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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA BACKGROUND GUIDE 2015

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NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS





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Dear Delegates,

We are pleased to welcome you to the 2015 National Model United Nations Conference in New York (NMUN•NY)! This year's staff for the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is: Directors David Godoy (Conference A) and Anke Schwarzkopf (Conference B), and Assistant Director Nicholas Gachet (Conference B). David is from São Paulo, Brazil and he is currently studying Political Science while he teaches and tutors Portuguese as a second language at Brigham Young University. This is his third year on staff. Anke is earning her M.A. in International and European Relations from Linköpings Universitet. She will return for her third year on staff at NMUN-NY. Nicholas holds a B.A. in Applied Mathematics from Universidad San Francisco de Quito and is currently working as a Short Term Consultant at the World Bank in Social Protection. This is his second year on staff.

The topics under discussion for ECA are:

- I. Innovative Financing for Africa's Transformation
- II. Access to Energy
- III. Including Vulnerable Populations in Economic and Social Development

The Economic Commission for Africa is one of several regional commissions within the UN system, pursuing the economic and social development of its Member States, the enhancement of intra-regional integration, and the promotion of international cooperation for Africa's development. ECA is supervised by the Economic and Social Council, to which it regularly submits reports and recommendations related to the advancement of the African continent.

We hope you will find this Background Guide useful as it serves to introduce you to the topics for this Commission. It is not meant to replace further research and we highly encourage you explore in-depth your Member State's policies, as well as use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the conference, each delegation will submit a [position paper](#). Please take note of the [NMUN policies](#) on the website and in the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) regarding plagiarism, codes of conduct/dress code/sexual harassment, awards philosophy/evaluation method, etc. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory.

The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) are available to download from the NMUN website. This document includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. It is thus an essential instrument in preparing for the conference, and a reference during committee.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the Commission or the Conference itself, feel free to contact the Under-Secretaries-General for the ECOSOC Department, Ardis Smith (Conference A) and Monika Milinauskyte (Conference B). You can reach either USG by contacting them at: usg.ecosoc@nmun.org.

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the conference!

Sincerely,

Conference A

David Godoy, *Director*

Conference B

Anke Schwarzkopf, *Director*
Nicholas Gachet, *Assistant Director*



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Abbreviations

ACBF	African Capacity-Building Foundation
ACET	African Center of Economic Transformation
ACG	African Centre for Gender
ADF	African Development Forum
AfDB	African Development Bank
AIR	African Institute for Remittance
ASDI	African Social Development Index
ATI	African Trade Insurance
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAP	Common African Position
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination
CPD	Commission on Population and Development
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
CSO	Civil society organizations
CSocD	Commission on Social Development
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
CWD	Committee on Women and Development
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign direct investment
GA	General Assembly
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIMAC	Gender is my Agenda Campaign
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDEP	Institute for Economic Development and Planning
IEA	International Energy Agency
IGO	Intergovernmental organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
IYDP	International Year of Disabled Persons
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ODA	Official development assistance
OWG	Open Working Group
PDSRE	South Sudan Distribution System Rehabilitation and Expansion Project
PIDA	Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable development goals
SDGEA	Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa
SRO	Sub-regional offices
UDHR	Universal Declaration on Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNCSD	UN Conference on Sustainable Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

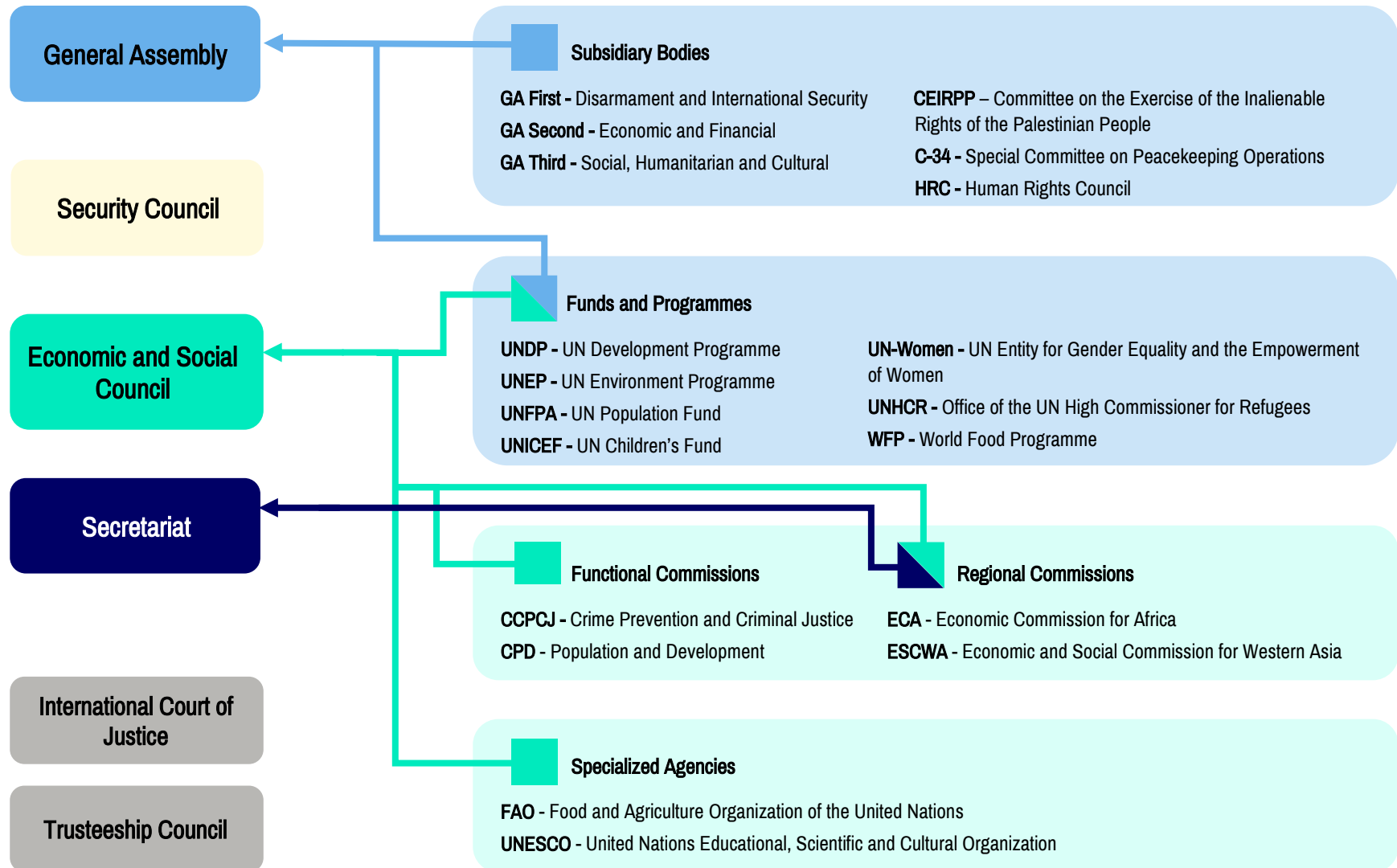


UNFPA
WHO
WSSD

United Nations Population Fund
World Health Organization
World Summit on Sustainable Development

United Nations System at NMUN·NY

This diagram illustrates the UN System simulated at NMUN·NY. It shows where each committee “sits” within the system, to help understand the reportage and relationships between the entities. Examine the diagram alongside the Committee Overview to gain a clear picture of the committee's position, purpose and powers within the UN System.



Committee Overview

Introduction

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) since its creation in 1957 has become one of the key forces for cooperation and capacity-building of African countries as it focuses not only on enhancing regional integration, trade but also conducts research and provides policy advice.¹ One of the key priorities of the Commission is tackling issues such as the region's low economic growth, which reached only 4% in 2013; continuing political instabilities and conflicts; and regional integration.² In 2013, ECA's Executive Secretary Carlos Lopes accentuated that industrialization and intra-African trade are the key priorities for ECA in advancing cooperation in the region.³ These two factors are of high necessity in order to reduce the instability of the African economies, make them more resistant to global volatilities, and to raise the value of the products sold by ECA Members States.⁴ In addition to this, the region still falls behind the average growth of developing countries and has a large discrepancy among African economies as most countries rely on the trade with primary commodities, which are heavily affected by market fluctuations.⁵

The **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)** is a regional commission, reporting to the Economic and Social Council.

The Commission has played a leading role in raising all these issues across the UN system and engaged actively in the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda to present the African common position, which was developed together with the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, and the United Nations development Programme Regional Bureau for Africa.⁶ The urgent need to address socio-economic issues affecting African countries, especially in the new development framework, has been recognized by the international community, so ECA's work will continue to be critical in such global discussions. This overview provides delegates with historical background of ECA and presents the key guiding documents and resolutions that set the Commission's mandate and structure. It also looks into the working methods of the body and explains its key powers and functions as well as a relationship with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Finally, the overview indicates the current priorities and issues that ECA deals with, and gives a summary of the recent sessions.

History

The creation of ECA was proposed by the General Assembly (GA) resolution 1155 (XII) of 26 November 1957, which stressed the need to promote economic activities among the African countries through cooperation with the UN and its subsidiary bodies.⁷ The foundation of ECA was a result of the UN's positive experience with regional economic commissions in Asia and Latin America as a means to strengthen developing economies.⁸ The establishment of the Commission was necessary in order to help build the capacities of its Member States in addressing their economic and social issues.⁹ The inaugural session of ECA was the first meeting of the African states under the UN supervision.¹⁰ Since its creation, the African regional commission faced a great amount of obstacles most of which were installed by the former colonial powers.¹¹ The main issues were related to the independence from colonies and the process of state building, dealing with matters such as apartheid, racism, and regional integration.¹²

¹ UN ECA, *Annual Report 2014*, 2014, pp. 7, 9f, 12.

² UN ECA, *Annual Report 2014*, 2014.

³ Lopes, *Africa needs structural transformation not structural adjustment*, 2013.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ UN ECA, *Post-2015 Development Agenda*.

⁷ UN General Assembly, *Proposed Economic Commission for Africa (Resolution 1155(XII))*, 1957, p. 11.

⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Terms of Reference of the Economic Commission for Africa (E/CN.14/1)*, 1958; UN General Assembly, *Proposed Economic Commission for Africa (Resolution 1155(XII))*, 1957, p. 11.

⁹ UN General Assembly, *Proposed Economic Commission for Africa (Resolution 1155(XII))*, 1957, p. 11.

¹⁰ Jolly, *The Economic Commission for Africa: Fighting to be Heard*, 2009, p. 1.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

During the 1970s, ECA experienced significant changes as it was requested by the GA to reassess its key priorities.¹³ As a result, the *Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa* (1979) and the *Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa* (1980-2000) were created, aiming towards a greater self-reliance of African countries and strengthening of intra-African trade.¹⁴ However, it was rather problematic for ECA to operationalize the goals of the Lagos Plan.¹⁵ Furthermore, at that time the Bretton Woods institutions were requesting countries that applied for loans from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to implement certain measures of neoliberal origin, which were counterproductive to the African economies.¹⁶ Only during the 1990s and early 2000s were new ideas and structural modifications implemented, which initially were shaped by ECA.¹⁷ However, the influence of Bretton Woods institutions have had a long lasting negative impact on the growth of African economies, which only started to improve at the beginning of the 2000s.¹⁸

Mandate

The Economic Commission for Africa was founded at the 25th session of ECOSOC, with the adoption of resolution 671 A of 22 October 1958.¹⁹ Its responsibilities and mandate was further amended in the GA resolution 32/197, which was adopted on 20 December 1977.²⁰ ECA is mandated to make recommendations to the governments of its Member States and specialized agencies relating specifically to social, economic matters concerning the African continent, as well as other matters that fall within its purview.²¹ ECA is a regional commission within the UN system and reports annually to the ECOSOC regarding its work plans and activities of its subsidiary bodies.²² Its mandate provides ECA with unique power as it plays a key advisory role on both regional and sub-regional levels.²³ According to ECOSOC resolution 671 A (XXV), ECA engages, inter alia, in investigations and research on economic and technological issues, provides technical assistance and advices Member States on policies to improve economic and technological development, initiates measures to enhance economic growth in Africa connected with social aspects and supplies African countries with advisory services.²⁴

Governance, Structure and Membership

The Commission comprises of 54 Member States and is one of the main African-wide governmental institutions.²⁵ ECA is led by an Executive Secretary, currently the position is held by Dr. Carlos Lopes, who receives assistance from a Deputy Executive Secretary.²⁶ Five substantive divisions of ECA are responsible for carrying out policy research; the African Centre for Statistics, the Capacity Development Division, African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, the Division of Administration and ECA's Sub-regional Offices.²⁷ The other substantive divisions work within the two pillars of ECA, which are the Strategic Planning and Operational Quality Division, and the Public Information and Knowledge Management Division.²⁸ To further enhance the cooperation with other organizations and sectors, ECA's Partnerships Office and the Joint Secretariat Support Office were created and partner with organizations such as the African Union Commission (AUC) and African Development Bank (AfDB).²⁹ The administration of ECA is financed through UN funds.³⁰ Apart from the automatic share ECA receives from the

¹³ Jolly, *The Economic Commission for Africa: Fighting to be Heard*, 2009, p. 1.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁹ UN ECOSOC, *Terms of Reference of the Economic Commission for Africa (E/CN.14/1)*, 1958.

²⁰ UN General Assembly, *Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations System (A/RES/32/197)*, 1977.

²¹ UN ECOSOC, *Terms of Reference of the Economic Commission for Africa (E/CN.14/1)*, 1958.

²² Ibid.

²³ UN ECA, *Repositioning ECA: Harnessing Regional Resources to meet Africa's Development Priorities*, 2006, p. 9.

²⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Terms of Reference of the Economic Commission for Africa (E/CN.14/1)*, 1958.

²⁵ UN ECA, *Overview*.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ UN ECOSOC, *Terms of Reference of the Economic Commission for Africa (E/CN.14/1)*, 1958.

regular UN budget, ECA holds additional budget from donor governments, which normally are directed towards a specific program or issue area.³¹

Sub-Committees and Regional Offices

ECA has five sub-regional offices (SROs), which are based in North Africa, West Africa, Central Africa, Eastern Africa and Southern Africa.³² The SROs, as subordinate entities of ECA, were established in 1977 and have been altered through several reforms, most recently in 2004 and 2006.³³ The reforms have mainly intended to enhance the role and capacities of the SROs, even though many of the proposed improvements have not been realized due to limited budget allocations.³⁴ In particular, the growing influence and engagement with the AU and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has strengthened the role and responsibilities of the SROs.³⁵ The main area of SROs' work focuses on coordinating macroeconomic programs and policies to improve sectors, such as agriculture, gender mainstreaming, food security, human development, infrastructure and trade.³⁶ SROs act on the sub-regional level, which enables them to acquire specific knowledge about the region's unique characteristics and necessities.³⁷ Due to the SROs' presence in across Africa and their role as ECA's executive instrument, the Commission receives relevant data and information that allows to better meet the needs of the Member States and region as a whole.³⁸ The SROs play a crucial connecting role between the UN and ECA on one side, and the Member States and the regional economic communities on the other side.³⁹

Functions and Powers

The mandate of ECA entails different activities such as advocacy and policy analysis to generate knowledge, assemble stakeholders to share experiences, agree on common strategies, and supply the Member States with technical assistance concerning national capacity-building.⁴⁰ The core topics of ECA are related to economic and social development in African countries.⁴¹ ECA represents "a dual role as a regional arm of the UN" within the African continent.⁴² It is closely connected with the work of AU and NEPAD, which act mainly on a regional and sub-regional level, while ECA also represents the interests and needs of the African region on the international stage.⁴³ ECA helps advancing AU's work on political and socio-economic integration of Africa through advocating Member States' positions, publishing statements, reports, and creating conditions that allow the African countries to play a significant role in the global economy.⁴⁴ Also, ECA plays a leadership role in working with NEPAD to eradicate poverty in the region, diminish marginalization of Africa in the globalization process, empower women and integrate African economy into the globalized world.⁴⁵

The Commission also provides knowledge management, analytics and research services to its Member States.⁴⁶ It has three pillars which drive its work: (1) knowledge generation, sharing and networking; (2) advocacy and consensus building; and (3) advisory services and technical cooperation.⁴⁷ The overall reform process of the UN in 2006 was also applied to ECA and all other regional commissions, in order to help them effectively address Africa's most pressing issues.⁴⁸ The goal of the reform was to further strengthen ECA's technical delivery capacity, especially research activities, and help the Commission develop stronger partnerships with UN agencies and other

³¹ Browne & Weiss, *How Relevant are the UN's Regional Commissions?*, 2013, p. 2.

