

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
1 October 2025

Original: English

Economic Commission for Africa
Committee on Social Policy, Poverty and Gender
Sixth session
Addis Ababa, 26–28 November 2025

Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda*

Reports to the Committee on Social Policy, Poverty and Gender – reporting and discussion: subprogramme 6 – gender equality and women’s empowerment**Report on the activities of the Economic Commission for Africa relating to subprogramme 6: gender equality and women’s empowerment****I. Introduction**

1. The work of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) under subprogramme 6 is undertaken by the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Section. The work relates to international and regional commitments on gender equality, including the commitments under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a particular focus on Sustainable Development Goal 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls); Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union, with emphasis on aspiration 6 (an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children); and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

2. During the biennium 2024–2025, the Section, under subprogramme 6, sought to render African States better able to implement the five-pillar capacity-development programme to enhance the digital skills of women and girls, enabling them to make the most of the continent’s economic and digital transformation. The Section also promoted the mainstreaming of gender objectives into national development planning and budgeting processes; encouraged the use of the African Gender and Development Index and the Africa Gender Index for the design and monitoring of and reporting on programmes pertaining to gender equality; and supported the mainstreaming of gender perspectives into sectoral and fiscal policies. To achieve these objectives, the Section focused on conducting analytical and policy research, providing technical advisory services, engaging in policy dialogue, disseminating knowledge, developing capacity and forging strategic partnerships to increase effectiveness.

3. In the present report, the main achievements made under the subprogramme in 2024 and 2025 are highlighted, the challenges encountered during its implementation are discussed and lessons learned in the process are detailed. In addition, the focus areas planned for 2026 and 2027 are outlined,

* E/ECA/CSPPG/6/1.



on the basis of the outcome documents of previous sessions of the Committee and of experiences gained from the work done under the subprogramme to date.

II. Main achievements during the biennium 2024–2025

A. Increased involvement of women and girls in digital transformation

4. Under the subprogramme, the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section advanced digital transformation by providing digital capacity-building workshops for women and girls involved in business, trade and digital enterprise, equipping them to use new technologies, innovate and participate in digitalization. At expert group meetings on the Commission's programme pertaining to gender equality and digital empowerment, participants reviewed progress made in the implementation of the capacity-development programme to enhance the digital skills of women and girls in the following countries: Djibouti, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Morocco, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa and the Sudan. The Section also promoted gender-responsive technical and vocational education and training on digital skills. In addition, with a view to fostering sustainable digital empowerment initiatives, the Section drafted the outcome statement issued following the parallel session on digital technical and vocational education and training that was convened as part of the fifth session of the Committee on Social Policy, Poverty and Gender.

5. The Section also produced a report on women's economic empowerment and digitalization, in which socioeconomic barriers to digital inclusion were identified and eight policy recommendations were made, with a view to giving women and girls in Africa greater access to digital technologies, increasing their digital literacy and offering them more opportunities in that connection.

6. In addition, under the subprogramme, ECA strengthened its members' understanding of digital empowerment and facilitated the sharing of related best practices. As a result, the following measures have been taken, demonstrating tangible progress in fostering inclusive digital transformation that empowers women and girls across the continent:

(a) In Lesotho, training for women and girls on online safety, digital awareness, content creation and online marketing has been conducted;

(b) In Mauritius, social media training for women entrepreneurs has been rolled out and online networking centres and digital banking programmes are being developed;

(c) In Seychelles, digital literacy has been embedded into school curricula and advanced online banking platforms have been established;

(d) In South Africa, policymakers and entrepreneurs have been trained on incorporating digital technologies into their business processes and the internationalization of small and medium-sized enterprises led by women to elsewhere in the African Continental Free Trade Area has been promoted.

B. Regional and global gender equality commitments: measurement, monitoring and reporting

7. Under the subprogramme, the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section continued to support African States in their measurement of, monitoring of and reporting on regional and global gender equality commitments, through targeted technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives.

