

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
30 March 2026

Original: English

**Economic Commission for Africa
Committee of Experts of the Conference of African
Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development**
Forty-fourth meeting

Tangier, Morocco (hybrid), 28–30 March 2026

**Economic Commission for Africa
Conference of African Ministers of Finance,
Planning and Economic Development**
Fifty-eighth session

Tangier, Morocco (hybrid), 2–3 April 2026

**Recent organizational changes in the secretariat of
the Economic Commission for Africa****Note by the Executive Secretary****I. Background**

1. In March 2025, the Secretary-General launched the UN80 Initiative, a system-wide reform effort to strengthen the effectiveness, efficiency and agility of the United Nations in the context of complex global challenges amid resource limitations. The Initiative, which is a continuation of earlier reforms, is intended to improve processes, enhance accountability and ensure better fulfilment of mandates. It is divided into three workstreams: operational efficiencies and improvements; a review of mandate implementation; and structural realignment.

2. To advance attainment of the initiative's objectives, the United Nations has taken several actions. These include:

(a) Targeted efficiencies and cost reductions related to the proposed programme budget for 2026 and the support account budget for 2025/26;

(b) Initial steps to enhance the management and operations of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), stemming from the workstream focused on operational efficiencies and improvements.

3. The actions taken necessitated, among other measures, the revision of resource requirements and the readjustment of the organizational structure of ECA to strengthen its internal coordination, improve collaboration among its divisions, reduce fragmentation and enhance overall efficiency. The revised estimates were presented in the report of the Secretary-General on revised estimates relating to the proposed programme budget for 2026 and the support account for peacekeeping operations for the 2025/26 period (A/80/400) and adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 80/242 of 30 December 2025.

4. The actions taken under the UN80 Initiative do not alter the Commission's intergovernmental mandates or geographical coverage. All mandated areas of work remain unchanged.

5. Beyond the UN80 Initiative, ECA has made further adjustments to the 2027 proposed programme plan and budget to ensure alignment with actions taken under the Initiative, but also to further enhance the Commission's effectiveness and efficiency. The adjustments are also intended to position the



Commission to respond more effectively to emerging priorities and the evolving development needs of its members.

6. The purpose of the present note is to inform the Conference of Ministers of the organizational changes made under the UN80 Initiative and to seek endorsement of the additional adjustments made to the programme of ECA, in order to further strengthen its efficiency and effectiveness.

II. Organizational changes arising from the UN80 Initiative

7. On the basis of the UN80 Initiative and actions taken so far, including the revised estimates relating to the 2026 programme plan and budget, ECA has made the following organizational changes, effective 1 January 2026:

(a) Programme support functions have been consolidated at the division level, with one administrative assistant, one staff assistant and one team assistant per division;

(b) In order to strengthen organizational efficiency, eliminate duplication, enhance service delivery and ensure better alignment between administrative functions and conference management, the Division of Administration and the Publications, Conference and Knowledge Management Division have been consolidated to form the Administration and Conference Management Division, which incorporates all sections of the former Division of Administration and two adjusted sections of the Publications, Conference and Knowledge Management Division;

(c) Previously performed by the Payroll and Disbursement Unit of the Finance and Budget Section, the core payroll function has been reallocated to the Department of Operational Support at United Nations Headquarters;

(d) Following the adjustments to the Division of Administration and the Publications, Conference and Knowledge Management Division, the new Administration and Conference Management Division comprises:

- (i) Facilities Management Section;
- (ii) Finance and Budget Section;
- (iii) Human Resources Management Section;
- (iv) Supply Chain Management Section;
- (v) United Nations Health Care Centre;
- (vi) Publications and Conference Management Section;
- (vii) Digital and Information Technology Management Section;

(e) Previously part of the Publications, Conference and Knowledge Management Division, the Knowledge Management Services Section has been transferred to the Strategic Planning, Oversight and Results Division;

(f) The Protocol and Liaison Services Unit of the Publications and Conference Management Section, previously of the Publications, Conference and Knowledge Management Division, and Risk Management and Business Continuity, formerly of the Strategic Planning, Oversight and Results Division, are now under the Office of the Chief of Staff in the Office of the Executive Secretary;

(g) All natural resources-related workstreams – namely those related to land and agriculture transformation and to natural resources management –

will now be the responsibility of a single Natural Resources and Food Systems Section in the Climate, Food Security and Natural Resources Division;

(h) The urbanization workstream of subprogramme 9 has been merged with the development planning workstream of subprogramme 1,¹ under a new Sustainable Development and Integrated Planning Section in the Macroeconomics, Finance, Governance and Planning Division;

(i) With a view to reducing internal fragmentation, to centralizing accountability for programme delivery, to promoting closer integration of analytical, advisory and capacity-building functions and to strengthening alignment between subregional support and country-level priorities, including collaboration with resident coordinator offices, country teams and relevant regional economic communities, the structure of each subregional office, all of which previously comprised two sections and one administration and finance unit, has been consolidated into a single substantive section, supported by an administration unit.

III. Additional organizational changes beyond the UN80 Initiative

8. In addition, ECA has introduced further structural changes to strengthen its effectiveness and efficiency, enhance its coherence, strengthen synergies and better respond to the needs of its members.