³² UN ECA, *Annual Report 2014*, 2014, p. 19.

³³ UN ECA, *Repositioning ECA: Harnessing Regional Resources to meet Africa's Development Priorities*, 2006, p. 19.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ UN ECA, *Annual Report 2014*, 2014, p. 20.

³⁷ UN ECA, *Repositioning ECA: Harnessing Regional Resources to meet Africa's Development Priorities*, 2006, p. 19.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ UN Development Group, *Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at A Glance*, 2009.

⁴¹ UN ECA, *Repositioning ECA: Harnessing Regional Resources to meet Africa's Development Priorities*, 2006, p. 9.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ UN Development Group, *Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at A Glance*, 2009.

⁴⁷ UN ECA, *Repositioning ECA: Harnessing Regional Resources to meet Africa's Development Priorities*, 2006, p. 17.

⁴⁸ UN Development Group, *Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at A Glance*, 2009.

organizations.⁴⁹ The reform identified the importance of enhancing the role of SROs that could play bigger leading role in shaping ECA's agenda and implementing its work programs at sub-regional level.⁵⁰

Current Priorities

Post-2015 Development Agenda

The achievement of international and regional development goals is one of the highest priorities on the continent, and as such there has been the development of a common African position towards the post-2015 development agenda.⁵¹ ECOSOC called, in resolution 910 (XLVI) and resolution 911 (XLVI), upon the AUC, the AfDB, ECA and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to represent a strong unified position to shape the development of the post-2015 agenda.⁵² The resolutions were directed towards the implementation of an intra-African working group to identify the most important issues of the continent and create indicators according to African needs and priorities for the post-2015 development agenda.⁵³ The working group adopted six main pillars as the African priorities which focus on: structural economic transformation and inclusive growth; science, technology and innovation; people-centered development; environmental sustainability, natural resources management and disaster risk management; peace and security; and finance and partnership.⁵⁴

Statistical Capacities

The Commission emphasizes the importance of comprehensive statistical data as a basis for sustainable and foresightedly decision-making and the identification of the most effective policies for states to implement.⁵⁵ ECA Member States can use the collected data for policy formulation and analyzing the main challenges and gaps in their current policies and state practices.⁵⁶ The Commission founded the African Centre for Statistics to strengthen the information systems across the continent and help systematically collect data from ECA Member States.⁵⁷ The Centre carries out statistical operations, such as surveys, censuses, and analyzes the overall performance of Member States.⁵⁸ ECA and its statistical bodies do not only collect data and carry out monitoring and evaluation activities across all regions, they also hold statistical training programs, implement standards of the International System of National Accounts in Africa, and support population and housing censuses.⁵⁹ The statistical capacities of ECA are hugely important to the advancement of development goals, such as the MDGs and the sustainable development goals (SDGs), especially in terms of formulating measurable targets and indicators to ensure international development goals correspond to the needs and requirements of the African continent.⁶⁰

Regional Integration

One of the key challenges most African countries are facing is regional integration into the global market as well as intra-regional cooperation and free trading zones.⁶¹ In order to strengthen and build the regional economic base, ECA collaborates closely with the AU to provide technical expertise.⁶² Both organizations work towards creating an inter-African free trade area and a common market of the African countries as well as focus on enhancing industrialization, infrastructure, transport, and energy development.⁶³ In 2013, ECA published jointly with the AUC and AfDB the report "Assessing Regional Integration in Africa VI: Harmonizing Policies to Transform the Trading

⁴⁹ UN Development Group, *Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at A Glance*, 2009.

⁵⁰ UN ECA, *Repositioning ECA: Harnessing Regional Resources to meet Africa's Development Priorities*, 2006, p. 19.

⁵¹ UN ECOSOC, *United Nations System Support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E.AC.51/2014/3)*, 2014, p. 19.

⁵² UN ECOSOC, *Regional Cooperation in the Economic, Social and Related Fields: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2013/15/Add.2)*, 2013, p. 4.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ UN ECA, *Repositioning ECA: Harnessing Regional Resources to meet Africa's Development Priorities*, 2006, p. 15.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ UN ECA, *African Centre for Statistics: Our Focus*.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ UN ECA, *Annual Report 2014*, 2014, p. 12.

⁶⁰ UN Development Group, *Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at A Glance*, 2009; UN ECOSOC, *Regional Cooperation in the Economic, Social and Related Fields: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2013/15/Add.2)*, 2013, p. 20.

⁶¹ UN ECA, *Annual Report 2014*, 2014, p. 9.

⁶² UN ECA, *Repositioning ECA: Harnessing Regional Resources to meet Africa's Development Priorities*, 2006, p. 23.

⁶³ UN ECA, *Annual Report 2014*, 2014, p. 9.

Environment,” which provides Member States with policy guidance to develop regional integration agenda.⁶⁴ Furthermore, ECA publishes reports and research studies on the realization of regional integration, and frequently holds meetings and symposiums to discuss the issue.⁶⁵

Recent Sessions

In March 2014 the 7th joint meeting of the AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was held. One of the central aims of the meeting was to create a platform to collect proposals on the implementation of the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa Initiative and commit to Africa’s industrialization.⁶⁶ The AU’s initiative focuses explicitly on promoting sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels, raising living standards across the African continent.⁶⁷ During the meeting the participants also discussed the potential mechanisms to help increase investment and the growth rate in agricultural, manufacturing, and modern services sectors as well as evaluated several approaches in securing long-term financing.⁶⁸ The main challenges that were identified relate to infrastructure and technological advancement as well as productivity and competitiveness on the global market.⁶⁹ In November 2014 the 9th African Economic Conference will take place, which is organized by the AfDB, ECA and UNDP.⁷⁰ The conference will bring together researchers, policymakers and development practitioners to discuss the topic of “Knowledge and Innovation for Africa’s Transformation.”⁷¹ Additionally, the participants will review and evaluate the progress of the nine sub-programs on economic, social and regional issues which were adopted at the 2013 conference.⁷² The main goal of this year’s conference is to discuss appropriate policy responses and investment frameworks to advance the knowledge and innovation across the continent, and assess the obstacles that regional faces in relation to this.⁷³ It will explicitly concentrate on the development of strategies to motivate Africa’s youth towards technological innovation, skills development and the acquirement of new sources of comparative advantage.⁷⁴

Conclusion

The activities of ECA are of high importance for the African continent, as most African economies are steadily growing and prospering, but the region still lacks a common African approach and an intra-African market, which would generate a stronger position within the global economy.⁷⁵ Over the years, the work and mandate of ECA has expanded in order to meet the needs of Member States. Additionally, the establishment of sub-regional organizations now facilitates the delivery of Commission’s core programs and help to foster regional integration and states’ capacity-building.⁷⁶ As the deadline for the MDGs is rapidly approaching ECA plays an instrumental role in presenting a unified position of the region’s need for the new set of development goals.⁷⁷ So far, it has effectively been advocating and raising global awareness on the key challenges and needs of the continent to help shape the post-2015 development agenda.⁷⁸

⁶⁴ UN ECA, *African Union, African Development Bank, Assessing Regional Integration in Africa VI: Harmonizing Policies to Transform the Trading Environment*, 2013, p. v.

⁶⁵ UN ECA, *Annual Report 2014*, 2014, p. 9.

⁶⁶ UN ECOSOC, *Regional Cooperation in the Economic, Social and Related Fields: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2014/15)*, 2014, pp. 16.

⁶⁷ African Union, *AU Conference of Ministers of Industry: Action Plan for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa*, 2007, pp. 1.

⁶⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Regional Cooperation in the Economic, Social and Related Fields: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2014/15)*, 2014, p. 17.

⁶⁹ UN ECA, *Seventh AU-ECA Joint Annual Meeting: Concept Note*.

⁷⁰ UN ECA, *African Economic Conference 2014*.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² UN, ECA, *Revised Proposed Strategic Framework for the Period 2014-2015*, 2013, pp. 1.

⁷³ UN ECA, *African Economic Conference 2014*.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ UN ECA, *Annual Report 2014*, 2014, pp. 1, 9.

⁷⁶ UN ECA, *Repositioning ECA: Harnessing Regional Resources to meet Africa’s Development Priorities*, 2006, p. 19.

⁷⁷ UN ECOSOC, *United Nations System Support for the New Partnership for Africa’s Development: Report of the Secretary-General (E.AC.51/2014/3)*, 2014, p. 19.

⁷⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Regional Cooperation in the Economic, Social and Related Fields: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2013/15/Add.2)*, 2013, p. 4.

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African Development Bank Group, African Union & Economic Commission for Africa. *African Statistical Yearbook*. Retrieved 17 June 2014 from:

http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/publications/african_statistical_yearbook_2014.pdf

The African Statistical Yearbook is a publication by three major African institutions. The Yearbook provides an overview on demographic shifts in the region, presents the changes concerning topics, such as, but not limited to, economic infrastructure, the investment climate and financial statistics, socio-economic inequalities and the progress on the MDGs. The publication provides an excellent insight into the positive and negative changes in the last years, and includes an overview of country-specific data. The Yearbook serves as a great starting point to get an overview on the key statistics in the region before receiving more detailed information about the key issues faced by the continent.

Jolly, R. (2009). *The Economic Commission for Africa: Fighting to be Heard*. UN Intellectual History Project, Briefing Note Number 21. Retrieved 11 August 2014 from: <http://www.unhistory.org/briefing/21ECA.pdf>

Jolly draws a picture of ECA from the days before its foundation, the era of African states becoming independent and the difficulties the commission faced in its early hours. Furthermore, he explains the consequences of international activities and measures in the following years on the African continent, and the problems that arose from these times and last until today. The source provides a good insight into the difficulties ECA faces and the necessity to keep the historical facts of the continent in mind, when addressing problematic economic issues and implementing possible solutions.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2014). *Annual Report 2014*. Retrieved 12 July 2014 from: http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/publications/annual-report_2014_eng_lwrs.pdf

The annual report provides detailed information concerning economic and social issues in Africa. It assesses internal and external factors affecting the African economies and outlines challenges associated with them. The report also looks into the key social problems such as gender inequality and describes how this is affecting the region. It serves as a good starting point to gain understanding on the economic situation of the African continent and the issues and problems ECA is dealing with.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa, African Union, African Development Bank, and United Nations Development Programme. (2012). *Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals: MDG Report 2013: Food security in Africa: Issues, challenges and lessons*. Retrieved 17 June 2014 from:

http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/MDG/english/MDG%20Regional%20Reports/Africa/MDG%20Report2013_ENG_Fin_12June.pdf

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In 2006 ECA went through a reform process as part of the overall reformation of the UN. As part of this, the report analyzes the situation in Africa, the challenges ECA is facing, the structure of ECA and its sub-committees and the cooperation strategies with its partners. This source provides detailed information about the changes of ECA over the years, and highlights the transformation of the African continent with all its implications.

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I. Innovative Financing for Africa's Transformation

*"Gandhi's insistence on self-sufficiency is a basic economic principle that, if followed today, could contribute significantly to alleviating Third World poverty and stimulating development."*⁷⁹

Introduction

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is one of the five regional bodies of the United Nations (UN) mandated to address region-specific economic concerns, and serves as a forum for discussion where African Member States are able to make decisions and deliberate strategies on how to address economic issues facing the region.⁸⁰ The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) represent the most important orientation for Africa's decision-making policies.⁸¹ According to the 2013 MDG Report "Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals," Africa's substantial progress towards the fulfillment of the MDG targets and indicators is beyond doubt.⁸² However, serious challenges still remain unsolved, especially the transmission of economic and financial resources to people, who have been affected by income, gender and geographical inequalities.⁸³

Poverty in Africa is predominantly rural and up to three times higher compared to poverty in urban areas.⁸⁴ Rural poverty is particularly prevalent in North and West Africa.⁸⁵ Most of the failures to achieve poverty reduction are due to increasing dependency on international financial resources, including development assistance and skewed forms of private capital inflows.⁸⁶ These methods were proven to be unsustainable regarding Africa's economic and social progress, and have had negative implications on the continent's self-sufficiency.⁸⁷ Also, historically, many developing countries have been lacking a positive credit history and this has contributed to limited investments being made, especially in politically and economically unstable countries.⁸⁸ The main issues are related to political risk (as a concern for Foreign Direct Investment), economic risk (the amount of liabilities the country is holding) and hesitance in creating new companies and enterprises.⁸⁹ Thus innovative financing mechanisms are indispensable in order to acquire financial resources and capacities to enhance Africa's transformation.⁹⁰ According to the African Center of Economic Transformation (ACET), Africa's transformation was predominantly defined as "growth without depth" meaning growth without structural consolidation.⁹¹ This means that Africa's economies still suffer from fragility and the lack of highly valued products.⁹²

The international community has recognized the importance of achieving Africa's transformation, in particular the economic transformation, which entails: diversification of production and exports; export competitiveness and gains; productivity increases; technology upgrading; and human economic wellbeing improvements.⁹³ Such transformation, however, also requires Member States to implement macroeconomic policies, which help strengthening entrepreneurship activities in the region.⁹⁴ Ultimately, structural transformation such as changing the mainstream policies for industrialized countries is needed in order to enable the construction of self-sufficient economic apparatus in African countries.⁹⁵ In addition to this, the post-2015 development agenda will represent a

⁷⁹ Mandela, *The Sacred Warrior*, 1999.

⁸⁰ UN ECA, *Overview*.

⁸¹ UN ECA, *MDG Report 2013: Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals: Food Security in Africa: Issues, Challenges and Lessons*, 2013, p. xi.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Abugre & Ndomo, *Structural Transformation and the Challenge of Financing Africa's Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2014, p. 4.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Noman, *Innovative Financing for Infrastructure in Low Income Countries: How Might the G20 Help?*, 2011, p. iv.

⁹¹ African Center for Economic Transformation, *Tracking Economic Transformation*, 2014, p. 26.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 34.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

framework of high importance to advance Africa's economic and social transformation.⁹⁶ So far the international community has drafted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and goal 10 focuses explicitly on reducing inequality within and among states, which is particularly important to African countries.⁹⁷ This background guide introduces the key guiding documents, international and regional framework on innovative financing mechanisms. It also discusses the role of the UN and its agencies in promoting innovation across the continent as well as reviews several examples for innovative financing that could be implemented in the region.