1. African Gender and Development Index

8. In 2004, ECA developed the African Gender and Development Index to provide States with a practical tool for monitoring and reporting progress made in meeting their gender equality commitments. It was accompanied by a publication, since revised and reissued several times, issued to support effective implementation of the Index.

9. Under the subprogramme, the Section continues to expand the roll-out of the Index to additional countries, to assess progress in achieving gender equality commitments and to institutionalize the use of the Index within national statistical systems. This approach enables African States to consistently monitor and report on advances in gender equality and women's empowerment, to benchmark their progress against regional peers and to identify bottlenecks, all with a view to informing policy interventions aimed at closing gender gaps. In this context, the work done in 2025 as part of the capacity-building for gender statistics and monitoring systems project has strengthened national capacity to track the progress made in meeting gender equality commitments, including the commitments under Sustainable Development Goal 5, and has supported the institutionalization of the Index.

10. In April 2025, to ensure that all States using the Index share a common understanding of the processes involved in its compilation, the Section published a revised and strengthened technical note for the Index, incorporating recent developments in human rights, climate action, disaster risk management and women's empowerment. The updated technical note constitutes a harmonized framework for African States' compilation of the Index and ensures a shared understanding of its methodology and processes. It is designed to support Governments, civil society organizations, women's groups and other stakeholders in making effective use of the Index. In addition, the revised technical note includes guidance on using the Index as a tool for evidence-based advocacy, policy formulation and resource allocation and for improving the availability, quality and use of gender statistics across the continent.

2. Africa Gender Index

11. Working with the African Development Bank, the Section helped African States to use the Africa Gender Index to track the progress made in achieving gender parity, to identify gaps and to guide policy interventions to close such gaps. To strengthen implementation, it produced the second edition of the Africa Gender Index report.¹ In the report, in which all African countries were covered, persistent inequality was highlighted across economic, social and empowerment metrics and evidence-based recommendations were provided to ensure that gender equality remained central to national development agendas. Informed by expert and stakeholder consultations, the Index is now used by Governments, civil society organizations and other development partners to shape gender-responsive policies, guide resource allocation and improve gender statistics.

3. Capacity-building for gender statistics and monitoring systems

12. Since 2022, the Section has been working with the African Centre for Statistics, under subprogrammes 6 and 4 (data and statistics), to implement a project to build capacity for gender statistics and monitoring systems in Burundi, Mozambique, South Sudan and Zimbabwe. With funding from the African Development Bank, the project is being used to build national capacity for gender-responsive programming, to strengthen data-collection and reporting systems, and to support participatory national gender monitoring mechanisms in order to track progress, mainstream gender into development planning, and meet regional and global reporting obligations.

¹ African Development Bank and ECA, *Africa Gender Index 2023 Analytical Report: African Women in Times of Crisis* (Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; Addis Ababa; 2024).

13. ECA conducted situation analyses in the four countries to identify gaps in their gender statistics and monitoring systems. The analyses were used to examine the processes of the four national bureaux of statistics, following which measures were recommended to improve the collection, analysis and monitoring of gender-responsive data.

14. Building on these analyses, the Section helped African States to develop national gender monitoring and reporting indicator frameworks to facilitate timely reporting on national, regional and international obligations pertaining to gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights. Capacity-development and technical assistance workshops were held in Burundi, Mozambique, South Sudan and Zimbabwe to validate the proposed frameworks and related situation analysis reports that had been produced. At the workshops, national stakeholders came together to review findings, exchange experiences and agree on specific steps to strengthen gender monitoring and reporting. Action-oriented implementation plans were developed; to date, the greatest progress has been made in Zimbabwe, where the proposed gender monitoring and reporting framework is being incorporated into the country's next national development plan.

