

Governance Country Profiles Released

ECA has released the first batch of 28 country governance profiles which assess the state of governance in African countries. The reports were compiled from national expert surveys, household surveys and other country data. The first profiles cover Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana and Namibia and are available online at: www.uneca.org



G8 outcome “a step in the right direction”

ECA said that the G8 summit could play an important role in spurring African progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). But it cautioned that doubling aid alone would not reduce poverty, and underscored the importance both of qualitative and quantitative aid.

The summit which was held in Gleneagles, Scotland concluded by agreeing on support for Africa to the tune of a US\$50 billion aid package, debt cancellation and progress towards a deal on fair trade.

Augustin Fosu, the director of ECA's Economic and Social Policy Division, told the press in Addis that this was a positive step in the right direction. But it was just a start, he added. G-8 leaders were only beginning to meet commitments they made years ago and they had still not committed to spending 0.7 percent of their GDP on foreign aid, a pledge they made in 1970.

Other Reactions

The UK's 'Guardian' daily summed up the mood by arguing that Africa had not been “bombed off” the agenda – a

reference to the devastating explosions in London that coincided with the G8 summit. It recalled the 1998 bombings of the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in which hundreds of innocent Africans lost their lives.

“Was Gleneagles really a sideshow then, a spasm of pomp and circumstance buried by flying glass?” wrote commentator Peter Preston. “Only if you don't connect. Did it make poverty a less oppressive chapter of all our histories? Only if we think that blowing up people is more important than leaving them to starve. Only if we put Africa in one neat little box of concern and forget the hundreds of Africans the terrorists - these terrorists - murdered. Only if we're prepared to turn a blind eye to violent despotism where it surfaces.”

Click here for the main outcomes of the Gleneagles summit:
<http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page7883.asp>

Inaugural issue of Africa's Sustainable Development Bulletin

ECA's Sustainable Development Division (SDD) has released the first issue of its repackaged annual publication, Africa's Sustainable Development Bulletin, formerly known as “Africa's Population and Development Bulletin”.

According to a foreword written by K.Y. Amoako, ECA's Executive Secretary, the new Bulletin will demonstrate the linkages between different economic and social sectors. Africa must make simultaneous progress on multiple fronts in order to develop in a sustainable manner, he noted. Published in English and French, and available at www.uneca.org/sdd, the Bulletin provides a vehicle through

which SDD presents policy briefs on trends and policies related to agriculture, food security, population, human settlements, natural resources and the environment. It is also intended to be an advocacy instrument.

ECA Reviews its Work

ECA recently ended its Programme Performance Review for the first 18 months of the 2004-2005 biennium. This self-assessment exercise was aimed at critically reviewing past experiences and results achieved so far, and looking ahead to future activities. Some issues that came up included better collaboration with research networks and regional pools of expertise, as well as continued cooperation with the African Union.

ECA publications this month:

Assessment of Power Pooling Arrangements in Africa:

http://www.uneca.org/eca_programmes/sdd/documents/POWER_POOLING_rd.pdf

Mineral Cluster Policy Study in Africa:

http://www.uneca.org/eca_programmes/sdd/documents/Mineral_cluster_study_SA_Mozambique.pdf

Africa's Sustainable Development Bulletin:

http://www.uneca.org/sdd/documents/ASD_Bulletin_%202004.pdf

Please check the ECA website at www.uneca.org for more details on these stories.