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**Economic Commission for Africa
Committee on Social Policy, Poverty and Gender
Fifth session**

Addis Ababa, 2 and 3 November 2023

Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

Consideration and adoption of the agenda and programme of work**Annotated provisional agenda****1. Opening of the session**

The Executive Secretary a.i. will deliver the opening address, which will be followed by a statement by the Director of the Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division.

Presentation of the terms of reference of the Committee on Social Policy, Poverty and Gender

The presentation will be an overview of the terms of reference and will guide the work of the Committee on Social Policy, Poverty and Gender.

2. Election of the Bureau

Consultations will be held based on clear guidelines to ensure that each subregion is represented in electing the Bureau of the fifth session.

3. Consideration and adoption of the agenda and programme of work

The provisional agenda and draft programme of work of the fifth session of the Committee will be presented by the Chair, discussed and adopted.

4. Reports to the Committee on Social Policy, Poverty and Gender – reporting and discussion**(a) Subprogramme 9 – poverty, inequality and social policy**

The focus of this presentation will be on the analytical and policy work on social policy and urbanization carried out under subprogramme 9. The policies influenced, results achieved, lessons learned and main challenges faced in implementing the subprogramme will be highlighted and the activities planned for the 2024–2025 biennium will be outlined.

* E/ECA/CSPPG/5/1.



(b) Subprogramme 6 – gender equality and women’s empowerment

The focus of the presentation will be on the work carried out under subprogramme 6 and the main achievements during the past two years. The policies influenced, results achieved, lessons learned and main challenges faced in implementing the subprogramme and in supporting members of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment will be highlighted and the activities planned for the 2024–2025 biennium will be outlined.

5. Parallel sessions

(a) Digital technical and vocational education and training: enhancing the skills of women and girls across Africa

The work of the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Section of ECA on enhancing the skills of women and girls will be presented to the Committee. The research paper on gender and digitalization and the Commission’s five-pillar capacity development programme will be introduced. It is hoped that members will be able to deliberate on the design, delivery and impact of the programme and endorse it as a subregional model. Countries will also be invited to submit additional requests for support on enhancing the digital skills of women and girls.

(b) Reducing poverty through skills development

The presentation will highlight the considerable progress that Africa has made in the past two decades, while acknowledging that poverty remains high. Based on ECA estimates, 555 million people still live below the international poverty line, mostly in countries where access to education is limited. Although it has long been recognized that skills training is important to reduce poverty and drive growth, evidence shows that there has been a sustained education and skills development crisis in Africa. Providing young people with a good foundational education and employable skills to boost productivity will enhance their resilience against shocks and have a catalytic effect on poverty reduction.

(c) Reviewing the *Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines* as a tool to foster the adaptation of the Sustainable Development Goals to the local level

The Committee will be informed of the work that the Urbanization and Development Section has carried out on the *Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines*, which are a practical tool designed to support African local authorities in preparing voluntary local reviews that will accelerate progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union. The *Guidelines* are based on the expertise and experience of ECA, which has supported five cities and localities – Accra, Harare, Yaoundé, Ngora District (Uganda) and Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe) – in conducting voluntary local reviews. Furthermore, previous research on voluntary local reviews conducted by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and United Cities and Local Government has been incorporated into the *Guidelines*.

6. General discussion on the theme of the fifth session “Building new social contracts in Africa: choices to fulfil development aspirations”

(a) Presentation of the issues paper

(b) Breakout sessions

(c) Reporting back on the breakout sessions and discussion on the way forward

Following a brief presentation, the Committee will have the opportunity to discuss and consider strategies for building new social contracts and to explore choices for fulfilling development aspirations. The Committee will engage in and provide a critical analysis of the broader social, gender and development policies, strategies and actions designed for African countries to achieve their development aspirations.

7. Consideration and adoption of conclusions and recommendations of the fifth session

The Committee will consider the conclusions and recommendations to be adopted at the fifth session.

8. Closing of the session

The major outcomes of the session will be highlighted and attention will be drawn to the future directions and work of the Committee.