International and Regional Framework

Official development assistance

Official development assistance (ODA) is the main financial flow entering to Africa.⁹⁸ ODA commonly consists of financial aid given by developed countries to developing ones.⁹⁹ The payments as part of ODA to the African continent have steadily increased since 2000, just as the implementation of foreign direct investment (FDI), which originates from the augmented engagement of China and India in the region during the last decade.¹⁰⁰ However, the dependency on ODA begins to represent a problematic matter, particularly in the Sub-Saharan region.¹⁰¹ The 2014 "Annual Report of the ECA" emphasized that "ODA is expected to continue to decline in the near future"¹⁰². This is mainly caused by donor countries redefining their engagements, as a result of the international financial crisis in combination with the increased prices of commodities.¹⁰³ During the first half of the last decade, ODA was more than two and a half times higher than the amount of private capital flows, consisting in FDI or flows.¹⁰⁴ This shows that the amount of international donations was much higher than the investments made, which consequently results in the lack of incentives by governments to focus on advancing their national industries.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, even though the continent received increasing amounts of FDI, these private capital flows were predominantly directed towards investments in oil exporting countries.¹⁰⁶ The prioritization of African countries with natural resources contributes to further inequalities in receiving external financial resources and ultimately leading to asymmetric development.¹⁰⁷

Monterrey Consensus

The *Monterrey Consensus* consists of a list of agreements and commitments adopted at the International Conference on Financing for Development in 2002.¹⁰⁸ The document recognizes the need for developing countries to take responsibility for poverty reduction strategies, and also takes into consideration that donor countries should provide assistance if needed.¹⁰⁹ Point 44 of the *Monterrey Consensus* recognizes the importance of innovative financing, while stressing the need to adequately allocate global liquidity at the international level.¹¹⁰ This consensus identifies six core areas in order for developing countries to mobilize development finance, which are: international trade; international resources; sustainable debt financing and external debt relief; resolution of systemic issues; financial and trading systems; domestic financial resources and international financial and technical cooperation.¹¹¹

Post-2015 Development Agenda

⁹⁶ UN ECA, *MDG Report 2013: Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals: Food Security in Africa: Issues, Challenges and Lessons*, 2013, p. xi.

⁹⁷ UN DESA, Division for Sustainable Development, *Open Working Group Proposal for Sustainable Development Goals*.

⁹⁸ Ratha, Mohapatra & Plaza, *Innovative Financing for Development*, 2008, p. 144.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Noman, *Innovative Financing for Infrastructure in Low Income Countries: How Might the G20 Help?*, 2011, pp. iv-v.

¹⁰¹ Ratha, Mohapatra & Plaza, *Innovative Financing for Development*, 2008, p. 144.

¹⁰² UN ECA, *Annual Report 2014*, 2014, p. 4.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁰⁴ Ratha, Mohapatra & Plaza, *Innovative Financing for Development*, 2008, p. 144.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ United Nations, Chief Executive Board for Coordination, *Conclusions of the Twenty-Seventh Session on the High Level Committee for Management*, 2014, p. 15.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ World Bank, *What is the Monterrey Consensus?*; UN DESA, *Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2002, pp. 5-6.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 5-6.

¹¹⁰ UN ECA, *Economic Report on Africa 2013*, 2013, p. 57.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 56.

The post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs present a new framework and direction for development processes locally, nationally and internationally.¹¹² ECA, the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Development Programme's Regional Bureau for Africa (UNDP/RBA) have initiated studies and consultations in order to form a common position and generate an all-embracing and extensive perspective of Africa's situation, which should be included into the post-2015 goals and targets.¹¹³

The African countries defined four broad development outcomes as priorities for the post-2015 development agenda: structural economic transformation and inclusive growth; innovation and technology transfer; human development and financing and partnerships.¹¹⁴ Additionally, the target of "structural economic transformation and inclusive growth" contains the following sub-topics: sustainable and inclusive growth; agriculture, food security and nutrition, green growth, industrialization and value addition, and economic infrastructure development.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, according to ECOSOC resolution on "regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields" (E/2014/15/Add.1) of 2014, the necessity of adopting a common African position on the post-2015 development agenda is instrumental towards moving into clearly defined and continent-specific targets.¹¹⁶ Also, the commitment towards signing and ratifying the *African Charter on Statistics* (2009) is transcendental because high quality data is needed to accurately set targets and design development strategies for African as well as UN agencies.¹¹⁷

Role of the International System

Relating to the implementation of innovative financing mechanism to achieve Africa's transformation, several international organizations and institution have been involved in this process. In particular, ECOSOC recognized in resolution 2013/2 the need for extensive and strategic planning towards countering deep-rooted and structural economic problems in the African region.¹¹⁸

African Institute for Economic Development and Planning

The African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) is a subsidiary body of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, which began its operations in 1963 and has a membership of 54 African states.¹¹⁹ The primary purpose of IDEP is to provide specialist training for officials, responsible for African economic policy design and management.¹²⁰ The aim of the institution is to provide support in research and policy formulation as well as organize high-level discussions and seminars addressing issues such as socio-economic development in Africa.¹²¹ The main area of engagement of this body is education, capacity development and training.¹²² ECOSOC, in its resolution 2013/2, updated the statute of the IDEP and recommended close collaboration with ECA to further advance its projects in economic development.¹²³

African Union

The AU is the main deliberative body of the African countries.¹²⁴ The main objective of the AU is to promote unity and solidarity among African states, including the enhancement of cooperation towards economic and social development and the integration of African countries towards increased international cooperation.¹²⁵ In the case of the topic ahead, the AU Assembly in its resolution 486 (XXI) on "Alternative Sources of Financing the African

¹¹² UN ECA, *Outcome Document of the Regional Consultations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2012, p. 2.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

¹¹⁶ UN ECOSOC, *Regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields*, (E/2014/15/Add.1), 2014, p. 8.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ UN ECOSOC, *Refocusing and recalibrating the Economic Commission for Africa to support Africa's structural transformation (E/RES/2013/2)*, 2013, p. 6.

¹¹⁹ UN ECA, African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, *Historical Background*.

¹²⁰ UN African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, *Strategic and Programme Directions 2010-2015*, 2010, p. 7.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² UN ECOSOC, *Refocusing and recalibrating the Economic Commission for Africa to support Africa's structural transformation (E/RES/2013/2)*, 2013, p. 6.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹²⁴ African Union, *AU in a Nutshell*.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

Union” of 2013, proposed the implementation of a mechanism to improve tax collection, mainly in the areas of airfare and tourism.¹²⁶

African Institute for Remittances Project

The “African Institute for Remittance (AIR) Project” is run by the AU, with the support of the World Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).¹²⁷ The aim is to implement concrete strategies and operational instruments using remittances as an innovative finance mechanism.¹²⁸ One example of this is the diaspora bonds which entail resources coming from migrants. The financial inflows by remittances represent a share of the GDP for the whole country, as people receiving remittances spend their money within the local economy and, consequently, the economic dynamisms are accelerated.¹²⁹ Remittances have surged over the last years and represent currently a great financial inflow into Africa, estimated to reach \$60 billion in 2014.¹³⁰ ECA acknowledges that remittances and their impact on economic development have not been fully understood, mainly due to issues of quantifying them.¹³¹ Hence, another objective of the AIR is to improve statistical measurements of remittance flows along with lowering the transaction costs.¹³²

The Ninth African Development Forum (ADF)

The Ninth Africa Development Forum (ADF) is a milestone event organized by ECA, AUC, AfDB which was held in Morocco in October 2014.¹³³ The Forum attempts to agree on a common policy on resource mobilization, transforming trade barriers into economic, institutional and policy frameworks, and advancing the post-2015 development goals.¹³⁴ The envisioned discussion topics are going to focus on the following strategic areas: domestic resource mobilization, illicit financial flows, private equity and new forms of equity.¹³⁵ The central topic of the Ninth African Development Forum concerns the positive growth outlook, which is currently overshadowed by funding deficits in the above strategic areas, and the declining donations from developed countries.¹³⁶ The ADF’s main purpose is to propose policy options to innovatively finance the economic transformation of Africa and identify other income generating mechanisms in order to move away from international donations.¹³⁷

Looking Beyond the “Mainstream” Methods of Finance

Mobilizing alternative financial resources is critical to fulfill Africa’s investment needs.¹³⁸ Hence, the African countries are required to reveal further sustainable financial resources in order to accelerate their economic growth and to reach their development goals.¹³⁹ Emmanuel Nnadozie, director of the economic development division at the ECA, claimed that “[t]he existing traditional sources of finance — both domestic and external — have proved inadequate in satisfying these financial requirements.”¹⁴⁰ The 2010 World Bank Africa Infrastructure Country Diagnostics Report estimated that Africa needs more than \$90 billion annually in order develop its infrastructure, while the continent has only managed to raise only about half of the required amount.¹⁴¹ This indicates that the fundraising for Africa development must be extended significantly in order to fulfill growth and development expectations.¹⁴² One of the main proposals to address the lack of financial resource for low income sectors was developed by the Nobel Peace Prize Winner Muhammad Yunus, whose idea of micro credits was revolutionary at

¹²⁶ African Union, *Modalities of Implementation of the Two Options retained by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union on Alternative Sources of Financing the African Union*, 2013, p. 1.

¹²⁷ African Union, *African Institute for Remittances (AIR) Project*.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ UN ECA, *Economic Report on Africa 2013*, 2013, p. 57.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ UN ECA, *About ADF IX*.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ UN ECA, *Ninth African Development Forum: Innovative Financing for Africa’s Transformation*.

¹³⁷ UN ECA, *Objectives of the Ninth African Development Forum*.

¹³⁸ Nnadozie, *Innovative financing for development: Opportunities and policy options for Africa*, 2011.

¹³⁹ UN ECA & African Union, *Making the Most of Africa’s Commodities: Industrializing for Growth, Jobs and Economic Transformation*, 2013, pp. 6-7.

¹⁴⁰ Nnadozie, *Innovative financing for development: Opportunities and policy options for Africa*, 2011.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

the time of its inception in the 1970s. Yunus' argued that extending small loans to people in poverty to start their own businesses is beneficial, allowing them to generate an income and become less dependent on international aid.¹⁴³ However, today the concept is perceived as an anachronistic and unsuitable measure to address current needs of the African continent in an efficient and sustainable manner.¹⁴⁴

Experimental economics in South Africa

In 2009, Karlan and Zinman made an experimental economics design to assess the effects of micro credits.¹⁴⁵ The micro credit industry targets developing countries as recipients of commercial credits.¹⁴⁶ One of the presumptions that Karlan and Zinman emphasized is that "expanding credit access to "productive" credits makes entrepreneurs and small business owners (weakly) better off such as micro credit's works."¹⁴⁷ The main finding of study was that consumer credits, in fact appear to have a positive correlation with people's wellbeing.¹⁴⁸ On the other hand, productive credits, driven by "mainstream" microcredit theory and policy, do not have the influence presumed such as leading to better jobs or value creation.¹⁴⁹

Examples of innovative financing mechanisms

Innovative financing can be interpreted as nontraditional mechanisms to raise additional resources that lead to the implementation of innovative projects, which ultimately strengthen development financing channels.¹⁵⁰ The world is susceptible to financial crises with a particularly severe impact on the regional economies, as, inter alia, the global economic crisis in 2007 has demonstrated.¹⁵¹ Consequent to this crisis, FDI has declined on the African continent from \$73 billion in 2008 to \$53 billion in 2010.¹⁵² The strong dependency of the African region on the economic stability of other countries is highly critical; therefore it is instrumental for the region to foster self-sufficiency through innovative and effective financing mechanisms.¹⁵³ The aim of such mechanism is to reach Africa's transformation in the areas such as: diversification of production and exports; export competitiveness and gains; productivity increases; technology upgrading; human economic wellbeing improvements.¹⁵⁴

Diaspora bonds

Ratha, Mohapatra and Plaza assessed the validity of diaspora bonds as a new mechanism to innovative financing for the African continent.¹⁵⁵ Diaspora bonds can be described as special debt instruments that work by raising financial means from overseas through the help of migrants by providing financial sources that came from another country.¹⁵⁶ Furthermore, the diaspora usually are contributions to the development of their home country and are therefore more likely to purchase diaspora bonds.¹⁵⁷ The authors assumed that up until 2005 the stock of Sub-Saharan Africa is estimated to come to around 16 million.¹⁵⁸ This indicates that members of the Sub-Saharan African diaspora earn the average income of their host countries and save a fifth of their income; ultimately, their annual savings would be more than \$28 billion that could be transferred from diaspora bonds to their country of origin.¹⁵⁹ The limitations of diaspora bonds lie in the number of migrants who reside in foreign countries.¹⁶⁰ However, this instrument seems promising as this financial resource can be directed to specific areas, unlike remittances, which usually go to the

¹⁴³ Hasan, *Micro Credit and Grameen Bank: A New Approach Towards Development*, 2002, pp. 45-46.

¹⁴⁴ Nnadozie, *Innovative financing for development: Opportunities and policy options for Africa*, 2011.

¹⁴⁵ Karlan & Zinman, *Expanding Credit Access: Using Randomized Supply decisions to Estimate the Impacts*, 2009, p. 1.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 30.

¹⁵⁰ UN ECA & African Union, *Making the Most of Africa's Commodities: Industrializing for Growth, Jobs and Economic Transformation*, 2013, pp. 6-7.

¹⁵¹ Nnadozie, *Innovative financing for development: Opportunities and policy options for Africa*, 2011.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Honohan & Beck, *Making Finance Work for Africa*, 2007, pp. 3-5.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 3-5.

¹⁵⁵ Ratha, Mohapatra & Plaza, *Innovative Financing for Development*, 2008, p. 158.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 159.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 163.

families of the migrants, in other words, governments can utilize these resources to implement development projects and industrialization policies.¹⁶¹

Trade finance

The concept of trade finance (exchanging different types of financial assets) is an effective way to increase short-term financing of projects in countries where economy is fluctuating and credit rates are low.¹⁶² Many African countries face discrepancies between the perception of investors and citizens concerning a certain situation or case, which makes investment appear less lucrative and more risky.¹⁶³ Recent developments in this field are initiated through and accompanied by the African Trade Insurance Agency (ATI), which is a multilateral organization that supports the continent in developing credible insurance mechanisms.¹⁶⁴ ATI supports African countries by providing political risk and trade credit risk insurance products that should decrease the insecurities for external corporations getting involved in businesses on the African continent.¹⁶⁵ ATI was launched in 2001 with the support and initiative of the World Bank and seven African countries.¹⁶⁶ The main focus of the Agency is on risk management aiming towards an increased attractiveness of the African economic sector for international investors.¹⁶⁷ Although ATI does not currently operate in all African countries, the mitigation of political and economic risk for potential investors must be recognized as one of the cornerstone to lead the African region towards financial stability and economic development.¹⁶⁸

Conclusion

It is important to recall ECA's mandate, which aims "to promote the economic and social development of its member States, foster intra-regional integration, and promote international cooperation for Africa's development".¹⁶⁹ This topic looks into new and creative ways such as diaspora bonds or trade financing in order to promote development through innovative financing to reach effective transformation of local economies and help boost investments in the region. Furthermore, having a clear idea of the path in which Africa could transform, in economic terms, is instrumental for countries to become less reliant on external financial aid and learn how to generate income from innovative mechanisms and ultimately strengthen their local economic performance.