4. Africa regional gender statistics programme

15. The Section worked with the African Centre for Statistics and other regional and international partners to advance the Africa Programme on Gender Statistics. In that context, the sixth and seventh Africa Gender Statistics Forums were held, in Gaborone from 8 to 12 July 2024 and in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 30 June to 4 July 2025, respectively. Producers and users of gender statistics, policymakers and technical experts from over 40 African States came together at the Forums to share innovations, exchange best practices and strengthen national capacity for gender data collection and analysis.

16. At the Forums, participants reviewed progress made in Africa on gender statistics in the 30 years since the issuance of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, identifying achievements and persistent gaps. They also reviewed the implementation to date of phase III of the Africa Programme on Gender Statistics, which runs from 2022 to 2026. At the seventh Forum, the Section presented the second edition of the Africa Gender Index report, highlighting the chief findings, the recommendations made and the methodology used for data collection and validation. In addition, participants discussed strategies for advancing policies on gender statistics, strengthening national monitoring systems and aligning gender indicators with global, regional and national frameworks, including the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In addition, the Forums served as platforms for technical capacity-building, peer-to-peer learning and the promotion of data-driven approaches to inclusive gender monitoring and policymaking.

5. Thirty-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

17. The Section coordinated and oversaw preparatory arrangements for the African regional 30-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It provided extensive technical support to African States in preparing their national review reports, including by contributing to the guidance note² issued by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), conducting advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns, and establishing strategic partnerships with the African Union Commission, the regional economic communities, other entities of the United Nations system and United Nations country teams. As a result, 48 African States completed comprehensive national

² UN-Women, "Guidance note for comprehensive national-level reviews" (New York, 2023).

reviews, documenting progress made and challenges faced in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

18. Drawing on the reviews and on survey responses from 41 African States, the Section prepared the “Africa regional review summary report: Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 2020–2024”,³ in which recent achievements in advancing gender equality and women’s rights were highlighted and priority measures to accelerate implementation across the continent were outlined.

19. In partnership with the African Union Commission and UN-Women, the Section organized the African regional 30-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. At the expert segment of the review, convened in Addis Ababa on 1 and 2 November 2024, 104 participants from 30 African States, including representatives of ministries responsible for gender issues, civil society organizations and youth groups, along with representatives of several African intergovernmental institutions and United Nations entities, came together to review a synthesis report produced by all States members of the African Union and to develop an outcome document for consideration during the ministerial segment.

20. During the ministerial segment, on 6 November 2024, representatives of 30 ministries came together, alongside observers from youth and civil society organizations, to advance the gender equality and women’s empowerment agenda. The result was the adoption of an African common position on the 30-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which served as the African contribution to the sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in New York in March 2025, and as guidance for participating African States.

C. Gender mainstreaming

1. Eleventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

21. The Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Section organized, under the subprogramme, one of five parallel meetings at the eleventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, convened in Kampala in April 2025, each of which was on the subject of a particular Sustainable Development Goal. At the meeting, which was on Goal 5, a representative of the Section presented the background report on gender equality, which the Section had prepared. Participants discussed achievements made in relation to gender equality, persistent challenges in that connection and action-oriented recommendations to advance its attainment.

22. During the presentation and discussion, critical data, case studies and best practices were showcased, and evidence-based recommendations were made for inclusion in the Kampala Declaration on Sustainable, Inclusive, Science-based and Evidence-based Solutions for Driving Job Creation and Economic Growth and for Implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

23. In relation to gender equality and women’s empowerment, the chief outcomes included:

(a) Adoption of the Kampala Declaration, which was reflected in the ministerial declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, held in New York in July 2025;

(b) Formulation of policy recommendations to guide national, regional and global efforts to ensure that gender equality remains central to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

³ ECA (Addis Ababa, 2024).

2. National legislative and policy measures to promote gender equality

24. In Kampala in May 2024, the Section jointly organized a policy dialogue on the need to mainstream gender into public policy. The focus was on embedding gender considerations into policymaking to foster economic transformation and social sustainability, while also providing technical support and advisory services to strengthen the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into sectoral policies and plans.

