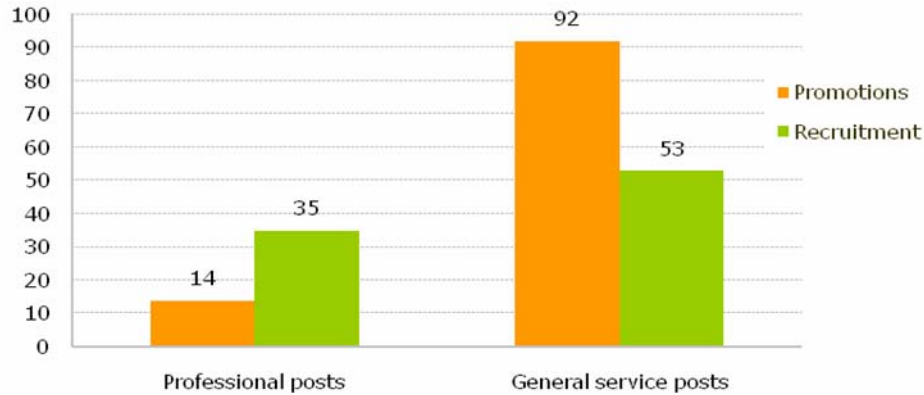
C. Human resources management

193. The role and place of human resources management in the repositioned ECA is of the utmost importance, because it is a necessary complement to the new programme structure. In this regard, ECA has continued to make incremental improvements to human resources planning and management, and has developed a clear strategy, which is closely aligned with the new programme structure of the Commission. The strategy puts emphasis on performance management, transparency, staff development and training, improving the quality and timeliness of service delivery through automation of processes, and ensuring gender balance in staff composition. The new strategy has resulted in a more efficient, client-friendly and responsive Human Resources Services Section at ECA during the period under review. In addition, emphasis is being placed on raising staff awareness of the management reforms currently underway within the United Nations, particularly the new contractual arrangements which come into effect as of 1 July 2009. Awareness-raising also focused on management of new talent, enterprise resource planning systems and the amended Staff Regulations and Rules.

D. Recruitment and placement of staff

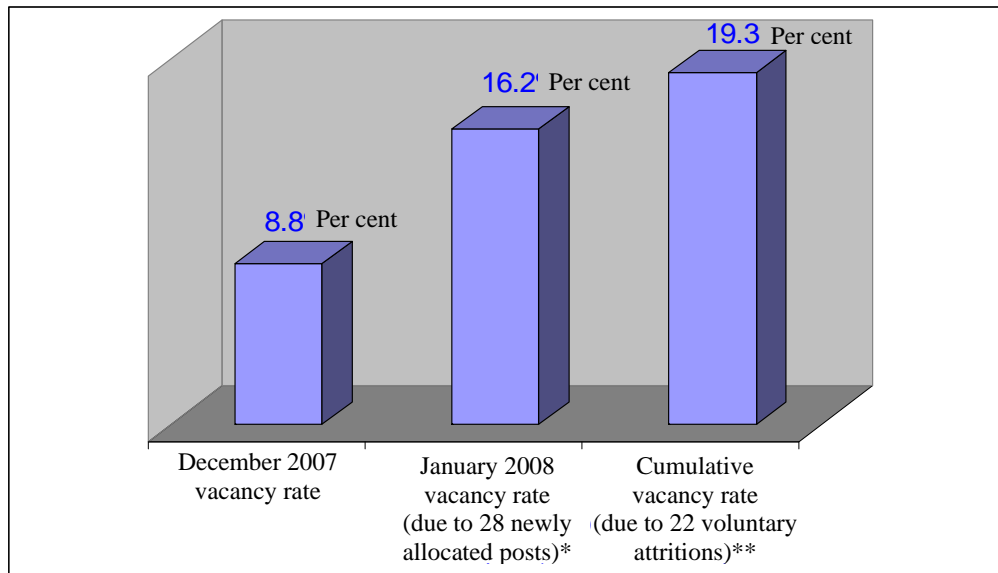
194. Efforts continued over the past year to strengthen the Commission's recruitment programme, with good results. A total of 194 Professional and General Service posts were filled through recruitment, promotions and mobility procedures during the period under review. Of these, 106 (14 Professional and 92 General Service posts) were filled through promotion, and 88 (35 Professional and 53 General Service posts) through external recruitment (See figure 1).