Further Research

Delegates should also consider the following questions when conducting their research: what actions should policy makers and governments in Africa take to strengthen financial resources in their countries and region at large? How can existing financial mechanisms be strengthened and improved? What benefits and limitations do micro credit schemes present? What are the remaining challenges in your country and region at large in fostering innovative financing? Which proposals suggested by the UN bodies and academia on innovative financing present the most practical and effective solutions?

¹⁶¹ Ratha, Mohapatra & Plaza, *Innovative Financing for Development*, 2008, p. 163.

¹⁶² Honohan & Beck, *Making Finance Work for Africa*, 2007, p. 2.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁶⁴ Ratha, Mohapatra & Plaza, *Innovative Financing for Development*, 2008, p. 163.

¹⁶⁵ African Trade Insurance Agency, *Overview*, 2013.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ African Trade Insurance Agency, *Annual Report and Financial Statements 2013*, 2013, p. 64.

¹⁶⁹ UN ECA, *Overview*.

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Abugre, C. & Ndomo, A. (2014). *Structural Transformation and the Challenge of Financing Africa's Post-2015 Development Agenda* [Report]. Retrieved 11 July 2014 from: <http://www.endpoverty2015.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/africapost2015.pdf>

In this source delegates will find updated information from the End Poverty Millennium Campaign. This document proposes some interesting innovative financing ideas and discusses the issue of structural transformation in Africa. Delegates will find this as a useful source, which will help them to better understand the relationship between innovative financing and the MDGs.

African Trade Insurance Agency. (2013). *Annual Report and Financial Statements 2013*. Retrieved 6 August 2014 from: <http://www.ati-aca.org/images/2013%20English%20Report%20-%2022%20May.pdf>

This resource provides technical information in relation to political and financial risk management in some African countries. This report is a crucial source for delegates to understand risk management when developing ideas to be implemented in their working papers. This report provides an insight to the question on how Africa could be more attractive to international investment. This resource also provides delegates with the key information how FDI can be appealed and introduces the functions of FDI.

Honohan, P. & Beck, T. (2007). *Making Finance Work for Africa*. Retrieved 11 July 2014 from: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DEC/Resources/Making_Finance_Work_for_Africa.pdf

This source presents an analysis/ description of present policy approaches and African priorities regarding financial sector. It provides specific regional information and evaluates case studies that look into financing mechanisms in Africa. The contextualization of innovative financing in terms of Africa will give a good overview to delegates and enables them to acquire fundamental background knowledge to formulate realistic suggestions in their resolutions.

Ketkar, S. & Ratha, D. (2008). *Innovative Financing for Development*. Retrieved 9 July 2014 from: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PROJECTS/Resources/40940-1118776867573/Innovative_Financing_for_Development.pdf

This source introduces important terminology used in the development financing field and introduces some mechanisms of innovative financing. It is an academic source, which provides delegates with technical terms, definitions and helps better understand the topic. Furthermore, the proposals of certain essays are particularly relevant for this topic and delegates should think how such suggestions could be applied in reality.

Noman, A. (2011). *Innovative Financing for Infrastructure in Low Income Countries: How Might the G20 Help?* Retrieved 11 July 2014 from: <http://acetforafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/ACET-think-piece-noman-financing-infrastructure11.pdf>

At the Seoul Summit, the Group of 20 (G20) agreed on the importance of cooperation in development with emphasis on Low Income Countries. This source provides proposals to innovation in terms of financing strategies and gives statistical information on the availability of Official Development Assistance (ODA). The main focus of this resource is on partnership between developed and developing countries with special attention on Low Income Countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa. Delegates may find interesting approaches in this document towards ODA and will gain a better understanding about the value of financial mechanism for income and profit generation.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council. (2014). *Regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields: Report of the Secretary-General (E/2014/15/Add.1)*. Retrieved 4 November 2014 from: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/2014/15/ADD.1

This report of the Secretary-General is a helpful resource for delegates to be more up to date with the proposals made by different Ministers of Africa with regards to economic development. The different proposals and statements will guide delegates towards a more extended research on this topic. Delegates will also be able to compare the strategies and efforts made by various governments to advance economic development and regional cooperation.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2013). *MDG Report 2013: Assessing Progress in Africa Toward the Millennium Development Goals*. Retrieved 6 August 2014 from: http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/publications/mdgreport2013_eng.pdf

In this report delegates will find an overview on the progress of the MDGs in the African region. This source also provides the key data and evaluation of the MDGs which will be useful for delegates to gain an understanding of the remaining gaps and issues towards meeting these goals. Furthermore, it entails an analysis on Africa's rapid growth and implications for human development in the region, which is currently considered a key priority by African countries.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2014). *Annual Report 2014*. Retrieved 3 August 2014 from: http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/publications/annual-report_2014_eng_lwrs.pdf

This report evaluates African economies and provides useful data in terms of economics, development, growth and industrialization. Delegates will find this source useful in order to have a general panorama of the situation of most African economies and the region. Furthermore the main focus of this report is to give an objective evaluation of the economic situation of African countries.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2014). *Ninth African Development Forum* [Website]. Retrieved 8 July 2014 from: <http://www.uneca.org/adfix>

This website provides information on the Ninth African Development Forum, which will have the same theme as this Background Guide's topic. This website offers information on the key topics to be discussed during the forum and contains useful resources, such as concept notes and agendas. This website will later be updated with the outcome document and key agreements that will be adopted at the end of this forum so delegates are highly encouraged to check this page.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2014). *Ninth African Development Forum: Innovative Financing for Africa's Transformation* [Concept Note]. Retrieved 6 August 2014 from:

http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/uploaded-documents/ADF/ADFIX/concept_note_adf_9-en.pdf

This concept note outlines the background of the event and states the key objectives and anticipated outcomes of the forum. It overviews the main topics that are going to be discussed at the ADF, such as domestic resource mobilization, illicit financial flows, private equity, new forms of partnership and issues in climate financing. This is a useful document for delegates to gain a better understanding on how this event will be structured and organized.

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United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (n.d.). *Overview* [Website]. Retrieved 11 July 2014 from: <http://www.uneca.org/pages/overview>

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II. Access to Energy

Introduction

Energy is vital to economic development throughout the world.¹⁷⁰ With energy, families can develop their health, education, and finances; energy also assists with the development of the economy of a country, city and village.¹⁷¹ However, one in five people today do not have access to sustainable energy; the World Energy Outlook estimates that around 1.3 billion people do not have electricity of any kind, while 2.7 billion do not have healthy cooking facilities.¹⁷² Much of the focus in achieving access to energy is on Africa and developing Asia, as 92% of the global population who does not have access to electricity lives in these areas.¹⁷³ Recently, the economic development of Africa has increased significantly and with it, the need for more and better access to energy sources.¹⁷⁴ The demand for energy is immense and millions on the continent still rely on basic means of energy such as wood and coal.¹⁷⁵ In 2008, Africa had the lowest electrification rate in the world, with about 600 million people without access to electricity.¹⁷⁶ Africa also experiences underdeveloped infrastructure and policies that could help with the formation and distribution of new energy sources, especially in rural areas.¹⁷⁷

With Africa's physical, economic and political characteristics, both advantages and disadvantages exist concerning access to energy.¹⁷⁸ The continent has a great amount of natural resources that enable it to use two types of energy sources: nonrenewable, such as oil and gas, and renewable, such as wind turbines and hydropower.¹⁷⁹ However, the continent's political issues and cross-border issues pose a barrier in formulating policy favoring access to energy, causing a very poor connective infrastructure.¹⁸⁰ In order to call attention to this issue in Africa and similar situations throughout the world, the United Nations (UN) in 2011 began an initiative called Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL).¹⁸¹ This calls upon the international community to support universal access to sustainable energy and achieve sustainable energy for all by 2030.¹⁸² The initiative has set the pace for other UN entities, including the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and non-UN organizations to start working on this issue in order to promote access to energy, especially renewable energy.¹⁸³ Therefore, SE4ALL strives to guarantee that everyone, including women, will have access to energy in order to have a healthier life with room for self-development.¹⁸⁴

International and Regional Framework

The right to energy access can be linked to the 1948 *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* (UDHR).¹⁸⁵ Articles 21, 23, 25, and 27 of the UDHR defend the idea that everyone has the right to work, receive public services, have a standard living for health, and benefit from scientific technologies and innovations.¹⁸⁶ These rights are tied to access to energy, since energy is vital for providing equitable job opportunities, having a healthy home with adequate cooking facilities, receiving public services such as electricity, and enjoying benefits such as modern renewable energy, which is cheaper to use and cleaner for the environment.¹⁸⁷ At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, the international community discussed the need for more sustainable development and identified access to energy as a crucial topic, since it can help to accelerate the local economy and increase quality of life for citizens.¹⁸⁸ Member

¹⁷⁰ United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: A Vision Statement by Ban Ki-moon*, 2011, p. 2.

¹⁷¹ African Energy Commission, *African Energy*.

¹⁷² United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: A Vision Statement by Ban Ki-moon*, 2011, p. 2.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ International Renewable Energy Agency, *International Renewable Energy Agency*, 2014.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ African Energy Commission, *African Energy*, 2014.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ The World Bank, *Overview: Regional Integration in Africa*, 2014.

¹⁷⁹ International Renewable Energy Agency, *International Renewable Energy Agency*, 2014.

¹⁸⁰ The World Bank, *Overview: Regional Integration in Africa*, 2014.

¹⁸¹ UN General Assembly, *International Year of Sustainable Energy for All (A/RES/65/151)*, 2011.

¹⁸² United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: A Vision Statement by Ban Ki-moon*, 2011, p. 4.

¹⁸³ Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice, *Access to Sustainable Energy: The Gender Dimensions*, 2012, p. 2.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ UN GA, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948, art. 21, 23, 25, 27.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ UN Conference on Environment and Development, *Agenda 21*, 1992.

States came together several years later at the 2000 Millennium Summit and adopted the *Millennium Declaration* (A/RES/55/2); the international community soon also committed to eight international development goals called the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be fulfilled by 2015.¹⁸⁹ The first goal is to “eradicate extreme poverty and hunger,” and the international community through programs led by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) recognized that access to energy is important to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty.¹⁹⁰ International leaders met once again at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) to discuss issues that affected access to energy, such as the improvement of quality of life and the usage of natural resources.¹⁹¹ At the 2005 World Summit, a follow-up to the 2000 Millennium Summit, global leaders discussed access to energy, and in particular, “cleaner” sources of energy.¹⁹² The World Summit promoted the acceleration of innovation for clean energy, energy conservation, and policies.¹⁹³ In 2012, the international community met at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, or Rio+20, which was a twenty-year follow-up to the Earth Summit.¹⁹⁴ At this conference, access to energy was further emphasized as Member States committed to promote modern sustainable energy that is more affordable for the poor and better for the earth’s atmosphere.¹⁹⁵

Although much progress has been made in the fulfilling of the MDGs, the UN recognized that further efforts are still needed in order to better achieve international objectives; thus, the post-2015 development agenda was initiated.¹⁹⁶ The UN is currently working to establish the framework for the post-2015 agenda and address current and new topics and issues, including access to sustainable energy.¹⁹⁷ During the Rio+20 conference, it was determined that the UN should create the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which comprises of new goals that will replace the MDGs upon their 2015 expiration, and which will be incorporated into the post-2015 agenda.¹⁹⁸ The Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals, a group that was tasked to formulate the SDGs, presented a full SDGs proposal in July of 2014, and in September, the General Assembly announced that the work of the OWG would be used to incorporate the SDGs into the post-2015 development agenda.¹⁹⁹ Ensuring affordable access to energy to all was highlighted in the proposal as one of the proposed goals of the SDGs.²⁰⁰ In September of 2015, a summit will be held, and it is anticipated that the post-2015 agenda will be put forward.²⁰¹

The African Union (AU) also has played an important role in helping obtaining access to energy across the African continent. In 1980, when the AU was called the Organization of African Unity (OAU), several leaders meet in Nigeria for the *Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980–2000*.²⁰² The meeting brought unity to African countries in cooperation towards self-sustaining development and economic advancement, and issues such as lack of energy policy, poor cooperation, and insufficient access to all types of energy sources were discussed.²⁰³ Several years later, the AU, in partnership with the European Union (EU), met twice to discuss the issue of energy at the First and Second High Level Meetings of Africa-EU Energy Partnership.²⁰⁴ At these meetings, leaders from Africa and Europe discussed cooperation in relation to energy access, and created several programs to enhance energy security and access, reinforce cooperation, and set several goals related to energy to be achieved by 2020.²⁰⁵ Additionally, the AU approved a resolution in 2012 supporting the UN Year of Sustainable Energy for All.²⁰⁶

¹⁸⁹ United Nations, *Millennium Development Goals and Beyond 2015*, 2014.

¹⁹⁰ United Nations Development Programme, *Our Work: Sustainable Energy*, 2014.

¹⁹¹ United Nations, *Johannesburg Summit 2002*, 2014.

¹⁹² UN Millennium Project, *What they are*; UN General Assembly, *2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1)*, 2005.

¹⁹³ UN General Assembly, *2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1)*, 2005.

¹⁹⁴ United Nations, *Rio+20: United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development*, 2014.

¹⁹⁵ United Nations, *Report of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (A/CONF.216/16)*, 2012.

¹⁹⁶ United Nations, *Millennium Development Goals and post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2014.

¹⁹⁷ International Institute for Sustainable Development, Reporting Services, *The Pre-2015 Agenda*, 2014.

¹⁹⁸ United Nations, *Sustainable Development: Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014.

¹⁹⁹ UN Open Working Group, *Proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014; International Institute for Sustainable Development, *OWG Report to Be “Main Basis” for SDGs in Post-2015 Agenda*, 2014.

²⁰⁰ UN Open Working Group, *Proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014

²⁰¹ International Institute for Sustainable Development, Reporting Services, *The Pre-2015 Agenda*, 2014.

²⁰² Southern African Research and Documentation Centre, *Development in Southern Africa: A sectoral review of regional integration in SADC*, 2014.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Africa-EU Energy Partnership, *Second High Level Meeting*, 2014.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ African Union, *Resolution on Sustainable Energy for All Initiative (AU/CEMA/MIN/RES. III)*, 2012.

