

## **UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (UNFPA)**

### **Support to NEPAD**

**Period of Report: 2005 to 2006**

#### **UNFPA's partnership with the African Union (AU), RECs and Regional Institutions in the context of the NEPAD and AU's strategic programme framework**

UNFPA continues to work closely with various departments of the AU Commission (AUC), particularly with the Department of Social Affairs, Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology, and the Gender Directorate. Policy dialogue with the regional economic communities has been strengthened, particularly with the West African Health Organization (WAHO) (of the Economic Community of West African States - ECOWAS), Southern African Development Community (SADC), East African Community (EAC) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Dialogue has also begun with Economic Community of Central Africa (ECCA).

#### Results to Date

- Following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the AU Commission and UNFPA regarding a cooperation project, UNFPA has approved USD1.2 million for the project, which aims at strengthening AUC's institutional and technical capacity.
- In collaboration with the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF/AFR), UNFPA supported the development of a Continental Reproductive Health Policy Framework which AU Ministers of Health approved in Gaborone and the Executive Council endorsed in Sudan (January 2006). Based on the Continental Policy framework and with UNFPA support, IGAD developed a draft subregional strategy which is scheduled to be reviewed by IGAD Ministers before the end of the year. Similarly, the SADC Secretariat is assessing the status of reproductive and maternal health with a view of developing a subregional strategy. With the view of capacity enhancement, UNFPA is also supporting SADC Secretariat on developing strategies for mainstreaming population issues in its policies and programmes.
- UNFPA provided technical and financial support for the development of the Pan African Youth Charter which was approved by the AU Council of Ministers and endorsed by the AU summit in Banjul (2006). The approval was preceded by an expert group meeting and a Youth Forum, both of which UNFPA supported.
- Given that the next step focuses on implementation, UNFPA produced a booklet on best practices in the area of youth development and empowerment entitled "Sharing Experiences that Work".

- UNFPA supported the requirement analysis of AU's development database, which has now been completed. To enhance AU's capacity in data management, UNFPA provided IT equipment worth over USD 100,000. Support is also being provided for enhancing the AU database.
- In support of AUC's leadership role for accelerating the promises made for the prevention of HIV and promoting universal access to treatment and care, and with the view of broadening the knowledge base, UNFPA supported the production of "Cultural Determinants and Social Dimensions of the HIV/AIDS Pandemic".
- Through financial and technical support to the AU Gender Directorate, Gender Focal Persons from the RECs, ECA, and NEPAD Secretariat (among others) convened to brainstorm on the strategic framework of AU's gender policy. Moreover, the group agreed to establish the "AU-Inter-REC Coordination Committee on Gender and Women's Development".
- UNFPA provided USD 20,000 to support the NEPAD Secretariat to (a) initiate mainstreaming reproductive health and HIV/AIDS across all sectors, as well as develop monitoring and evaluation indicators for APRM; (b) sensitize and develop the capacity of NEPAD advisors, professional staff and management on gender issues. This was on the basis of a Letter of Understanding between the Secretariat and UNFPA.
- UNFPA supported the East African Economic Community (EAC) to develop strategies for harmonization of reproductive health policies in EAC partner countries; and the strategy has been agreed by the respective Ministers of Health.
- In collaboration with IOM and WHO, UNFPA support a rapid capacity assessment for WAHO, IGAD, ECA and SADC and identified priority areas for joint support.
- UNFPA has begun involving the RECs in its planning workshops and key meetings, particularly those related to maternal mortality reduction and ensuring reproductive health commodity security.
- UNFPA supported the AUC's Department of Social Affairs in undertaking MDG+5 review (intended contribution to the GA Review of MDG+5 in September 2005). The MDG Review Report has been widely disseminated.
- UNFPA participated in consultation meetings on AUC's role in intensifying the struggle against HIV/AIDS. It provided technical inputs to the Draft HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan (2005-2007) and to the Strategic Plan of AIDS Watch Africa (AWA).

- UNFPA supported the AUC in developing the continental position on the African Family; the AU position paper was a contribution to the GA observance of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Year of the Family in September 2004. Technical input was also provided for the Implementation Plan of Action. (Other contributions included, *inter alia*, technical inputs to the expert group meeting and to the analytical paper on “African Family in the New Millennium: Prospects and Challenges”).
- UNFPA supported the AUC in producing the first ever State of the African Population Report.
- UNFPA participated in brainstorming sessions on the mission and vision of the AUC. It also sponsored and participated in a retreat on the strategic orientation of the Department of Social Affairs. This coupled with continued policy dialogue contributed to the inclusion of gender mainstreaming, youth development and empowerment, family, reproductive health and population issues in the AU strategic programme framework covering 2004-2007.
- Financial contribution was made to AU conferences such as (a) the Labour and Social Affairs Commission; (b) General Assembly of the African Population Commission, which is in the process of being revitalized; and (c) African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development.
- UNFPA supported the AUC in preparing a report on “Selected Positive Cultural Practices” in Africa (with examples from 30 African countries). The selected practices are associated with social support systems linked with poverty reduction, women’s empowerment etc. The report, which is in English and French, has been widely disseminated.

Currently UNFPA is providing technical services to AUC, *inter alia*, for the following: (a) review and developing of strategies for strengthening African Health Systems; (b) identification of model health projects (best practices); (c) developing strategies for operationalization of the Road Map on acceleration of the reduction of maternal and newborn mortality in Africa. Planning activities include the following:

- **Support to the Special Session of African Ministers of Health on Sexual and Reproductive Health (September 2006);**
- Support to the African Union with respect to Pan African Youth Charter (in collaboration with EAC); and related African Youth Experts Meeting and Youth Forum (first week of December);
- Gender Policy formulation;
- Support to AU Advocacy on Human Rights and HIV/AIDS;
- Support to the African Cultural Congress.