

Concept Note

Leveraging Data and Technology to Strengthen Domestic Resource Mobilization and Debt Governance in Africa

March 31, 2026

11:30 – 13:00

Convener: Macroeconomics, Finance and Governance Division (MFGD)

Background and Rationale

African countries are advancing their development priorities in a challenging global context that demands a more strategic use of fiscal space. Strengthening debt governance is increasingly important to support investment in social services, infrastructure, and climate resilience. The central question is how debt is governed, monitored, and integrated into fiscal and development planning, rather than the level of debt itself.

As countries work to strengthen debt governance, attention is increasingly turning to institutional coordination and data coverage across the public sector. Improved information flows among ministries of finance, debt management units, central banks, and oversight institutions can enhance governments' ability to assess risks and respond proactively. Expanding and consolidating information on state-owned enterprises, guarantees, and other contingent liabilities can support transparency, credibility, and more effective fiscal management.

At the same time, African countries are intensifying efforts to expand fiscal space through domestic resource mobilization and international tax cooperation. Engagement in the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation reflects a strategic push to strengthen revenue bases, address illicit financial flows, and rebalance taxing rights in the global system. These reforms are central to reducing excessive reliance on debt and restoring policy autonomy. However, as with debt governance, progress in taxation and DRM depends critically on data quality, institutional coordination, and analytical capacity. Weak taxpayer information systems and limited data sharing across government agencies continue to constrain the implementation of modern tax administration and fiscal coordination.

Debt governance and tax cooperation are therefore not separate agendas. It is at this operational intersection that data systems and technology become strategically important. Digital debt registries, integrated fiscal data platforms, and analytical tools enable governments to consolidate information across the full public-sector perimeter and to move toward near-real-time risk monitoring. When embedded in appropriate legal and institutional frameworks, these tools can support early detection of debt stress, improve transparency, and strengthen coordination across fiscal authorities. They can also enhance the capacity of parliaments and audit institutions to exercise oversight, reinforcing accountability and public trust.

Technology, however, is not a substitute for policy or institutional reform. Its value lies in implementation, especially in reducing reliance on manual processes and enabling evidence-based decision-making. Used effectively, data systems can allow governments to link borrowing decisions to revenue prospects, tax

reforms, and development outcomes, shifting fiscal management from short-term crisis response toward strategic planning. In this sense, technology supports not only debt sustainability but also the expansion and protection of fiscal space.

Against this backdrop, the *Economic Governance Report III (EGR III)* provides a timely analytical foundation. The report documents how weaknesses in institutional coordination, transparency, and information systems have contributed to Africa's debt challenges and advances a Sustainable Debt Governance Cycle that places data integration and oversight at the center of effective debt management. Its findings, based on the growth-enhancing governance framework, reinforce the proposition that improving debt outcomes requires strengthening the governance architecture that underpins fiscal policy.

UNECA is convening a side event that brings together debt governance, fiscal space, and international tax cooperation through a common lens: strengthening fiscal governance through data and technology. The event will both launch EGR III and engage Member States, in line with Africa's priorities on debt sustainability and domestic resource mobilization.

Objectives

The side event aims to:

1. Highlight how data and technology can strengthen debt governance and transparency, including coverage of central government, state-owned enterprises, guarantees, and other contingent liabilities.
2. Examine how digital tools and analytics support the management of debt stress, including risk monitoring, stress testing, and early warning of refinancing, exchange-rate, and interest-rate pressures.
3. Explore how data and technology can improve coordination across debt, tax, and fiscal policy, supporting domestic resource mobilization and the protection of fiscal space.
4. Identify institutional and legal priorities for implementing technology-enabled fiscal governance reforms, with a focus on capacity building and accountability.

Guiding Questions

1. How can integrated debt data platforms, shared reporting standards, and digital dashboards improve transparency and coverage across the public-sector debt perimeter?
2. How can analytics and selected frontier technologies support early warning of debt stress, improve risk assessment, and enhance the credibility of debt data?
3. Where do specific digital tools, such as supervisory technologies and traceability systems, add value for oversight, compliance, and accountability, and where are their limits?
4. What legal, institutional, and governance reforms are needed to ensure that data and technology strengthen debt governance and align borrowing decisions with national development priorities?

Expected Outcomes

1. **Agreed priority actions.** A short list of priority actions for strengthening debt governance in Africa through data and technology.
2. **Pilot countries identified.** A group of interested Member States identified for follow-up support on debt data integration and debt-stress monitoring.
3. **Common reference framework established.** A shared set of reference elements agreed for debt data coverage, transparency practices, and use of technology for risk monitoring and oversight.
4. **Next steps for support confirmed.** Specific follow-up support areas confirmed for UNECA and partners, including advisory assistance, training, and system strengthening for debt management and oversight institutions.

Suggested Speakers

Name and Title	Rationale for the suggestion	Gender	Region represented	
Mr. Mohamed Ibrahim Abdu, Associate Minister of Finance for Policies and Economic Affairs; Ministry of Finance, Egypt	To share experience on how data and digital tools have improved budget planning, expenditure control, transparency and shock response.	M	North Africa	Confirmed
Hon. Amine Tahraoui Minister of Health and Social Protection, Morocco	To highlight how digital health systems and data analytics are strengthening service delivery, monitoring and emergency preparedness.	M	North Africa	TBC
Honourable Emma Inamutilla Theofelus Minister of Information and Communication Technology, Namibia	To provide a cross-cutting perspective on digital ID, interoperability, legal frameworks and citizen-facing digital services.	F	Southern Africa	TBC
Mrs. Ilaria Carnevali, Resident Representative, UNDP, Morocco	To reflect on regional and global support, financing models and lessons from other regions on building data-driven public sectors.	F	Pan-African / International	Confirmed
Ms. Rose Mwebaza, Director, Regional Office for Africa	To highlight how data and digital tools can support climate resilience, environmental sustainability, and strengthen transparency and accountability in fiscal governance.	F	UNEP	Confirmed
Mr. Yungong, Theophilus Jong Acting Executive Director,	To provide insights into the key challenges in debt management at the regional and global levels	M	Civil Society	Confirmed

The African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD)	and their implications for sustainable development.			
Mr. Gamal Ibrahim ECA representative (MFGD)	To frame the discussion, present key findings from ECA's work on institutional governance, of public debt in Africa and summarize policy messages.	M	UNECA	Confirmed
Mr. Daniel Nuer, Co-Lead for Workstream 1 on the draft Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation	To provide insights on how international tax cooperation and data-driven reforms can support effective fiscal management and sustainable financing.	M	West Africa	Confirmed

Programme of Work

Moderator: Stephen Karingi, Director, MFGD, UNECA

- **Opening Remarks:** Hanan Morsy, Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist, UNECA (7 minutes)
- **Framing Presentation:** Key messages from the Economic Governance Report III *Gamal Ibrahim, Chief, EGPF, MFGD, UNECA (15 minutes)*
- **Update on Articulation of Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation:** Key messages from the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) on progress of Negotiations *Mr. Daniel Nuer, Co-Lead for Workstream 1 on the draft Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation (10 minutes)*
- **Panel Discussion:** Debt Governance, Fiscal Space, and Technology (30 minutes)
- **Interactive Discussion:** Questions and interventions (15 minutes)
- **Formal Launch:** Economic Governance Report III (5 minutes)
- **Closing Remarks:** UNECA (5 minutes)