25. The Section supported the Government of Zimbabwe in identifying critical indicators pertaining to gender goals. The indicators are to be incorporated under the 10 strategic priorities included in the country's second national development strategy, which is set to cover the period 2026–2030. The strategic priorities include macroeconomic stability and deepening of the financial sector; inclusive economic growth and structural transformation; and infrastructure development and housing.

26. Concurrently, the Section has been helping the Government of Uganda to ensure that a gender perspective is effectively integrated into the country's development initiatives, including the national employment policy and strategy for the period 2023–2028.

3. National migration policies

27. Under subprogramme 6 and subprogramme 9 (poverty, inequality and social policy), ECA is working with the African Union Commission on the project known as "International migration in Africa: shaping a positive narrative and removing barriers to mobility", with funding from the Government of Italy. Within the project, the Section is taking the lead on one of six thematic areas, namely "Promoting economic empowerment of migrant women", aimed at enhancing the economic empowerment of migrant women returning to Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda and at strengthening their capacity to address human rights violations related to migration and internal displacement.

28. The Section's interventions laid the groundwork for coordinated efforts to empower returnee migrant women by closing systemic gaps, fostering collaboration and promoting evidence-based approaches. It conducted a comprehensive assessment of the economic and business needs of returnee migrant domestic workers in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, documenting the countries' legal and policy frameworks; profiling returnees and analysing their needs; mapping crucial service providers; and identifying job opportunities. Following the assessment, the Section disseminated its principal findings and recommendations widely, including at the Kenya Population and Development Conference, held in Nairobi in March 2025.

29. To operationalize its recommendations derived from the assessment, the Section established a working group to promote the economic empowerment of migrant domestic workers returning to the three countries. Meetings of the working group were convened to develop its terms of reference and a detailed workplan aligned with the recommendations.

30. In this connection, the Section has contributed to the development of population policy in Kenya, including the ongoing formulation of the draft national migration policy. It has also contributed to efforts by the Government of Kenya to mainstream gender into the labour migration management bill (No. 16 of 2024), which underscore the Government's commitment to the economic empowerment and protection of returnee migrant women.

4. Work programme of the Commission

31. The mainstreaming of a gender perspective across the work of ECA remains a priority aspect of the subprogramme. To this end, the Section supports the integration of gender dimensions into all other subprogrammes, by embedding a gender equality marker into the Commission's planning of all its

deliverables and by providing technical support to gender focal points in other divisions, the subregional offices and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning.

32. In accordance with the Commission's gender policy for the period 2023–2027,⁴ a strategic plan has been developed for the subprogramme, in which clear roles and responsibilities have been defined, measurable targets set and timelines for the effective meeting of critical policy commitments established.

33. In addition, under the subprogramme, the Section is responsible for preparing an annual report on the Commission's performance in respect of gender equality pursuant to the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. In each report, a synthesis is provided of how planning, policy initiatives and financial arrangements have been aligned with targets under Sustainable Development Goal 5 to improve results on gender equality and women's empowerment. The 2023 and 2024 reports were completed and submitted to UN-Women.

34. In addition, the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section supports the Commission's implementation of the United Nations System-wide Gender Equality Acceleration Plan. In collaboration with the Human Resources Management Section, the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section organized a gender parity awareness workshop for 35 ECA staff members and other United Nations personnel. The training was aimed at strengthening participants' understanding of gender parity within ECA and across the wider United Nations system.

5. Commission on the Status of Women

35. In November 2023, the Women, Gender and Youth Directorate of the African Union Commission, UN-Women and the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section of ECA jointly convened the expert and ministerial segments of the African regional consultations in advance of the sixty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The theme of the sixty-eighth session and, thus, of the prior consultations was "Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective".