Role of the International System

Currently, there are many programs and initiatives to more fully ensure access to energy throughout the international system. One of the largest initiatives concerning access to energy is the SE4ALL initiative started by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.²⁰⁷ In the initiative, the Secretary-General envisioned three objectives to be achieved by 2030: establishing access to modern energy globally, improving energy efficiency, and increasing the usage of renewable energy.²⁰⁸ In 2011, the General Assembly adopted resolution 65/151, which declared 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All.²⁰⁹ The UN in 2002 also created the UN-Energy Knowledge Network as a response to the WSSD in order to support countries with access to energy needs.²¹⁰ The Network aims to facilitate the sharing of information concerning energy throughout the world.²¹¹ It also helps with programs related to energy and has as its main areas energy access, renewable energy, and energy efficiency.²¹² Additionally, it includes a subprogram called UN-Energy Africa, which specifically focuses on Africa and provides information, knowledge, and experience sharing.²¹³ ECA is one of the members of UN-Energy Africa, a program currently chaired by the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), which is a committee that focuses on improving urban lives.²¹⁴ The UN Development Programme (UNDP) is another key actor in this program.²¹⁵ The UNDP currently assists with policy advice in order to help developing countries expand access to energy and promote economic growth.²¹⁶

The General Assembly (GA) adopted resolution 67/215 in 2013 on the “Promotion of New and Renewable Sources of Energy” in connection with the SE4ALL program.²¹⁷ This resolution declared 2014 to 2024 to be the Decade of Sustainable Energy for All, when new sources of energy will be promoted.²¹⁸ The resolution further encouraged Member States to work towards achieving sustainable energy for all and called upon them to cooperate in making access to energy a priority, especially access to renewable sources of energy.²¹⁹ Additionally, the UN Secretary-General organized a group called the High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda that would counsel on development after 2015.²²⁰ This is a part of the post-2015 development agenda and aims to analyze and advise on MDGs that have not been achieved yet, and new issues to focus upon beyond 2015.²²¹

The Economic Commission for Africa is highly concerned with ensuring that all Africans have equal access to energy.²²² ECA’s program divisions particularly involved with energy are the Regional Integration, Infrastructure and Trade divisions.²²³ In 1996, ECA produced resolution 819 (XXXI) that recommends that African Member States create strategies and policies that will facilitate access to energy for all Africans, especially renewable energy.²²⁴ In ECA’s Strategic Framework for 2014 and 2015, the Commission stated that promoting sustainable energy would be one of its activities.²²⁵ ECA has supported UN projects for sustainable development by promoting policies and practices in favor of sustainable energy.²²⁶ ECA also assists local governments in creating laws and policies and establishing strategies that will aid the growth of the energy sector in Africa.²²⁷ The Commission is involved in different regions of Africa; for example, in 2014, the committee published “Energy Access and Security in Eastern

²⁰⁷ UN General Assembly, *Promotion of new renewable sources of energy (A/RES/67/215)*, 2013.

²⁰⁸ United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: A Vision Statement by Ban Ki-moon*, 2011, p. 4.

²⁰⁹ UN General Assembly, *International Year of Sustainable Energy for All (A/RES/65/151)*, 2011.

²¹⁰ UN-Energy, *About UN-Energy*, 2014.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² *Ibid.*

²¹³ UN-Energy, *UN Energy Africa*, 2014.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ UN Development Programme, *Our Work: Sustainable Energy*, 2014.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*

²¹⁷ UN General Assembly, *Promotion of new renewable sources of energy (A/RES/67/215)*, 2013.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ UN High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, *About*, 2014.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² UN ECA, *Promotion of energy resources development and utilization in Africa (E/ECA/819/XXXI)*, 1996.

²²³ UN-Energy, *United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)*, 2014.

²²⁴ UN ECA, *Promotion of energy resources development and utilization in Africa (E/ECA/819/XXXI)*, 1996.

²²⁵ UN ECA, *Revised Proposed Strategic Framework for the Period 2014-2015 (E/ECA/COE/32/15)*, 2013.

²²⁶ UN-Energy, *United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)*, 2014.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*

Africa.²²⁸ This report draws attention to the urgency of improving access to energy such as obtaining clean cooking facilities and improving electric distribution.²²⁹ The report also provides advice to African Member States in how to transform their economy in order to be able to provide better energy access to citizens.²³⁰

Additionally at the international level, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), an intergovernmental organization (IGO), is a leader in promoting the use of renewable energy.²³¹ This agency offers a great range of resources that aim to provide renewable energy for all.²³² Presently, IRENA is working on an initiative called “Africa Clean Energy Corridor” that unites East and Southern Africa in order to accelerate the implementation of clean renewable energy.²³³ Another organization is the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), which works in cooperation with the AU to find solutions for poverty and the increase the development of Africa.²³⁴ Currently, NEPAD and the AU offer the “Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa” (PIDA).²³⁵ This program focuses on establishing renewable energy in Africa, reducing the cost of energy, and increasing access to it.²³⁶

Energy Sources

Energy is vital in order to achieve sustainable development and to help alleviate poverty.²³⁷ Energy is an important resource, as it helps to provide a standard way of life.²³⁸ Today, there are several different types of commonly used energy sources, which can be divided into two main categories: nonrenewable and renewable.²³⁹ Nonrenewable energy is composed of energy sources that do not replenish themselves in a short period of time.²⁴⁰ These are the most used and they comprise of nuclear energy and fossil fuels such as oil, natural gas, and coal.²⁴¹ They are often cheaper to extract and easier to transport.²⁴² However, they also take millions of years to replenish, and can be harmful to the environment and to people.²⁴³ Currently, the international community is discussing the effects of these sources on the planet, including the emissions of greenhouse gases that are a major factor contributing to global climate change issues.²⁴⁴ On the other hand, renewable energy comes from sources that can be naturally replenished over time.²⁴⁵ They are less harmful to the environment; however, they only account for 5% of total global energy.²⁴⁶ Renewable sources are composed of biomass such as ethanol and biodiesel, hydropower, solar, wind, and geothermal energy.²⁴⁷ Renewable energy has been given special attention since WSSD, and some reports state that by 2050, renewable energy can reach 80% of the total world’s energy supply.²⁴⁸

For many Africans, reliable access to energy is difficult to secure.²⁴⁹ The continent is rich in most renewable and nonrenewable sources of energy; however, with many Africans earning less than \$1.25 a day, affording any of these types of energy can be difficult.²⁵⁰ Africa’s infrastructure is another factor to consider, since energy access is often

²²⁸ UN ECA, *Energy Access and Security in Eastern Africa*, 2014, p. xiii.

²²⁹ *Ibid.* p. xiii.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. xv.

²³¹ International Renewable Energy Agency, *International Renewable Energy Agency*, 2014.

²³² *Ibid.*

²³³ International Renewable Energy Agency, *Africa Clean Energy Corridor – Executive Strategy Workshop*, 2014.

²³⁴ New Partnership for Africa’s Development, *About*, 2014.

²³⁵ African Development Bank Group, *Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA)*, 2014.

²³⁶ African Development Bank Group, *The Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa: Transforming Africa through Modern Infrastructure*, 2010, p. 2.

²³⁷ United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: A Vision Statement by Ban Ki-moon*, 2011, p. 2.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

²³⁹ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Nonrenewable Energy Explained*, 2014.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² National Geographic, *Non-renewable energy*, 2014.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁴ United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: A Vision Statement by Ban Ki-moon*, 2011, p. 2.

²⁴⁵ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Nonrenewable Energy Explained*, 2014.

²⁴⁶ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Renewable energy*, 2014.

²⁴⁷ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *Nonrenewable Energy Explained*, 2014.

²⁴⁸ *Renewable sources can meet most global energy demands – UN-backed report*, UN News Centre, 2011.

²⁴⁹ The World Bank, *Energy in Africa: Overview*, 2014.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

deficient and costly.²⁵¹ With the high cost for traditional sources of energy, renewable energy seems to be a better and more affordable energy option.²⁵² The continent has abundant natural resources, including geothermal, hydropower, biomass, wind power, and solar energy, which can be harnessed in an affordable way.²⁵³

Civil society organizations (CSOs) also have an active role in supporting access to energy in the African region. In 2013, almost 50 CSOs, including CARE USA, Save the Children USA and World Vision, and global leaders such as President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, as well as the UN High-Level Group for Sustainable Energy for All, joined forces and signed the The ONE Campaign's "Open Statement on Electricity in Africa."²⁵⁴ The International Network for Sustainable Energy (INFORSE) is a network of over 140 non-governmental organizations working towards sustainable energy access to alleviate poverty and avoid environmental harm.²⁵⁵ In June 2014, INFORSE published a report on "Combining Energy Access and Climate Protection," using African and Asian cases to highlight the necessity of amenities such as solar lamps, ovens, and stoves, as well as routes to generate income and methods of harnessing local sources of renewable energy.²⁵⁶

Sustainable Energy for All

The UN launched the Sustainable Energy for All initiative to achieve universal sustainable energy by 2030; since its creation, more than 80 Member States, around 40 of which are located in Africa, have participated.²⁵⁷ Current national policies are one of the major problems with achieving sustainable energy in Africa, hindering development of new and cheaper renewable sources of energy.²⁵⁸ To improve the access to energy in any significant way, African governments will need to make heavy investments that are well beyond their present means.²⁵⁹ Energy subsidies and high pricing also hampers the income of new investors.²⁶⁰ For example, Kenya, due to recent rises in electric costs, discontinued licenses for wind farms.²⁶¹ The current regulatory policy in several countries in Africa imposes higher taxes for different sources of energy, and due to pressures coming from private and public companies of traditional energy sources, governments tend to favor fossil-fuel energy that is unaffordable for many Africans.²⁶² Countries that face political instability, such as South Sudan, also present a challenge in obtaining access to energy for all.²⁶³ These countries have a very poor electrification system and the internal conflict hampers the aid of the international system.²⁶⁴ Without a medium and long-term policy on energy, this hampers the entrance of new ways of energy and the building of new infrastructure.²⁶⁵

Ghana is one of the main countries currently benefiting from SE4ALL.²⁶⁶ In 2010, the Parliament of Ghana started discussions on how to increase the country's use of renewable energies.²⁶⁷ The country committed to obtain up to 10% of its power through renewable energy.²⁶⁸ To achieve this goal, the government passed a Renewable Energy Act that facilitates the growth of the country's renewable energy area.²⁶⁹ This act also facilitated the implementation of solar panels by offering feed-in tariffs for the next 20 years.²⁷⁰ The feed-in tariff also helps in attracting foreign investments to the renewable energy sector by providing long-term contracts with lower costs.²⁷¹ Ghana is also

²⁵¹ The World Bank, *Energy in Africa: Overview*, 2014.

²⁵² International Renewable Energy Agency, *International Renewable Energy Agency*, 2014.

²⁵³ UN ECA, *Dynamic Industrial Policy in Africa: Executive Summary*, 2014, p. 2.

²⁵⁴ The ONE Campaign, *Dozens of African, US Leaders and NGOs Sign On to Support African Access to Energy*, 2013.

²⁵⁵ INFORSE, *About INFORSE-Africa*.

²⁵⁶ INFORSE, *Publication - June 2014 "Combining Energy Access and Climate Protection,"* 2014.

²⁵⁷ United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: A Vision Statement by Ban Ki-moon*, 2011, p. 2.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁵⁹ International Renewable Energy Agency, *Prospects for the African Power Sector*, 2012, p. 1.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²⁶¹ *Renewable Energy Country Attractiveness Index*, Ernst & Young, 2014.

²⁶² United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: A Vision Statement by Ban Ki-moon*, 2011, p. 7.

²⁶³ U.S. Energy Information, *Sudan and South Sudan*, 2014.

²⁶⁴ International Renewable Energy Agency, *Prospects for the African Power Sector*, 2012, p. 11.

²⁶⁵ African Energy Commission, *African Energy*, 2014.

²⁶⁶ United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: Ghana Leads on Sustainable Energy for All*, 2014.

²⁶⁷ Parliament of the Republic of Ghana, *The Eight Hundred and Thirty-second Act*, 2011, p. 3.

²⁶⁸ United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: Ghana Leads on Sustainable Energy for All*, 2014.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁰ *Ghana solar energy plant set to be Africa's largest*, BBC News, 2014.

²⁷¹ National Renewable Energy Laboratory, *A Policymaker's Guide to Feed-in Tariff Policy Design*, 2010, p. vi.

promoting the use of liquefied petroleum gas, a fuel that is cleaner and helps prevent nearly 2 million deaths per year caused by smoke inhalation and open fires from older stoves.²⁷² The goal was set to obtain clean and new stoves to 100 million houses in the country by 2020.²⁷³ Ghana has been a great example in achieving sustainable energy to all, since when the country started to participate in the initiative, more than 4,000 communities received electricity, and from 1989 until present day, the population receiving energy went from 24% to 67%.²⁷⁴ Other important programs are also changing the shape of Ghana with its access to energy; for example, the Nzema solar plant is a project to build solar panels and includes installing 155 MW plants with 630,000 panels, the largest in Africa.²⁷⁵

Gender and Access to Energy

It is often assumed that men and women share the same difficulties from not having access to energy; however, there are significant differences to be considered on energy access in relation to gender.²⁷⁶ Women can experience increased difficulties in economic, social, and political aspects of their lives, leading to unequal poverty rates between the sexes.²⁷⁷ With energy poverty, the situation worsens as many women in Africa take care of their household and help support their family.²⁷⁸ A lack of energy access affects women particularly in their education, health, and nutrition.²⁷⁹ Within education, electricity helps teachers in rural areas to provide a better education for the students by allowing studying at night, using videos in class, and having evening classes.²⁸⁰ Since the task to collect firewood falls heavily on girls, by giving them access to energy, the need to collect firewood decreases, and this increases the chance for girls to go to school instead of helping in household responsibilities.²⁸¹ With health, energy not only assists medical staff in their work, but it also facilitates child delivery at night.²⁸² Many women also suffer health issues that come from the smoke produced by the burning of the wood they collect.²⁸³ In nutrition, energy can help children have more meals per day.²⁸⁴

By increasing access to energy, opportunities of women's empowerment will also increase.²⁸⁵ Women who do not have access to energy also suffer from time-poverty, meaning they are deprived from time for rest and leisure after work.²⁸⁶ Instead, women spend hours gathering firewood for basic energy needs, many times walking great distances for hours since these natural resources are scarce in many areas.²⁸⁷ The UNDP has recognized the environmental hardships that women suffer due to lack of energy, since many are exposed to the hardships of the environment because of their traditional responsibilities such as gathering wood and water.²⁸⁸ With energy access, women can better assist their children on health issues, work in order to help financially their family, cook faster and healthier meals, and attend to their family or work at night, thus allowing them to manage their time more effectively.²⁸⁹ The UNDP is assisting governments in allowing access to energy and environmental services to women; protecting women that suffered from environmental hardships, including women in their environmental planning; and identifying opportunities for creating policies in favor of gender equality and environment.²⁹⁰

The Msamala Sustainable Energy Project was an initiative implemented mainly by Concern Universal Malawi, an international development organization that provides opportunities for the alleviation of poverty.²⁹¹ In this project,

²⁷² United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: Ghana Leads on Sustainable Energy for All*, 2014.

²⁷³ Ghana, *Ghana Launches Sustainable Energy for All*, 2014.

²⁷⁴ United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: Ghana Leads on Sustainable Energy for All*, 2014.

²⁷⁵ *Ghana finalizes plans for 155 MW solar park*, PV Magazine, 2014.

²⁷⁶ Clancy et al, *Gender Equity in Access to and Benefits from Modern Energy and Improved Energy Technologies*, 2011, p. 3.

²⁷⁷ UN Development Programme, *Gender & Energy for Sustainable Development: A Toolkit and Resource Guide*, 2004, p. 17.

²⁷⁸ Our Africa, *Our Africa: Women*, 2014.

²⁷⁹ Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice, *Access to Sustainable Energy: The Gender Dimensions*, 2012, p. 3.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 2012, p. 2.

²⁸³ Clancy et al, *Gender Equity in Access to and Benefits from Modern Energy and Improved Energy Technologies*, 2011, p. 11.

²⁸⁴ Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice, *Access to Sustainable Energy: The Gender Dimensions*, 2012, p. 2.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁶ Clancy et al, *Gender Equity in Access to and Benefits from Modern Energy and Improved Energy Technologies*, 2011, p. 3.

²⁸⁷ UN Development Programme, *Gender and Energy*, 2013, p. 2.

²⁸⁸ UN Development Programme, *Gender and Environment and Energy*, 2014.

²⁸⁹ Clancy et al, *Gender Equity in Access to and Benefits from Modern Energy and Improved Energy Technologies*, 2011, p. 3.

²⁹⁰ UN Development Programme, *Gender and Environment and Energy*, 2014.

