

CONCEPT NOTE

CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Side Event during the Annual Conference of Ministers
March 25, 2017, 9:00 am to 11:30 am
King Fahd Hotel, Conference Room A-01,
Dakar Senegal

I. BACKGROUND

Development planning is vital for the implementation of national, regional and global development initiatives. The Macroeconomic Policy Division (MPD) supports Member states of ECA strengthen development planning and adaptation of the global and regional development frameworks as one of the key strategies towards inclusive economic growth and structural transformation. Planned development has been found to explain the successful agricultural and industrial transformation of all industrial countries, as well as some of the early leaps immediately after independence of several African countries. Paradigm shifts induced by global political, economic and climatic crises¹ of the seventies and eighties led most African states to retreat away from planning and toward liberal market-led policies. The assumptions that private sector will rise up to the task of industrialization and technology driven agricultural growth have not come to fruition for most of the African countries.

Institutions are critical for the successful implementation of development plans. Institutional capacity in planning generally grows organically through continuous practice and the uninterrupted feedback loop between design, on the one hand, and, on the other, successes and challenges in implementation. The very long interval in African countries' practice in industrial policy has had severe consequences manifesting in large gaps of knowledge and skills in planning. As a result the planning profession still suffers deficits in leadership skills for coordination of sectoral, sub-national and private sector activities. Essential specializations in areas of resource mobilization and risk management of selective acquisition of technologies for strategic industrial projects are hardly present in current planning institutions.

MPD is at the forefront of fulfilling ECA's mandate to rapidly close institutional capacity and structural gaps to ensure that African governments seize the opportunities created under the new commitments in international development cooperation. In this context, MPD strengthens the capacity of member states to design, implement and follow-up on internationally agreed development goals.

At the regional level ECA is equally committed to the African Union's Agenda 2063 which is the blueprint for regional development in Africa. Ensuring coherent implementation of national, regional, and global agendas is at the heart of MPD's support to member states. In this context the Renewal of Planning Section (RPS) has developed a number of initiatives and programs aimed at revitalizing African development planning capacities and strengthening networks among development planners.²

¹ We refer here to OPEC's price hikes on Petroleum in 1973 and the Sahelian Drought of the eighties.

² African Union Commission; Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, Popular Version, Critical Enablers for Africa's Transformation, 74.d, pg. 20; Final Edition April 2015

MPD's approach to supporting African Governments in understanding and delivering on these commitments consist of the following:

- Research to establish institutional capacity and readiness baseline; 5 case study countries have been selected for in depth research;
- Developing tools to help synchronize Agenda 2030 and 2063 into a unified framework;
- Developing tools and resources to integrate Agenda 2030 and 2063 into the medium term national development plans and M&E and harmonized reporting mechanisms;
- Moderating the African Development Planners' Community through an online knowledge-sharing platform where queries and responses on planning are exchanged among peers.

II. PURPOSE OF THE SIDE EVENT

The 2017 Conference of Ministers to be held in Dakar Senegal from 23 -28 March will deliberate on the theme of “Growth, Inequality and Unemployment”.³ The UN and AUC joint conference, together with the African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development will consider “... policy approaches and actions to address inequalities and find pathways towards inclusive and job-creating growth...”. MPD will convene a half- day side-event to engage and seek feedback from senior planning officials and professionals on two projects that are designed to build planning capacity in African country institutions:

- a) Web and desktop based applications and tools that enable countries to understand, integrate and incorporate Agenda 2030 and 2063 in national development plans with built-in M&E and reporting mechanisms.
- b) To establish a permanent advisory committee to guide the African Development Planners' Community – a virtual professional community of practice – that has been mobilized into a moderated knowledge sharing platform hosted by the Renewal of Planning Section.

Participants:

The participants will be drawn from the Advisory Steering Committee that has been established to guide the African Development Planners' Community of Practice moderated by MPD/RPS. Also invited will be decision-makers from among the planning officials attending the experts' preparatory meeting of the CoM and the RITD and ECOSOC side-events who are likely to support piloting and adopting the planning toolkits in their national planning institutions, while also enlisting to provide feedback and inputs through RPS's online platform.

³ See Concept Note at <http://www.uneca.org/cfm2017>

Tentative program of side event (two hours)

Capacity Building Strategies for Development Planning King Fahd Hotel – Conference Room A-01 March 25, 2017 - 9:00 am to 11:30 am		
Time	Activity	Presenter
9:00 – 9:30 am	Registration	Secretariat
9:30 – 9:45 am	Demonstration of the web-based Agenda 2063 and 2030 integration framework	MPD/RPS Staff
9:45 – 10:00 am	Demonstration of ICT toolkit for integrating Agenda 2063 and 2030 in National Development Plans	MPD/RPS staff
10:00 – 10:30 am	Q&A and comments from participants	Participants
10:30 – 10:45 am	Presentation on the Status of the African Development Planners' Community Platform	The Moderator
10:45 – 11:30 am	Q&A and Comments on platform	Participants