36. The Section participated in the sixty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in New York in March 2024. The Section also provided technical support to African States in the finalization of a unified African position for presentation on the global stage. In addition, the Section hosted a well-attended event on the margins of the sixty-eighth session, which was on the subject of education for women and girls in Africa over the course of a decade. The discussions were focused on best practices and innovative approaches, achievements made in the area of women and girls' education and the enhancement of sustainable financing for the full implementation of African continental commitments on the education of women and girls by 2030.

37. In November 2024, the African Union Commission, UN-Women and the Section jointly convened the African regional consultations in advance of the sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. During the consultations, attended by representatives of Governments, including ministers responsible for gender issues, of civil society and youth organizations, of regional bodies and of United Nations entities, participants reviewed 30 years of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in all African States, assessing progress, challenges and gaps. Participants also adopted an African common position on the 30-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in which

⁴ ECA, *Gender Policy and Strategy, 2023–2027: Building a Gender-responsive Organization* (Addis Ababa, 2023).

the commitments of African States were reaffirmed and action-oriented recommendations to strengthen policies, accountability and capacity-building were outlined, for presentation at the sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in New York in March 2025.

38. The Section also participated in the sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

III. Partnerships

A. Regional institutions

1. African Union Commission

39. The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section has worked closely with the African Union Commission, specifically its Women, Gender and Youth Directorate and Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security, in particular in preparation for the sixty-eighth and sixty-ninth sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women.

2. African Development Bank

40. The Section worked with the African Development Bank to produce the second edition of the Africa Gender Index report. In addition, ECA and the Bank worked together on the project to build capacity for gender statistics and monitoring systems and the Africa Programme on Gender Statistics, with a view to strengthening gender-responsive programming, enhancing strategies and synergies, and improving gender statistics, monitoring frameworks and reporting mechanisms.

B. Entities of the United Nations system

1. United Nations Population Fund

41. The Section worked with the United Nations Population Fund to produce the "Africa regional review summary report: Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 2020–2024" and to convene high-level consultations in advance of the sixty-eighth and sixty-ninth sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Fund also provided technical support in relation to the African regional 30-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

2. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

42. The Section worked with UN-Women to convene the consultations in advance of the sixty-eighth and sixty-ninth sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and to coordinate and support the African regional 30-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Section has also worked closely with UN-Women on the Africa Programme on Gender Statistics.

IV. Challenges and lessons learned

A. Challenges

1. Unavailability of accurate and timely data

43. Paucity of data remains a challenge. More data are required for deeper analysis and insights into matters pertaining to gender equality in Africa. In this regard, the partnership between the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section and the African Centre for Statistics has been strengthened to help to ensure the timely provision of data.

2. Delayed responses from members of the Economic Commission for Africa

44. Delays in obtaining timely responses from members of ECA remain a challenge and staff shortages make it difficult for the Section to follow up with States to obtain those responses. It is very common for processes, for instance the regional 30-year reviews of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, to be slowed by delays to critical responses from and action on the part of States.

3. Budgetary constraints

45. Budgetary constraints have delayed the timely implementation of planned activities and limited the number of African States that are able to benefit from capacity-building initiatives and other deliverables.

4. Political and security situations of beneficiary States

46. The political and security situations of several African States have hindered the timely implementation of the project to build capacity for gender statistics and monitoring systems, including the workshops and validation of the situation analysis reports, and the development of national gender monitoring and reporting indicator frameworks.