²⁹¹ Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice, *Access to Sustainable Energy: The Gender Dimensions*, 2012, p. 7.

the organization aimed to increase sustainable energy within five years in Balaka, Malawi, an area highly affected by droughts, floods, windstorms, poverty and deforestation.²⁹² The program installed solar panels, made available clean fuel stoves, and approached afforestation and micro-business.²⁹³ After five years of the project, working closely with local authorities, the initiative obtained great success in Balaka.²⁹⁴ There was a significant reduction in firewood consumption, thus reducing the levels of carbon emission, increasing the health of women, and reducing local deforestation.²⁹⁵ Small solar panels were installed, allowing for the recharge of battery dependent devices, and when someone purchased a stove, they also received food supplies to increase their nutrition.²⁹⁶

Capacity Building and Financing

In order to achieve greater development and economic growth in Africa, the continent is in need of strong infrastructure development.²⁹⁷ Needed steps include improving cross-border power trade, developing current utility companies, improving electric distribution systems, and providing cleaner cooking facilities.²⁹⁸ All these and other improvements will help energy to become more accessible and affordable for Africans, improve health conditions, and boost the economy, minimizing poverty.²⁹⁹ However, this is a challenge in Africa due to poor infrastructure around the continent, especially in the energy sector.³⁰⁰ In order to improve its energy infrastructure, Africa needs great investments in sectors such as electricity networks and modern energy services.³⁰¹ Between the years of 2010 and 2030, energy investments might reach a total of \$14 billion; however, this will still not be enough to meet energy needs, leaving 1 billion people without electricity.³⁰² The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that investments need to reach around \$48 billion from 2010 to 2030.³⁰³ By receiving funding in energy sector infrastructure, Africa can improve its ability to compete in the industrial sector, as having a better energy infrastructure helps by lowering transaction costs, thus making local markets more competitive internationally.³⁰⁴

In order to meet future increasing demands in Africa, due to rapid increases in population, local governments need to create public and private partnerships to raise enough funding to sustain this growth.³⁰⁵ To attract more private investments, Africa also needs to improve its business policies and environment, where today, many national bureaucratic systems and unclear policies deter investors.³⁰⁶ Funding can come through the private sector, local government investments, and non-governmental organization (NGO) donations.³⁰⁷ Many organizations have contributed funds to the energy sector in Africa; some of these organizations are the World Bank; the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP)/EU Energy Facility; and several Member States, such as China and the United States.³⁰⁸ The World Bank, for example, is conducting efforts to attract investors and other donors to the continent in order to improve the electrical system network.³⁰⁹ Furthermore, in October 2014, ECA met in the 9th African Development Forum to address innovative financing for Africa.³¹⁰

Investments and funding are not enough without proper capacity-building efforts, which is one of ECA's main objectives towards improving access to energy.³¹¹ Due to lack of demand for skilled workers and poor investments

²⁹² Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice, *Access to Sustainable Energy: The Gender Dimensions*, 2012, p. 7.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁹⁷ UN ECA, *Industrialization and Infrastructure*, 2014.

²⁹⁸ The World Bank, *Energy in Africa: Overview*, 2014.

²⁹⁹ UN ECA, *Industrialization and Infrastructure*, 2014.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁰¹ The World Bank, *Fact Sheet: The World Bank and Energy in Africa*.

³⁰² UN ECA, *Energy Access and Security in Eastern Africa*, 2014, p. xiii.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁴ UN ECA, *Industrialization and Infrastructure*.

³⁰⁵ International Renewable Energy Agency, *Prospects for the African Power Sector*, 2012, p. 1.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁷ International Renewable Energy Agency, *Financing Renewables in Africa*, 2012, p. 15.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ The World Bank, *Fact Sheet: The World Bank and Energy in Africa*, 2014.

³¹⁰ UN ECA, *Morocco to host the 9th Africa Development Forum*, 2014.

³¹¹ UN-Energy, *United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)*, 2014.

in education, Africa is in great need for trained human resources.³¹² In conjunction with the AU and the African Development Bank (AfDB), ECA published a report that highlights the necessity of capacity-building in Africa.³¹³ Some necessities include the need for development of innovation policies that favor renewable energy; provide education and awareness for children about the importance of energy; and ensure that trained personnel keep working at their full capacity.³¹⁴ ECA is currently undergoing studies on more eco-efficient infrastructure, helping in energy policy analysis, providing guidance for energy efficiency, and promoting regional cooperation.³¹⁵

South Sudan is an example of low infrastructure and poor access to energy.³¹⁶ Although the country has oil productions in its territory, the country has the lowest energy consumption on the continent, with only 1% of the population receiving access to energy.³¹⁷ The vast majority of individuals rely on firewood for daily tasks such as cooking.³¹⁸ Since its independence, the country has also experienced internal conflicts and political instability through local rebel militias, thus hindering aid from the international community.³¹⁹ Although the situation seems severe, in the beginning of 2014 South Sudan received \$26 million from AfDB in order to develop a project called South Sudan Distribution System Rehabilitation and Expansion Project (PDSRE).³²⁰ The project, which will start in December 2014, aims to improve the country's electric distribution by building 145 km of new voltage network.³²¹ With proper planning and funding, not only South Sudan, but other countries in Africa, will enjoy a healthier development with the construction of new energy services.³²²

Conclusion

Energy is vital for development and progress on the African continent.³²³ In order to fulfill the MDGs, it is necessary that everyone has equal access to energy.³²⁴ Energy access can provide a better life and future.³²⁵ With Africa's recent population and economic growth, the demand of energy is also increasing, and new and creative ways to obtain and share it are needed in order to meet this rapid growth.³²⁶ Before 2030, Africa's infrastructure needs to improve significantly; new policies need to be created; communication and negotiations between countries will need to be improved; and technology must be invested. As this occurs, ECA will need to be ready to foster efforts, provide support and advice, work with projects, and create innovative ideas of addressing energy access.

Further Research

Delegates should consider the role of ECA in relation to improving access to energy in Africa and what new approaches could be taken. During research, delegates should also contemplate questions such as: what necessary steps should be taken by the committee to continue the efforts started by the MDGs? How can energy access be tied into the new SDGs and the post-2015 agenda? When discussing energy access, several different variables appear such as electricity network, household needs, and oil and gas; accordingly, on what are areas should the ECA focus? International cooperation is crucial for development; therefore, how can African countries work with each other in order to facilitate energy sharing and the usage of natural resources? What renewable energy sources can be more effectively employed in Africa? How can ECA help Member States to create effective policies that will support current energy programs? How can the international system guarantee equal access to energy for both men and women? What economic plans exist that help to develop industry in Africa, and what can be alternative ways to attract more public and private investors to the energy sector in the continent?

³¹² UN ECA, *Science, Technology, Innovation and Capacity-Building for Addressing Climate Change*, 2010, p. 4.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³¹⁵ UN ECA, *Industrialization and Infrastructure*, 2014.

³¹⁶ U.S. Energy Information, *Sudan and South Sudan*, 2014.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ UN Integrated Regional Information Network, *Insecurity hampers access to aid, basic services in northern Kenya*, 2014.

³²⁰ United States, *Sudan and South Sudan*, 2014.

³²¹ African Development Fund, *South Sudan: Juba Power Distribution System Rehabilitation and Expansion Project*, 2013, p. iii.

³²² UN ECA, *Industrialization and Infrastructure*, 2014.

³²³ United Nations, *Sustainable Energy for All: A Vision Statement by Ban Ki-moon*, 2011, p. 2.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

³²⁵ *Ibid.*

³²⁶ International Renewable Energy Agency, *International Renewable Energy Agency*, 2014.

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International Renewable Energy Agency. (n.d.) *International Renewable Energy Agency* [Website]. Retrieved 5 August 2014 from: <http://www.irena.org/home/index.aspx?PriMenuID=12&mnu=Pri>

This website is the official page of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). It is a good source for learning about renewable energy. IRENA is an intergovernmental organization that supports countries with the desire to install renewable energy and those who already have these structures. The agency has information on what is currently happening in Africa and how the UN and other agencies are helping Africa achieve access to energy to all. It is a valuable resource to learn about renewable energy, how it works, examples of places working with renewable energy and other initiatives launched by the agency that helps promoting renewable energy.

Mary Robinson Foundation - Climate Justice. (2012). *Access to Sustainable Energy: The Gender Dimensions*. Retrieved 22 July 2014 from: <http://www.mrfcj.org/pdf/Policy-Brief-Malawi-Access-to-Sustainable-Energy-the-Gender-Dimensions.pdf>

This small policy brief focuses not only on achieving access to energy, but also specifically on women and energy. The document shows how women are affected when they have or do not have access to energy. It contains information on how women will benefit with access to energy. It is a good resource to learn about gender issues related to energy and also it contains two case studies with examples of current projects assisting women in energy access.

United Nations. (n.d.). *Sustainable Energy for All* [Website]. Retrieved 11 July 2014 from: <http://www.se4all.org/>

The Sustainable Energy for All initiative it is one of the biggest current programs concerning access to energy in the international community. This initiative, which started in 2011, is still undertaking actions, and this website is the ideal location to find out more about these efforts. The website contains explanations about energy, past discussion and documents that are related to the topic and current world situation in regards to access to energy. It is a good source to start researching and learning more about the topic, as it not only explains about energy access, but also leads to other valuable online sources that contain UN and non-UN organizations and what they are doing to help the Sustainable Energy for All initiative.

UN-Energy. (n.d.). *UN-Energy Knowledge Network: About UN-Energy* [Website]. Retrieved 5 August 2014 from: <http://www.un-energy.org/about/overview>

This is the official UN website for the UN-Energy Knowledge Network, and it contains vast information concerning energy. The website is good for understanding basic concepts about energy and having access, and it shows current organization and projects regarding energy throughout the world. It is a great tool to find other valuable resources and documents online in relation to this topic. It is organized with different topics such as member, chair & vice chair, and terms of reference. The most valuable section for delegates is the UN-Energy Africa section where it focuses on Africa's current energy challenges.

United Nations. (2011). *Sustainable Energy for All: A Vision Statement by Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations*. Retrieved 11 July 2014 from: http://www.un.org/wcm/webdav/site/sustainableenergyforall/shared/Documents/SG_Sustainable_Energy_for_All_vision_final_clean.pdf

This document is a statement by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, where he starts the initiative to improve and provide sustainable energy for all global citizens. This statement provides great information about the UN's three goals in achieving sustainable energy to be achieved by the year of 2030. The Secretary-General's Vision Statement contains statistics, current issues, and goals of improvement. It is a helpful resource to start learning about sustainable energy, especially what the UN is currently doing in the issue. The document also contains useful insights that can lead to new innovative ideas to provide energy to all.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2014). *Energy Access and Security in Eastern Africa*. Retrieved 11 July 2014 from:

http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/publications/energy_access_and_security_in_ea_eng_fin_lowres_27dec2013.pdf

This report from the Economic Commission of Africa (ECA) contains detailed information regarding the current state of energy access in African countries, especially those located in the Eastern Africa region. The report contains several energy policies initiatives that were created by international, regional, and national organizations. It highlights issues with infrastructure, energy resources, government implications, and environmental consequences. It is a good resource for learning about regional implications in Eastern Africa, what is being done in regarding to energy improvement and new ideas of how to increase the access to clean energy in Eastern Africa.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2006). *Sustainable Energy: A Framework for New and Renewable Energy in Southern Africa*. Retrieved 11 July 2014 from:

http://www.unep.org/training/programmes/Instructor%20Version/Part_2/Activities/Innovations_and_Technology/Energy/Supplemental/Sustainable_Energy_A_Framework_for_New_and_Renewable_Energy.pdf

The main goal of this publication is to help increase the access of cheaper energy for the population in Southern Africa. The document contains recommendations that help Member States to develop renewable and more affordable energy. Some recommendations include research and development in renewable energy, community participation in project developments, and commercialization of research results. It suggests how Member States can work with each other and formulate their policies in order to facilitate the implementation of cleaner energy.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2012). *The Renewable Energy Sector in North Africa*. Retrieved 11 July 2014 from:

http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/publications/renewable_energy_sector_in_north_africa_en_0.pdf

This document is useful in learning about renewable energy. It focuses on North Africa and gives an overview of the current issues and the developments being made in the region. The document highlights the potential of the region to obtain renewable energy due to the region's natural resources. It also focuses on strengthening the cooperation in the region, showing opportunities for potential partnership. It gives the main issues and barriers for the development of a cleaner energy in the region. The document is a good resource when researching actions taken in a particularly area and finding new ideas for improving access to energy.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-fifth session. (2011). *International Year of Sustainable Energy for All (A/RES/65/151)* [Resolution]. Adopted on the report of the Second Committee (A/65/436). Retrieved 9 August 2014 from: <http://www.nachhaltigkeit.info/media/1325766025phpkgzFZU.pdf>

This is a General Assembly (GA) resolution connected to the Sustainable Energy to All initiative. This resolution declares 2012 as the International Year for Sustainable Energy to All. It is useful to delegates that want to learn more about the framework of energy discussion and it also shows in the preambulatory clauses other valuable documents, resolutions, and resources that are concerning energy. The resolution is a useful tool to start learning about the history of energy discussion at the UN and within the international community.

World Energy Council. (2014). *2014 World Energy Issues Monitor*. Retrieved 12 July 2014 from:

<http://www.worldenergy.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/World-Energy-Issues-Monitor-2014.pdf>

This document is from a non-governmental organization (NGO) that focuses mainly on benefiting people by promoting the use of sustainable energy. This source helps the reader understand the development of energy in the world and where it could be in several years. It highlights current energy issues such as high prices in electric distribution, energy efficiency, among others. It is a great tool in understanding the environment and how to use it better in order to obtain energy. This document also contains many study cases of current global energy leaders.

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III. Including Vulnerable Populations in Economic and Social Development

“Nearly 1 billion people have escaped extreme poverty. Child and maternal mortality have been cut by nearly one half. There are more laws to protect and uphold human rights. But enormous inequalities remain in the realization of those rights and access to vital services.”³²⁷

Introduction

In the last twenty years, significant success has been achieved in economic and social development. However, inequality during this time period has also increased, and the continuing growth of global inequality threatens to unravel developmental achievements.³²⁸ While poverty rates are falling and low and middle-income Member States have seen per-capita wealth more than double since 1990, over 1.2 billion people live in extreme poverty.³²⁹ Regionally, Africa in particular has shown considerable economic growth over the past two decades, but this wealth has not translated into significant social development outcomes.³³⁰ Vulnerable populations such as women and persons with disabilities are doubly disadvantaged as this development process occurs, as they face additional barriers to development than the standard population.³³¹ The economic and social development of both women and persons with disabilities is inhibited in part by lack of access to education, training, and employment.³³² In order to foster real economic and social growth, recent conversation around Africa’s development trajectory has focused on shifting towards inclusive and equitable development.³³³ The United Nations (UN) and other organizations seek to address these and related challenges by mainstreaming both gender and disability across the development agenda in order to promote inclusive development moving into the post-2015 period.³³⁴

International and Regional Framework

The UN and the international community have established a broad framework of human rights instruments that promote equitable participation in social and economic development. The 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) and the 1966 *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) broadly guard the rights of all people to education, work, and social security.³³⁵ The UN’s *Declaration on the Right to Development*, adopted in 1986, builds on this foundation to guarantee people the specific rights relating to economic and social development, again including education, work, and social security, as well as inclusion of women, in the development process.³³⁶ This Declaration calls upon Member States to promote conditions within their borders that foster development and to ensure equal access to opportunity.³³⁷ The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) protects development rights specifically in relation to urbanization; it is reviewed every five years, most recently in 2014.³³⁸ The 1981 *African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights* reiterates much of the language found in these documents, with it establishing the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights and mandating the Commission to protect these rights.³³⁹

Women are particularly vulnerable to human, economic, and social rights violations, and the international community has developed an additional suite of documents to address their rights. The 1979 *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) acts as a “women’s bill of rights” and commits all party Member States to ending discrimination; Article 14 addresses how rural women face even higher discrimination barriers to economic rights.³⁴⁰ The *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, a result of the 1995

³²⁷ UN Population Fund, *UN Launches ICPD Beyond 2014 Global Review Report*, 2014.