A. Macroeconomics, Finance, Governance and Planning Division

9. In the Macroeconomics, Finance, Governance and Planning Division, structural adjustments have been made in relation to integrated macroeconomic policy, governance and domestic resource mobilization. The Macroeconomic Analysis Section and the Institutions and Economic Governance Section have been merged to form the Macroeconomic Analysis, Institutions and Economic Governance Section.

10. Meanwhile the Urbanization and Development Section has been moved from the former Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division and merged with the Development Planning Section to form the Sustainable Development and Integrated Planning Section. The Section will also coordinate monitoring of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union. That coordination will also include the organization of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and support to voluntary national and local reviews. The establishment of the Section will reinforce linkages among macroeconomic analysis, development planning, governance and financing for development.

B. Regional Integration and Trade Division

11. Under the Regional Integration and Trade Division, structural adjustments have been introduced to streamline the Division's internal organization, strengthen coherence among its related areas of work and sharpen its strategic focus on strengthening regional cooperation and integration

¹ The United Nations organizes its work into programmes mandated by the Member States, each of which is designed to achieve a major goal; ECA is programme 15, Economic and social development in Africa. Each programme is divided into specialized, operational components, known as subprogrammes. ECA has nine subprogrammes.

through increased trade flows, improved industrialization and greater investment. The number of sections within the Division has been reduced from three to two, through the merger of the former Market Institutions Section and the former Regional Integration and New Partnership for Africa's Development Section into a single new entity: the Regional Integration and Economic Diversification Section. The African Trade Policy Centre, meanwhile, remains unchanged. The changes reinforce synergies between the trade and industrialization workstreams and strengthen the Division's capacity to provide focused and coordinated support to members of ECA.

C. African Centre for Statistics

12. Within the African Centre for Statistics, structural adjustments have been introduced to strengthen the Centre's strategic orientation, enhance coherence among its areas of work and ensure its responsiveness to the evolving data and statistical needs of members of ECA. The Centre, previously divided into four sections, has been restructured into three interlinked sections: the Data Capability and Geospatial Knowledge Section; the Statistical Production, Methods and Research Section; and the Coordination, Partnerships and Policy Outreach Section.

D. Climate Change, Food Security and Natural Resources Division

13. The Climate Change, Food Security and Natural Resources Division has been restructured from three sections to two, with the merger of the former Natural Resources and Green and Blue Economy Section and the former Land and Agricultural Transformation Section to form the new Natural Resources and Food Systems Section. The African Climate Policy Centre, meanwhile, remains as a stand-alone section. These adjustments bring together closely linked workstreams on land, natural resources and food systems, supporting a more integrated and coordinated approach to agrifood system transformation and sustainable development in Africa, while enhancing synergies, policy coherence and integrated delivery for members of ECA and regional institutions.

E. Socioeconomic Development Division

14. The former Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division has been renamed the Socioeconomic Development Division, which continues to be responsible for implementing subprogrammes 6 and 9. Adjustments have been made to enhance internal coherence, streamline operations and strengthen synergies among related areas of work.

15. The Division, previously divided into three sections, has been restructured into two sections. The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section has been renamed the Women and Youth Economic Empowerment Section. The Section continues to focus on subprogramme 6. The Social Policy Section has remained unchanged and continues to focus on subprogramme 9. As mentioned above, the new Sustainable Development and Integrated Planning Section of the Macroeconomics, Finance, Governance and Planning Division is now responsible for the work previously done by the Urbanization and Development Section.

16. Subprogramme 9 has been renamed "Poverty and socioeconomic policy" and its overall objective has been adjusted to read: "to eradicate extreme poverty and reduce multidimensional poverty by ensuring that members of

ECA have evidence-based policies and strategies for social investment and productive job creation”. In a similar vein, subprogramme 6 has been renamed “Economic empowerment of women and youth” and its overall objective has been adjusted to read: “to achieve the economic empowerment of women and youth in Africa, by strengthening the design and implementation of inclusive and resilient policies and programmes by members of ECA, in line with national development plans and strategies, and relevant global and regional commitments”.

F. Subregional Office for North Africa

17. The Subregional Office for North Africa has sharpened its objective to better align its programmatic delivery with the evolving needs and priorities of North African States. Its objective has been adjusted to “advancing inclusive growth and sustainable development in North Africa through strengthened economic diversification, fiscal management, development finance, regional integration and better recognition of migrant workers’ economic contributions”. In addition, the Subregional Office’s area of specialization has changed from “Employment skills and balanced development” to “Inclusive growth and sustainable development”. These adjustments reflect a change from an employment-centred framing towards a broader and more integrated focus on accelerated and inclusive growth and sustainable development, with increased emphasis on macroeconomic policy, development financing, fiscal management, regional integration and economic diversification.

IV. Conclusion

18. The changes made in the context of the UN80 Initiative and beyond strengthen the Commission’s ability to deliver with greater coherence, agility and strategic focus. By streamlining structures, clarifying accountabilities and refocusing related workstreams, ECA has ensured that it is better positioned to respond to evolving regional priorities and emerging global challenges. In addition, the changes enhance the Commission’s capacity to accelerate the progress being made in the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, while advancing more effective, coordinated and results-oriented multilateral action. Through streamlined structures and clearer accountabilities, ECA is delivering greater value to its members with more effective, demand-driven programmes grounded in national and subregional priorities.