Figure 1. Staff promotion, recruitment and regularization
(1 January 2008 - 31 May 2009)



195. As figure 2 below shows, however, these efforts were hampered by high rates of voluntary departure of staff, over which the Commission had no control. A total of 18 staff in the Professional category left the Commission on transfer to other United Nations organizations and offices or to join non-United Nations organizations, raising the vacancy rate considerably. In addition, the allocation of 10 new posts in January 2008 and 20 new posts in 2009 resulted in a significant increase in the vacancy rate of 8.8 per cent as at 31 December 2007. Currently, ECA's cumulative vacancy rate over the past 16 months stands at 19.3 per cent.

Figure 2. Vacancy rates
(2008-2009)



* ECA obtained a total of 28 new posts (8 for the Subregional Offices, 6 for African Centre for Statistics, 13 National Officers, and 1 Legal Officer for the OES)

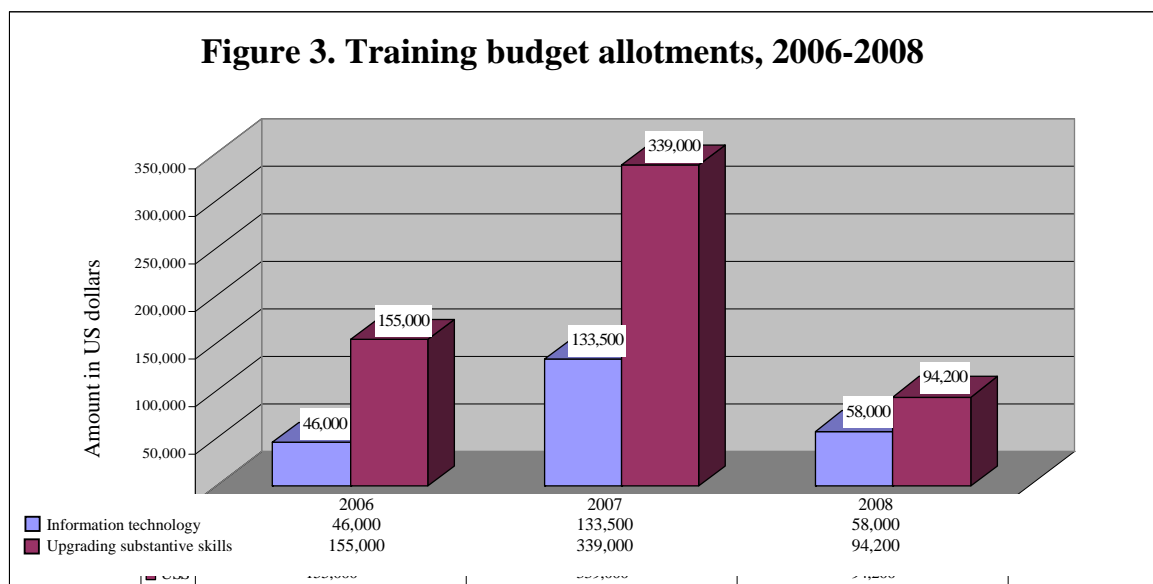
** 18 voluntary departures/attritions in 2008 and 4 in 2009 = 22.

196. There was a slight improvement in gender and geographical distribution. To attract female candidates and improve geographical balance in staff composition, a major recruitment drive was embarked upon during the past year. A key feature of the recruitment campaign was the development of an outreach package, which was piloted in three under-represented countries; Angola, Botswana and Gabon, in conjunction with the administration of National Competitive Examinations in these countries. External communication and advertisements in major media are also planned as part of the efforts, targeting unrepresented and underrepresented member States, including participating in job fairs, holding seminars and establishing contacts with universities in the concerned countries. The Consultant's Roster Project, another measure to enhance gender balance and geographical distribution, among other purposes, is currently under way. Its main objective is to develop an integrated central data repository on consultants aimed at facilitating speedy engagement. Once operational, it will enable a wider search and categorization of screened consultants by occupational group, gender and geography, as well as providing a comprehensive framework for processing, managing and monitoring the recruitment of consultants.