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ UN Development Programme, *Humanity Divided: Confronting Inequality in Developing Countries*, 2013, p. 1.

³³⁰ UN ECA, *ECA’s Social Development Index seeks inclusion of vulnerable people*, 2014.

³³¹ UN General Assembly, *The Way Forward: A Disability-Inclusive Development Agenda Towards 2015 and Beyond: Report of the Secretary General (A/68/95)*, 2013; UN General Assembly, *The Future We Want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012, p. 45.

³³² UN ECA, *ECA’s Social Development Index seeks inclusion of vulnerable people*, 2014.

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ UN Enable, *About Us*.

³³⁵ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948.

³³⁶ UN General Assembly, *Declaration on the Right to Development (A/RES/41/128)*, 1986.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ UN Population Fund, *ICPD Overview*.

³³⁹ Organisation of African Unity, *African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights*, 1981.

³⁴⁰ UN-Women, *Guiding Documents*, 2014.

Fourth World Conference on Women, marks additional governments' actions and commitments to women's rights.³⁴¹ The 2009 *African Women's Report* reported on the work of the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI), a tool of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) that helps monitor these rights through qualitative and quantitative data.³⁴² It measures three facets of human development: social rights like education and health that provide capacity for development; economic rights and opportunities such as accessing productive resources; and political agency.³⁴³ The 2003 *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa* builds on this to further extend human rights protections to specifically address challenges faced by women.³⁴⁴

The rights of persons with disabilities are also protected under international efforts. In 1981, the International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP) was celebrated.³⁴⁵ The following year, the General Assembly (GA), in resolution 37/52, adopted the *World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons*.³⁴⁶ The Programme sought to establish an international approach to ensure that individuals with disabilities had equal access to societal and developmental inclusion.³⁴⁷ The period from 1983 to 1992 was recognized as the UN Decade of Disabled Persons, created in order to provide opportunities for Member States and international groups to work towards the *World Programme of Action*.³⁴⁸ In 1993, the GA adopted the *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*, recognizing that disabled persons are within all Member States and all levels of communities, and establishing set guidelines to ensure the equal participation of disabled individuals within society.³⁴⁹ In 2006, the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) was established.³⁵⁰ Resulting from the UN's work to change to include persons with disabilities in the development process, the Convention protects human rights and deliberately addresses social development.³⁵¹ It also identifies how these human rights are violated and how they can be effectively protected.³⁵²

Furthermore, international frameworks also guide development efforts across the international community. The UN's development work since 2000 has been guided by eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which include halving extreme poverty (MDG 1) and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women (MDG 3).³⁵³ As the MDGs are set to expire in 2015, the UN and partners have been actively working towards the establishment of a post-2015 development agenda.³⁵⁴ Partially towards this end, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), otherwise known as Rio+20, took place in 2012 to discuss sustainable development, poverty eradication, and green economies.³⁵⁵ Member States, civil society groups, universities, businesses and others have since committed to the outcome document, titled *The Future We Want*, which creates a platform for extensive future action concerning international social, economic, and environmental issues.³⁵⁶ This includes improving gender equality and launching a process to form the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).³⁵⁷

The resulting Open Working Group (OWG) on the SDGs met 13 times over more than a year to produce the outcome proposal for the SDGs in July 2014.³⁵⁸ These goals address a wide spectrum of development issues including ending poverty (Goal 1), ensuring inclusive and equitable education (Goal 4), achieving gender equality

³⁴¹ UN-Women, *Guiding Documents*, 2014.

³⁴² UN ECA, *African Women's Report*.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁴ Gender is my Agenda Campaign, *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA)*.

³⁴⁵ UN Enable, *The International Year of Disabled Persons 1981*.

³⁴⁶ UN Enable, *World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons*.

³⁴⁷ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

³⁴⁸ UN Enable, *United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons 1983-1992*.

³⁴⁹ UN Enable, *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities*; UN General Assembly, *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (A/RES/48/96)*, 1994.

³⁵⁰ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² *Ibid.*

³⁵³ UN We Can End Poverty, *Background*.

³⁵⁴ UN DESA, Division for Sustainable Development, *Sustainable development goals*, 2014.

³⁵⁵ UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *About the Rio+20 Conference*, 2011.

³⁵⁶ UN Conference on Sustainable Development, *Rio+20 concludes with big package of commitments for action*, 2012.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁸ UN DESA, Division for Sustainable Development, *Sustainable development goals*, 2014.

and empowerment (Goal 5), and promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth (Goal 8).³⁵⁹ The GA decided in September 2014 that the OWG recommendations should be used to incorporate the SDGs into the post-2015 development agenda.³⁶⁰ The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Beyond 2014, coordinated by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), provides a foundation of population and development that also informs the post-2015 development agenda.³⁶¹ Similar to the process of the OWG on the SDGs, the ICPD Beyond 2014 Global Report synthesizes a long review of the original 1994 *ICPD Programme of Action* with input from governments, civil society, and academic research.³⁶² A key outcome of this process is finding that growing inequality will significantly undo development gains made in the past two decades.³⁶³

The African Union (AU) has also established a vision for Africa's development titled "Agenda 2063, The Future We Want for Africa."³⁶⁴ A 50-year action plan, Agenda 2063 seeks to establish short, medium, and long-term objectives for positive socio-economic transformational achievements across the continent while building African unity.³⁶⁵ The AU is currently gathering input from stakeholders with the goal of creating a collaborative guiding policy.³⁶⁶ In conjunction with the SDGs and as part of the Agenda 2063 process, the AU released the *Common African Position (CAP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*.³⁶⁷ Built upon the outcome principles of Rio+20, the CAP is Africa's single unanimous voice identifying its six priorities for the global development agenda, including structural economic transformation and inclusive growth as well as people-centered development.³⁶⁸

Role of the International System

The UN provides an important aspect of international efforts concerning social and economic development in Africa. In particular, the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) promotes economic and social development and intra-regional integration among its Member States, as well as international cooperation for development in Africa.³⁶⁹ ECA is one of five regional commissions overseen by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which as one of the six main organs of the UN is mandated to coordinate, review, and implement economic, social, and environmental issues and development goals.³⁷⁰ ECOSOC also oversees several functional commissions whose work overlaps with that of ECA, including the Commission on Population and Development (CPD), Commission on Social Development (CSocD), Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).³⁷¹ Funds and programs overseen by the GA also work both together with and separately from ECA to promote development in Africa. These include the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and its Regional Bureau for Africa and the UNFPA.³⁷² ECA also works with the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the UN's coordinating body for gender issues; for example, both ECA and CSW have prepared guidance notes for the regional review process leading up to the 2015 Beijing+20 *Platform for Action* review.³⁷³

As the UN's only agency mandated to operate regionally within Africa, ECA takes an active role in Africa's social and economic development by directing resources towards Africa's priorities, gathering data and conducting regional research, and promoting capacity development and policy consensus.³⁷⁴ ECA's work focuses on seven themes that include capacity development, social development, and gender.³⁷⁵ The 2014-15 Strategic Framework for ECA highlights several objectives under these themes that relate to this topic, including increased capacity for

³⁵⁹ UN Open Working Group, *Proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014.

³⁶⁰ International Institute for Sustainable Development, *OWG Report to be "Main Basis" for SDGs in Post-2015 Agenda*, 2014.

³⁶¹ UN Population Fund, *UN Launches ICPD Beyond 2014 Global Review Report*, 2014.

³⁶² *Ibid.*

³⁶³ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁴ African Union, *About Agenda 2063*.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁷ African Union, *Common Africa Position (CAP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2014.

³⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁹ UN ECA, *Overview*.

³⁷⁰ UN Economic and Social Council, *About ECOSOC*.

³⁷¹ UN Department of Public Information, *The United Nations System*, 2013.

³⁷² *Ibid.*

³⁷³ UN ECA, *Introduction to the Beijing+20 review*.

³⁷⁴ UN ECA, *Overview*.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

Member States and regional groups to mainstream gender into national policies and advancing Africa's development agenda through sound policies.³⁷⁶ ECA has specifically addressed inclusion of vulnerable people in its recent work through the new African Social Development Index (ASDI), which aims to measure efforts in African development policy towards a more inclusive approach.³⁷⁷

ECA also promotes gender equality through several channels within the Commission. The Committee on Women and Development (CWD), one of ECA's eight subsidiary organs, meets every two years to review progress towards global and regional platforms for action.³⁷⁸ ECA also hosts the African Centre for Gender (ACG), which provides Member States with technical support for promoting gender equality.³⁷⁹ The ACG conducts analytical research and promotes good policies through the Gender and Development Index, which measures progress towards gender equality in Africa.³⁸⁰ The UN's focus on gender equality permeates all of its work, including that of ECA, with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) acting as the primary coordinator for UN efforts.³⁸¹ UN-Women's promotion of women's economic empowerment has included developing the Women's Empowerment Principles with the UN Global Compact for empowering women in the workplace and marketplace.³⁸² These seven Principles include equal opportunity, inclusion and nondiscrimination; health, safety and freedom from violence; education and training; enterprise development; and community leadership.³⁸³

The UN also focuses on mainstreaming disability across the development agenda. The Secretary-General released a report in 2009 reviewing the inclusion of disability across development work at the time and provided several recommendations for how to better mainstream disability moving forward.³⁸⁴ These included adopting disability-inclusive policies at all levels of development, incorporating people with disabilities in development activities, raising awareness of disabilities among development staff, and linking this mainstreaming process with other processes, such as gender mainstreaming.³⁸⁵ UN Enable, the Secretariat for the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, acts as the focus for the UN system's work concerning the rights of persons with disabilities.³⁸⁶ In particular, UN Enable supports the work of the GA and ECOSOC, facilitates the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD, and promotes mainstreaming of disability across the development agenda.³⁸⁷ The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, composed of independent experts, monitors how Member States implement the CRPD.³⁸⁸ The Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development (CSD) monitors the implementation of the *Standard Rules of the Equalization of Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities* and provides an annual report to CSD.³⁸⁹ The UN also recognizes 3 December as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, with a different theme focus for each year; the 2014 theme is "Sustainable Development: The Promise of Technology."³⁹⁰

Several regional organizations also assist in promoting inclusive economic and social development in Africa. The African Union (AU) provides a regional forum and guidance on issues concerning Africa's future with an emphasis on development and integration.³⁹¹ Its vision is "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena."³⁹² The AU has established the New Partnership for

³⁷⁶ UN ECA, *Revised Proposed Strategic Framework for the period 2014-2015*, 2013.

³⁷⁷ UN ECA, *ECA Social Development Index seeks inclusion of vulnerable people*, 2014.

³⁷⁸ UN ECA, *About CWD*.

³⁷⁹ UN ECA, *About Gender*.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁸¹ UN Global Compact, *Women's Empowerment Principles*, 2014.

³⁸² *Ibid.*

³⁸³ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁴ UN Commission for Social Development, *Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda: Report of the Secretary-General [E/CN.5/2010/6]*, 2009, p. 1.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

³⁸⁶ UN Enable, *About Us*.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁸ UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, 2014.

³⁸⁹ UN Enable, *Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development*.

³⁹⁰ UN Enable, *International Day of Persons with Disabilities – 3 December*.

³⁹¹ African Union, *AU in a Nutshell*.

³⁹² *Ibid.*

Africa's Development (NEPAD), a strategic framework for socio-economic development across Africa.³⁹³ The African Development Bank (AfDB) also seeks to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable economic and social progress by mobilizing investment resources and providing policy and technical support for its members' development work.³⁹⁴ The African Capacity-Building Foundation (ACBF) seeks to foster poverty reduction and sustainable growth across Africa by supporting capacity development, such as national or regional initiatives, to strengthen public, private, and civil society interactions promoting development.³⁹⁵ The AU also focuses on promoting gender equality, as shown by the *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa* (SDGEA), and its efforts to foster gender mainstreaming at all policy levels.³⁹⁶

In addition, civil society organizations (CSOs) contribute to including vulnerable populations in Africa's economic and social development. Many women's civil society groups are united by the Gender is my Agenda Campaign (GIMAC), which is coordinated by Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) and boasts a membership of 47 CSOs from across Africa.³⁹⁷ The Campaign helps implement, monitor, and evaluate the AU's *Solemn Declaration* while focusing on six themes, including economic empowerment and education.³⁹⁸ UN Enable also facilitates partnerships between civil society and other stakeholders like UN bodies, Member State governments, and academic institutions to promote mainstreaming of disability.³⁹⁹

Including Women in Africa's Development

Sustainable and equitable economic and social development requires women's empowerment, gender equality, and for women to have equal access to financial and economic resources.⁴⁰⁰ Women can be constrained by lack of access to education, limited mobility, early and forced marriage, unequal access to justice, lack of property rights, and lack of access to financial services and economic inputs.⁴⁰¹ Often they cannot realize economic benefits from their labor due to unequal wages and unpaid work conducted through care services.⁴⁰² The 2009 *African Women's Report* measured how women are integrated into and how beneficiaries of the development process in Africa are broken down into four blocks, two of which are economic and social measures.⁴⁰³ The economic block measures inequality through access to productive resources, employment, and income level, while the social block considers education, health, and violence against women.⁴⁰⁴ Equal access to resources has a positive multiplier effect on poverty reduction at both the micro level of household productivity and wellbeing and at the macro level of economic and development growth trends.⁴⁰⁵

Women face unique gender-related barriers to accessing the inputs of economic development, including property rights, finance, and access to markets.⁴⁰⁶ Women are 20% less likely to have an account at a formal financial institution and restrictions sometimes prevent them from opening a bank account without permission from a male family member.⁴⁰⁷ Women also often lack financial literacy required to utilize these services and sometimes have them in name only as a male relative controls financial decisions.⁴⁰⁸ While women count for over 40% of the global workforce and own 30-37% of all small and medium-sized businesses, they have financial needs of \$260-320 billion for their businesses every year that cannot be met due to limited access to financial services.⁴⁰⁹

³⁹³ The New Partnership for Africa's Development, *About*.

³⁹⁴ African Development Bank, *Mission and Objective*, 2014.

³⁹⁵ The African Capacity-Building Foundation, *About Us*.

³⁹⁶ Gender is my Agenda Campaign, *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA)*.

³⁹⁷ Gender is my Agenda Campaign, *Women's movements in Africa*.

³⁹⁸ Gender is my Agenda Campaign, *Member Organizations*.

³⁹⁹ UN Enable, *About Us*.

⁴⁰⁰ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *2009 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development*, 2009, p. v.

⁴⁰¹ UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, *Women's role in economic development: Overcoming the constraints*, 2013.

⁴⁰² *Ibid*.

⁴⁰³ UN ECA, *African Women's Report 2009*, 2009.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid*.

⁴⁰⁵ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *2009 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development*, 2009, p. v.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid*.