B. Lessons learned

47. The following lessons were learned:

(a) From the African regional 30-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the importance of regular assessment of progress, challenges and commitments in implementing the Platform for Action was clear, as was the need for strengthened partnerships among Governments, civil society organizations, private companies and individuals to accelerate efforts to close gender gaps;

(b) Amid budgetary constraints, it has proved essential to maximize the impact and expedite the implementation of initiatives, in particular initiatives pertaining to migration and to gender statistics, by focusing on select countries with tailored interventions and aligning deliverables with existing extrabudgetary projects;

(c) To influence national policies in a way that will have transformative results, it is essential to use the tools and knowledge products created under the subprogramme to inform practical, in-country capacity-building and tailored advisory services for African States;

(d) Strategic partnerships with clear roles for each partner play an important part in maximizing the effect of the work done under the subprogramme;

(e) The judicious use of online delivery approaches is important in order to expand the reach of initiatives implemented under the subprogramme and render the support thereby provided to African States more effective;

(f) With a view to generating timely and disaggregated data, continued investment is needed in data collection at the national and subnational levels, including through the project to build capacity for gender statistics and monitoring systems and the Africa Programme on Gender Statistics.

V. Activities planned for 2026 and 2027

48. In 2026 and 2027, the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section will contribute to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa, by accelerating the pace at which African States meet and report on their global and regional gender-related commitments. The Section will also enhance States' implementation of policies and programmes for the empowerment of women and girls. The means employed to achieve these objectives will include policy research, technical advisory services and the convening of meetings of policymakers and experts to increase knowledge, build capacity and stimulate discussion on the mainstreaming of gender into development policies and programmes. This work will assist African States with making progress in the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 5 and will have a positive impact, both directly and indirectly, on the attainment of Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 13 and 16.

A. Regional and global gender equality commitments: measurement, monitoring and reporting

49. Under the subprogramme, the Section will further roll out and institutionalize the African Gender and Development Index in countries where it has not yet been adopted.

50. The Section will also finalize the third edition of the Africa Gender Index, incorporating the tools into national statistical systems to track progress on gender equality and women's empowerment.

51. In addition, the Section will continue to implement the project to build capacity for gender statistics and monitoring systems, with a view to promoting gender-responsive programming, strategies and reporting mechanisms.

52. Furthermore, the Section will actively participate in the Africa Gender Statistics Forum, as a platform for dialogue and knowledge exchange, at which collaboration, consensus-building and accountability are fostered to advance the production and use of gender statistics.

B. Mainstreaming of gender into fiscal policy

53. In order for African States to meet their commitments, they must ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are at the centre of financing for development frameworks, programmes and policies. The Seville Commitment of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development represents a vital framework for doing so. African States must hone and rethink their strategies to sustainably finance gender equality, including the attainment of the related Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, the Section will provide technical support to enable African States to mainstream action-oriented gender perspectives into resource mobilization and use strategies, thereby placing gender considerations at the heart of fiscal policy. This support will include strategic engagement with ministries of

finance to strengthen gender-responsive planning and budgeting processes and prioritize financing for gender equality.

54. Also under the subprogramme, the Section will convene high-level policy dialogues with representatives of ministries of finance and development planning to promote the mainstreaming of gender equality into fiscal policies and resource mobilization frameworks, while reinforcing coordination mechanisms for financing gender equality across Africa.

C. Financial inclusion and gender-sensitive financial regulatory frameworks

55. Financial inclusion is critical for enabling women and girls to achieve economic independence, thus reducing their vulnerability to poverty and violence, and for generating more inclusive and equitable economic growth. Despite some legal reforms, significant gender gaps in financial access persist across many African countries. From the African regional 30-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the second edition of the Africa Gender Index report, evidence emerged that women in Africa continue to face structural barriers that limit their participation in formal labour markets and their access to finance and credit, delaying progress towards gender equality.

56. To address these challenges, the Section will conduct targeted research, analysis of which will generate evidence on the critical constraints to women's financial inclusion. On the basis of the findings, the Section will convene high-level policy dialogues and provide technical and advisory services to support African States in mainstreaming gender perspectives into financial regulatory frameworks.

57. The Section will also prioritize reforming lending products to better meet the needs of women and young people. The aim will be to develop innovative financial instruments and encourage the adoption of alternative risk assessment frameworks that are tailored to informal businesses. These interventions are intended to increase women's access to credit, enhance participation in formal markets and, ultimately, reduce gender disparities in financial inclusion.