E. Staff development and training

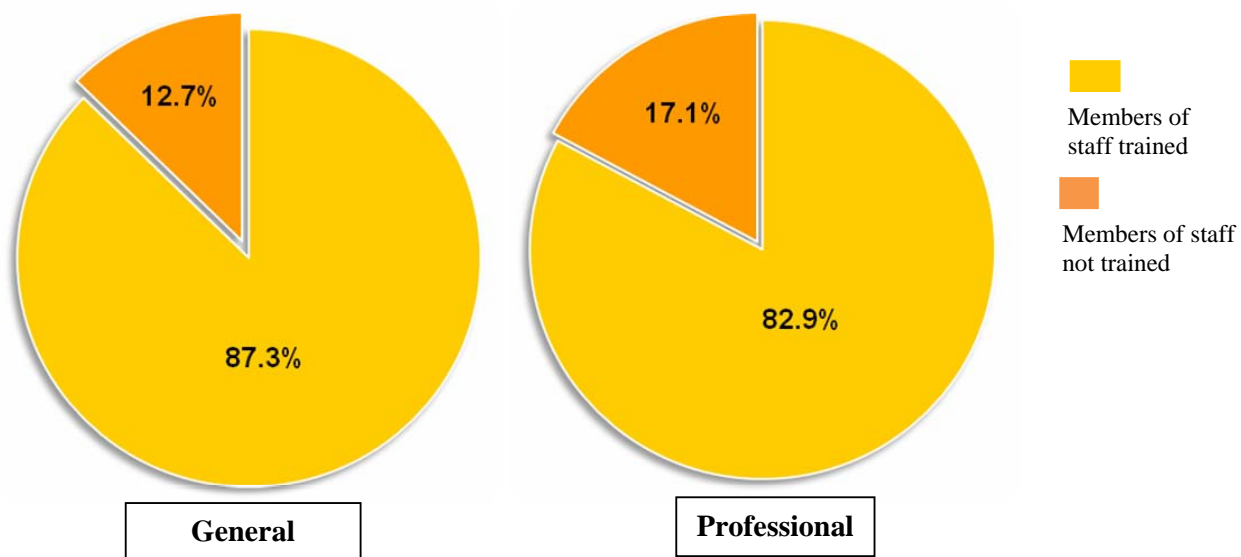
197. Staff development needs were addressed through a combination of centrally coordinated programmes aimed at developing the core values and core and managerial competencies so as to promote a shared organizational culture and values; and through decentralized programmes to address specific substantive and technical skills and knowledge.

198. In 2008, however, the Commission witnessed a decline of 73 per cent in the decentralized training allocations overall, as shown in figure 3 below (\$US 94,200 for upgrading substantive skills and \$US 58,900 for upgrading technical and IT skills). To make the best use of scarce resources, staff development activities were reformulated to target programme areas of high impact and address new priorities in ECA's work, as articulated in the approved work programme and Business Plan. The substantive skills training programme was aimed at enhancing the capacity of ECA staff to support the programme of work in various sectors, thereby increasing the impact and quality of ECA services to member States. The training activities undertaken in 2008 covered such topics as technology planning, including ICTs and geoinformation, the use of e-platforms for decision support and as a social networking tool, and knowledge management.



199. Staff development and skill-upgrading opportunities were made available to all categories of staff, and took into account gender balance, as reflected in figure 4 below.

Figure 4. Training Activity by Category



	Professional	Total Number of Professional Staff	General Service	Total Number of General Service Staff	Male	Female
Centrally coordinated training	152	237	645	829	332	465
Substantive and technical skills training	55	237	42	829	65	32
Total	207		687		397	497