⁴⁰⁷ World Bank, *Expanding Women's Access to Financial Service*, 2014.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid*.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid*.

Increased access to services like microcredit, or small loans, for people who do not have enough credit history or collateral to take out a loan from a standard bank can help women overcome these financial barriers.⁴¹⁰ The Fund for Gender Equality, operated by UN-Women, seeks to reduce some of these barriers and support women’s economic empowerment, specifically “to increase women’s access and control over decision-making, land, technology, credit, livelihoods and other means of production and social protection.”⁴¹¹ The Fund delivers competitive grants to governments and CSOs who are promoting women’s rights along the criteria of women’s economic and political empowerment.⁴¹² UNDP projects, like the “Rural Dryland Development through Innovative Market Approaches,” focus on improving women’s capacity to market demand and strengthening mobilization and linkages to the market.⁴¹³ Continuing to address gender inequalities will significantly contribute to the economic and social wellbeing of families and communities; for example, a World Bank study found that if women farmers had equal access to inputs and resources as men, total agricultural production could increase 6-20%.⁴¹⁴

Social rights are equally important in order for women to participate in sustainable development. Education is critical to empowering women to play a strategic role in sustainable development.⁴¹⁵ Educated women have better access to economic and business activities, opportunities in the formal job sector, and earn more money than uneducated women.⁴¹⁶ A woman’s education affects her family as well, because an educated woman is more likely to send her children to school and invest in the health and wellbeing of her girl children.⁴¹⁷ A recent background paper to the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda highlights how the emphasis on education has shifted to the girl child and has fallen short on addressing education for adult women, subsequently calling for this to be rectified in the post-2015 development agenda.⁴¹⁸ Health care is also important as a measurement of women fully realizing better wellbeing and sustainable development, including access to family planning, maternal health services, and access to and the resources to use health information.⁴¹⁹

The UN, AU, and other international and regional groups are committed to promoting gender equality throughout the development process, in particular through gender mainstreaming. Defined as “ensuring that a gendered perspective is central to all activities, including planning, implementation and monitoring of all programmes, projects and legislation,” gender mainstreaming helps integrate women’s voice in all levels of social and economic development.⁴²⁰ Civil society groups such as GIMAC also promote women’s voices and integration throughout the development process by monitoring the implementation of the AU’s *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa*.⁴²¹

The Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities form another significant vulnerable population, as there are more than one billion persons with disabilities in the world.⁴²² The UN defines “disability” as “any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.”⁴²³ Disabilities and poverty have a reciprocal relationship, as disability can increase the likelihood of poverty, while poverty can increase the likelihood of disabilities.⁴²⁴ Families of disabled persons are more often socio-economically challenged than other families.⁴²⁵ Several factors contribute to this: children with disabilities are less likely to go to school, people with disabilities are less likely to be employed or earn fair wages, and families of

⁴¹⁰ Consultative Group to Assist the Poor, *What is Microfinance*, 2014.

⁴¹¹ UN-Women, *Fund for Gender Equality*, 2014.

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Drylands Development Center – Arab States Program, *Rural Dryland Development*, n.d.

⁴¹⁴ UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, *Women’s role in economic development: Overcoming the constraints*, 2013.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid.

⁴¹⁹ UN ECA, *African Women’s Report 2009*, 2009.

⁴²⁰ Sustainable Development Solutions Network, *Women’s role in economic development: Overcoming the constraints*, 2013.

⁴²¹ Gender is my Agenda Campaign, *Member Organizations*.

⁴²² World Health Organization, *World Report on Disability*, 2011.

⁴²³ United Nations, *World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons*.

⁴²⁴ World Health Organization, *World Report on Disability*, 2011.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

disabled persons experience higher financial costs.⁴²⁶ While these links are known, persons with disabilities have not been an active part of international development goals until recently; for example, they are not mentioned in the MDGs.⁴²⁷ The UN has made deliberate efforts to include persons with disabilities in the post-2015 development agenda, and three of the proposed SDGs specifically address disabilities.⁴²⁸

The 2011 World Health Organization (WHO) World Report on Disabilities estimates that 15.3% of the African population suffers from a moderate or severe disability.⁴²⁹ The most common types of disability in the region are physical disabilities, blindness, and mental disabilities.⁴³⁰ There are several causes of disabilities in Africa, including malnutrition, road accidents, conflict and war, and environmental hazards.⁴³¹ Infectious diseases like HIV, malaria, polio, leprosy, and trachoma are particularly prominent in Africa; while infection rates have dropped over the past few decades, the population is also still affected by legacy disabilities.⁴³² Studies in Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe have shown significant unmet needs among the disabled population; out of the health care, welfare, assistive devices, education, counseling, and vocational training sectors, only health care was found to meet the reported needs of at least 50% of people with disabilities.⁴³³

While education is critical for children to develop their human capital and enhance their future economic and social opportunities, children with disabilities are less likely than their peers to receive an education.⁴³⁴ Roughly 90% of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school, while the few who do often attend sub-par programs.⁴³⁵ These children are often sent to separate institutions that offer inferior education, fail to address negative social perceptions that will impede a child's life outside of the classroom, or are too specialized to serve the broad spectrum of the definition of disability.⁴³⁶ Since children with disabilities are in fact a widely varied group encompassing many physical, emotional, and mental disabilities, equitable access to education requires a variety of solutions.⁴³⁷ Physical accommodations like assistive technology devices help children integrate into schools; these tools include Braille signs, hearing aids, communication software, and visual aids.⁴³⁸ Training teachers and equipping them to run fully inclusive classrooms can also alleviate this exclusion.⁴³⁹ Such teacher-training curricula should include child-centered methodology, teaching techniques in multicultural and inclusive environments, and information on how to support children with disabilities and specific educational needs with adaptable individual education plans.⁴⁴⁰

Persons with disabilities also face challenges concerning economic development, particularly in employment. There is an unemployment rate of 80 to 90% among persons with disabilities who are of working age in developing countries.⁴⁴¹ This is due to several reasons, including discrimination, prejudice, and lack of accommodation in the workplace.⁴⁴² If employed, persons with disabilities will often earn fewer wages than their non-disabled peers; for disabled women there is an even larger wage gap.⁴⁴³ There are several methods the UN can support to promote inclusion of persons with disabilities in the work place, including education and vocational rehabilitation, promoting laws and regulations protecting the right to work, offering microfinance and self-employment channels, and working to change social attitudes.⁴⁴⁴

⁴²⁶ World Health Organization, *World Report on Disability*, 2011.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁸ UN Open Working Group, *Proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals*, 2014.

⁴²⁹ World Health Organization, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 30.

⁴³⁰ World Health Organization, *Disabilities & Rehabilitation*, 2012.

⁴³¹ African Studies Centre Leiden, *Disabilities in Africa*.

⁴³² World Health Organization, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 32-3.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

⁴³⁵ Global Partnership for Education, *Children with Disabilities*, 2013; UN Children's Fund, *Disabilities*, 2013.

⁴³⁶ World Health Organization, *World Report on Disability*, 2011, p. 205.

⁴³⁷ UN Children's Fund, *Mainstreaming Disability Across All of our Policies and Programmes*.

⁴³⁸ Public Broadcasting Station, *Assistive Technology Devices*.

⁴³⁹ UN Children's Fund, *The Right of Children with Disabilities to Education*, 2012, p. 80.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁴⁴¹ UN Enable, *Disability and Employment*.

⁴⁴² World Health Organization, *World Report on Disability*, 2011.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Conclusion

While Africa has progressed in both social and economic development at a macro level, real development in the day-to-day lives of individuals in Africa has not been realized at the same magnitude. Growing inequality between those with no or very low income and those with higher income has served to increasingly marginalize vulnerable populations, including women and people with disabilities. The UN recognizes these populations and has looked to specifically address their needs in the SDGs. The UN will begin to work towards these goals through its programs, the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs, and by coordinating the multilateral efforts of its Member States.

The ECA also has the opportunity to coordinate inclusive development across Africa and help women and people with disabilities realize better social and economic wellbeing. There are several priorities under the proposed SDGs to help these vulnerable populations achieve full access and inclusivity in the development process. For women, ECA can focus on promoting access to finance and markets, which allows women to achieve economic growth and access to education, thus increasing both economic and social opportunities. For persons with disabilities, ECA can also promote education and job training to increase both economic and social development. ECA is in a unique position to champion for both gender and disability mainstreaming across regional and Member State national policy and dialogue. All of these channels can help include vulnerable populations in the development process and promote equitable and inclusive development.

Further Research

Delegates should consider how the UN and in particular ECA can promote the inclusion of vulnerable populations in economic and social development. First, consider how ECA should address the priorities identified here. How can ECA promote inclusive education? Are there opportunities to facilitate regional programs through partners like the African Union? What is already being done and how can those efforts be complimented through multilateral efforts? How can ECA promote equal work opportunities? What opportunities are there to increase access to financial resources that allow women and persons with disabilities to realize economic potential? Delegates should also consider how best to utilize the ECA's unique position as the UN's regional body in Africa. How can ECA facilitate cooperation and sharing of best practices among African Member States? What programs and policies have been successful for other regional UN commissions and how can ECA share and build upon these to promote Africa's development?

Annotated Bibliography

African Studies Centre Leiden. (n.d.). *Disability in Africa* [Website]. Retrieved 14 October 2014 from: <http://www.ascleiden.nl/content/webdossiers/disability-africa>

Collated by the African Studies Centre Leiden, this site is an online catalogue of research and resources pertaining to disability in Africa. It begins with an introduction to the issue and identifies the parameters of disability across the continent. It then provides links to an online library under the categories of general disability, physical disability, mental disability, education for disabled persons, and a list of web resources. Delegates can use this resource to explore both the breadth and depth of the topic of disabilities in African and get specific information relating to specific countries and areas of focus for the UN Economic Commission of Africa.

African Union. (2014). *Common African Position (CAP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*. Retrieved 12 July 2014 from: http://ea.au.int/en/sites/default/files/Book%20CAP%20%208_0.pdf

The African Union put together this Common African Position (CAP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda to help unify Africa's approach to development challenges and encourage a strategic shift in the structure of development to be inclusive and centered on people. This document discusses six pillars of Africa's position, the first of which is structural economic transformation and inclusive growth and the third is people-centered development. Both of these pillars have sub-goals related to this topic. Delegates should closely review the CAP when considering their positions and proposals for how to advance this topic as it indicates what Africa wants to prioritize for development efforts starting in 2015.

Gender is my Agenda Campaign. (n.d.). *Women's Movements in Africa* [Website]. Retrieved 16 August 2014 from: <http://www.genderismyagenda.com/campaign/previous.html>

Hosted by the Gender is my Agenda Campaign, a group of civil society groups working to promote gender equality across Africa, this website holds a wealth of information on the movement for women's rights in Africa. It identifies the primary regional documents safeguarding these rights, including the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, and traces their use over the past 20 years. It provides a history of active civil society groups, African Union bodies, and the ECA in promoting these rights. Other pages on this site will also connect delegates with African organizations active in promoting women's rights in development and provide additional insight as they prepare position papers and materials for the conference.

Pan-African Conference on Inequalities in the Context of Structural Transformation. (2014). *Programme & Presentations* [Website]. Retrieved 12 July 2014 from: <http://africainequalities.org/conference/about/program/>

Held in April 2014, the Pan-African Conference on Inequalities in the Context of Structural Transformation looked at developing a statement on The Africa We Want as input to Rio+20 and The World We Want. To do this, the Conference examined a variety of topics and conversations relating to inequality in Africa and how it affects development. The agenda gives insight into what the Conference discussed and links to the presentations given over its course. This website provides an extensive variety of resources on the topic for delegates to examine as they learn about this topic and write their position papers.

United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (2014). *Incorporating the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the post-2015 development agenda; Note by the Secretariat (CRPD/CSP/2014/2)*. Retrieved 16 August 2014 from: www.undocs.org/crpd/csp/2014/2

Published in April 2014, this note by the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) provides a recent analysis of how rights protected by the CRPD can be incorporated into the post-2015 development agenda. It provides a brief history of attention within the UN to persons with disabilities and how the history is relevant to the post-2015 development agenda process. The report concludes with four recommendations as the UN moves into post-2015, including inclusion of persons with disabilities in both general society and development processes, strengthening partnerships for disability inclusion in the agenda, and the improvement of data gathering and evaluation of inclusive policy and programming.

United Nations, Department of Public Information. (2013). *The United Nations System*. Retrieved 16 August 2014 from: http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/structure/pdfs/UN%20system%20chart_lettercolor_2013.pdf

While simple, this one-page chart provides a valuable overview of the United Nations system. It identifies the six principle UN organs and links them to their subsidiary bodies, funds, programs, commissions, agencies, departments, offices, and more. It shows how the Economic Commission for Africa fits under the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat. Delegates should review this document for a more complete understanding of the UN system. They should keep it close by when formulating position papers and working in committees as a reference guide for what part of the UN may already be working on something they are interested in developing or what part of the UN may be best suited to administering or fulfilling a proposed solution.

United Nations Development Programme. (2013). *Humanity Divided: Confronting Inequality in Developing Countries*. Retrieved 12 July 2014 from:

http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/Poverty%20Reduction/Inclusive%20development/Humanity%20Divided/HumanityDivided_Full-Report.pdf

Published in November 2013, this UNDP report provides an in-depth study on inequality and the rhetoric framing much of the SDGs, including equitable access to finance and markets. It starts by defining types of inequality, including both income and access to opportunities, and identifies why inequality matters. One section discusses income inequality in particular, including trends and drivers of disparate incomes, while another addresses gender inequality with a sub-section on gender trends in livelihoods. The report concludes with a section on how policy can address these inequalities moving forward. Delegates can use this for further research into income and gender inequalities, as well as for ideas on how the UN can address these issues.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa, African Union Commission, & United Nations Population Fund. (2013). *Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development in Africa beyond 2014 (ECA/ICPD/MIN.2013/4)*. Retrieved 12 July 2014 from: <http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/uploaded-documents/ICPD/2014/declaration-final-e1351225.pdf>

This Declaration sets out priorities and recommendations for the international community concerning population and development in Africa as the previous International Conference on Population and Development expires. The topics addressed in this Declaration are: dignity and equality, health, place and mobility, governance, data and statistics, international cooperation and partnership, and implementation. The key sub-topics in this Guide are also addressed here. Delegates will find this document a great overview when beginning their research; it provides a holistic view to assist in more specific recommendations in their position papers and work during the conference.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development. (2014). *Sustainable development goals* [Website]. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. Retrieved 10 August 2014 from: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

This site documents the process of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals relating to the post-2015 development agenda. It is updated frequently after global meetings, so it will provide up to date information beyond the scope of this background guide. The SDGs are critical to both this topic and all UN work moving forward into 2015 and beyond. On this site, delegates can track and view the latest developments to the proposed goals, read input papers from different groups and work streams, and track general progress towards creating the SDGs.

World Health Organization. (2011). *World Report on Disability*. Retrieved 3 August 2014 from: http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789240685215_eng.pdf

The World Health Organization's (WHO) World Report provides detailed information on disabilities, including the definition of disability and how this relates to human rights. It provides extensive demographics, details the costs of disabilities, and reviews the situation of general health care, rehabilitation, assistance and support, enabling environments, and work and employment pertaining to disabilities. Specifically applicable to this topic, the Report dedicates a section to disability and development. It provides excellent information for delegates to

understand the situation and provides recommendations for action delegates can consider when preparing their own positions.

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