

## **DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (DESA)**

### **Support to NEPAD**

**Period of Report: July 2007 to June 2008**

#### **Collaboration with other UN agencies in support of NEPAD**

In collaboration with various UNDP country offices, the Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) of DESA supports poverty-reduction and income-generation strategies in line with the implementation of NEPAD. The Division supports governments and civil society organizations in the following areas:

- The design and implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategies;
- Support for the elaboration of Poverty Surveys, MDG reports, MDG costing and MDG based Poverty Reduction papers and the establishment of Poverty Observatories, for poverty monitoring and evaluation;
- Support to the elaboration of National Human Development Reports and substantive papers on poverty of Capacity Development Programs, to support the implementation of Poverty Reduction and MDG Strategies.

#### **Institutional support extended to the NEPAD Secretariat**

The DPADM is, at present, embarking on analyzing e-readiness in the major regions of the world, including Sub-Saharan Africa. The NEPAD Secretariat should be a contributor to this regional report, which is expected to be completed by the third quarter of 2008.

The regional reports on e-Government readiness, offshoots of the *UN Global E-Government Readiness Reports*, focus on a qualitative assessment of regional issues, constraints, and solutions to regional problems in deploying ICTs for e-government. The regional report on Sub-Saharan Africa should be a useful tool in development planning and implementation by African governments as well as for obtaining bilateral and multi-lateral development assistance for deploying ICTs in enhancing public service delivery.

#### **Advocacy work in support of Africa's development**

##### Development Policy and Analysis Division (DPAD)

###### *(i) African Regional Economic Outlook*

The regional outlook of the *World Economic Situation and Prospects Report 2008* comprises a section on Africa's economic outlook (prepared in close cooperation with UNECA), which discusses the main drivers of growth in 2007 and 2008 as well as the risks and policy challenges for continued economic development. The section pinpoints the strong economic performance across Africa as being mainly attributable to the

buoyant performance of commodity exports, but also to a strong element of domestic growth as the result of structural reforms that have improved the business and investment climate and increased capital flows; increased debt relief and rising domestic demand. The policy challenge for sustained economic development in the region is thus to continue to improve the domestic stimulus to economies and fostering diversification of production. This challenge remains particularly pertinent for Africa in the near term as the risk of a sharp downturn in the global economy could dampen commodity prices and significantly lower the continent's growth prospects.

*(ii) Prospects for Least Developed Countries*

The global outlook of the *World Economic Situation and Prospects Report 2008* also comprises an update of the prospects for least developed countries (LDCs). The update highlights the boom in agriculture-based economies that has contributed strongly to economic growth in some least developed economies in Africa, while others have benefited more from modest increases in aid and investment flows. Most importantly, growing domestic revenues and/or aid flows have been used to stimulate longer term development and growth by scaling up public spending for infrastructure and social sectors as a means of alleviating supply constraints and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The development policy challenge for many LDCs is to widen and sustain broad-based economic growth in an economic environment that is currently highly susceptible to both internal and external shocks.

*(ii) Link Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

The fall 2007 *Project LINK Meeting* was held on 12-14 November in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, co-hosted by DESA and ECA. The meeting provided an opportunity to promote economic research on issues of foremost importance to the continent. The meeting agenda comprised of sessions on the global and regional economic outlook, macroeconomic modelling and special sessions that focused on pertinent issues for African economies, such as Trade, Regional Integration and South-South Cooperation, Resource Flows in Africa and Macroeconomic Modelling Experiences in Africa.

Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM)

In support of Africa's overall development goals, DPADM has been involved in the implementation of the Governance and Public Administration programme of NEPAD in close collaboration with (i) parliaments in Africa, (ii) ministers of local government, (iii) ministers of public service, (iv) the Africa Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), and (v) the African Union Commission.

(i) The Division and the Pan-African Parliament are collaborating on progressively strengthening parliamentary information systems in Africa, using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

(ii) The Division and the regional assemblies as well as local governments in Africa are collaborating within the Euro-African Partnerships for the Decentralized Governance Project to strengthen capacities of local governments. Exchanges of study visits and

sharing of information are being facilitated. Five African local government elected women leaders undertook the study visit to Italy in October 2007.

(iii) The Division has been collaborating with AAPAM to enhance the knowledge and skills of public servants in the region. AAPAM is now a member of the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN). DESA/DPADM financed the participation of Human Resource managers in the Public Service in Africa to attend the AAPAM Annual Roundtable Conference in Mbabane Swaziland as part of the Division's efforts to strengthen the capacity of human resource management in the public sector in Africa.

(iv) The Division collaborated with the African Union Commission to strengthen DESA's Portal on Conflict Transformation to reach out to the organization in the public, private and civil society sectors that are engaged in managing conflicts in Africa.

(v) The Division has coordinated the Africa Governance Inventory (AGI) for a number of years. Given diminishing funds for the coordination, the Division engaged in discussions last year with the NEPAD Secretariat, the Africa Peer Review Mechanisms (APRM) Secretariat and the African Union Commission to arrange for an agreed institution in Africa to continue the coordination.

#### The Secretariat of United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFFS)

(i) UNFF emphasized the importance of Africa's increased participation in international negotiations on forests. The UNFF Secretariat provided tickets and DSA for a considerable number of participants from the Africa region to participate in the UNFF seventh session which decided on adopting the first ever Non-Legally Binding Instrument on all types of forests (NLBI).

(ii) The Secretariat provided strategy development and technical advice in the establishment of the African Forum on Forests (AFF). The goal of the Forum is to galvanise the African voice and opinion, and mobilise resources on forestry and related issues that cut across countries and regions with a view of enhancing the relevance and contribution of forestry to the people of Africa and their environment.

(iii) The UNFFS provides institutional support and policy advice to the Africa Region through country-led initiatives. In 2007, the UNFFS was involved in a Swedish sponsored Country Led Initiative on "Lessons Learned on Sustainable Forest Management in Africa". The Secretariat is involved in an initiative sponsored by the Governments of Switzerland and South Africa on "Forest Governance and Decentralization in Africa".

#### Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

At its Fifth Session in 2006, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues held a region-specific meeting focusing on indigenous peoples in Africa and adopted comprehensive policy recommendations in that regard. The Permanent Forum, among

other things, recommended that there be an effort made by the United Nations system to bring greater awareness of instruments and mechanisms specific to indigenous peoples to the attention of the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative.

#### Technical Cooperation Unit

Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD), in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa, organized a workshop entitled, *Assessing National Youth Policies in Africa: Five country experiences*, which was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 12-14 December 2007. The workshop brought together representatives from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda, as well as UNDP, UNFPA, and the African Union Commission, with the objective to review progress, support discussions and identify the effective tools associated with the implementation of national youth policies and programmes. It also aimed to recognize areas which required further capacity development to ensure continued advancement of youth development policies. The workshop resulted in recommendations which included the sharing of experiences between youth ministries across the continent, the integration of youth issues across government structures and departments, the strengthening of national platforms of youth organizations and greater interaction between international, regional and national entities working with youth.

#### Social Integration Branch

Substantive support was provided by the UN Secretariat and Division for Social Policy and Development to the intergovernmental negotiations that led to the adoption by the forty-sixth session of the Commission for Social Development of the resolution on "Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development". The Division for Social Policy and Development continued its collaboration with UNESCO, UNRISD and other stakeholders in supporting regional integration processes in African countries, including work done by regional fora of Ministers of Social Development to enhance normative significance of intergovernmental exchanges and evidence-based social policy.