

## **ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA (ECA)**

### **Support for NEPAD**

**Period of Report: July 2008 to June 2009**

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

ECA's collaboration with other UN agencies and organizations in support of NEPAD is carried out in the context of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM). ECA has put in place a Unit—the RCM Secretariat—dedicated to coordinate UN support to NEPAD. This Unit has been proactive in terms of follow-up on the implementation of RCM recommendations, in facilitating networking and consultations. The overall coordination of UN support to the AU and its NEPAD programme has been enhanced and strengthened.

In collaboration with other UN agencies, ECA organized the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the RCM in support of AU and its NEPAD programme in October 2008. The 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting provided the opportunity to build on the achievements of the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the RCM and to deepen the partnership with the AU Commission, the AfDB, the Regional Economic Communities and the NEPAD Secretariat. The 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting was chaired by the UN Deputy Secretary-General and co-chaired by representatives of African organizations. UN agencies were represented at the level of the Deputy Secretary-General, the ASG for Political Affairs, Regional Directors/Representatives, Directors and senior staff. The 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the RCM considered two important issues—the food crisis and climate change—and agreed that UN response to the related challenges should take a coordinated and multisectoral approach built around the AU's the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) programme and ECA's ClimDev project, respectively.

The operational arms of the RCM are nine thematic clusters, which identify and implement activities in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme. The RCM Secretariat participates in most of the cluster meetings and provides secretariat support to cluster meetings including updates and clarifications on the implementation of the recommendations of RCM meetings. It regularly shares the minutes of cluster meetings and other relevant information with all agencies and African regional and sub-regional organizations participating in the RCM process to facilitate information exchange and to encourage inter-cluster dialogue.

The clusters are preparing multi-year business plans to pave the way for them to work together around joint activities and programmes. Cluster meetings have become more structured and more regular—more than 50 cluster meetings took place in 2007 and 2008. Examples of strong interaction, strengthened coordination and collaboration between RCM clusters on the one hand and between the latter and relevant Departments of the AUC on the other include The Year of the African Youth, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the AU Summit on Water and Sanitation, activities on Internally Displaced Persons, interagency meetings on coordination and harmonization of HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria policies and

strategies, CAADP, Science & Technology policies, Joint Annual Meetings of the AU and ECA, ADF VI, and the 60th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights.

ECA is the convener of the RCM cluster on Infrastructure. The membership of the cluster is composed of AfDB, AUC, FAO, IAEA, IMO, ITU, the NEPAD Secretariat, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UN-HABITAT, UPU, WHO/WAC, WIPO, WMO, the World Bank and ECA. The cluster has four sub-clusters dealing with water, energy, transport and ICT. This cluster has a strong engagement in the activities of the AUC and the relevant African Ministerial Conferences and institutions. The sub-cluster on water has developed a strategic partnership with the African Ministers' Council on Water, the Water Units of the Regional Economic Communities, the Water and Sanitation Department of ADB and the Water and Energy Section of the NEPAD Secretariat. It has fully aligned its activities with the water and sanitation agenda set by the continents lending institutions in the areas of water and sanitation.

In energy, the sub-cluster activities are informed by the AU and NEPAD priorities. It includes direct assistance to these two bodies as, for example, in the formulation of the Africa Energy Vision 2030 (which the AUC leads) and in the provision of capacity building for regional integration (proposed by the NEPAD Secretariat). In ICT, the sub-cluster played an important role in the adoption by the AU of the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE) as its ICT Action plan for the next 10 years. ARAPKE, which is part of the Ten Year AU Capacity Building Programme, was developed by ECA with full support of all sub-cluster members and was endorsed by the European Commission as its cooperation framework with Africa and subsequently approved funding of three of the ARAPKE projects for the amount of US\$ 9,912,270. Other major actions by the sub-cluster include the implementation of the Connect Africa Summit Goals led by ITU with involvement of all sub-cluster members and the international private sector as well as the development of harmonized regulatory frameworks and e-strategies for RECs to enable their respective countries enter the Knowledge Economy smoothly with compatible standards and guidelines. In terms of tangible results of these actions, model bills and guidelines on ICT have been adopted at RECs level, hence eliminating at the country level duplication of activities and re-inventing the wheels, thus saving resources and time. In the context of ARAPKE, templates for project design and project selection criteria were approved at the regional level, thus facilitating submission of ICT projects to partners worldwide. The transport sub-cluster continuously supported the AUC in developing a consolidated plan of action for the transport sector in the various modes by making substantive contributions at the concept and formulation stages.

A critical assessment of ECA's support to NEPAD in the context of the RCM shows that:

- Participating UN Agencies and African regional and sub-regional organizations should be more committed to the RCM process and ensure that desirable outcomes and impacts are registered. The establishment and operationalization of a monitoring and evaluation framework should help in assessing outcomes and impacts.
- UN agencies and organizations should be willing to surrender part of their individual identities to be subsumed under one identity. Regular communication, information sharing and consultation as well as joint planning are key success factors that should be enhanced.

- Clusters should endeavor to systematically mainstream crosscutting issues into their activities and report on it.
- Experience sharing and knowledge networking among clusters should be promoted. The knowledge generation and networking platform established by the RCM Secretariat provides an important opportunity for ensuring this. The experience during the 9th meeting of the RCM whereby a pre-RCM meeting was organized for the clusters has proved to be fruitful in that it enabled the clusters prepare themselves and come up with coordinated actions.
- The Advocacy and Communication Cluster has demonstrated that the effective functioning of a cluster is determined to a large extent by the dynamism of the convener and to a lesser extent by the location.
- Clusters should prepare and submit their respective business plans based on the outline provided to facilitate their consolidation into one RCM business plan. The business plan would provide a clear direction where the RCM is heading and promote accountability and sharing of responsibilities, facilitate the mobilization of resources and enhance delivery, as well as impact.
- The RCM Secretariat located in ECA should be well resourced to effectively execute its strategic coordination role in the context of its expanded mandate. Related to this is the question of ensuring that clusters adequately respond to the requests of the Secretariat.
- Additional resources (human and financial) should be mobilized to fully implement recommendations of RCM meetings.
- UN agencies and organizations should find a way of reconciling the different priorities of cluster members with those related to the RCM, given their accountability to different organizations. They should be able to ensure that work undertaken in the context of the RCM or its clusters is recognized and rewarded by individual organizations.

### **Institutional Support by ECA to the NEPAD Secretariat**

ECA enjoys a close working relationship with the NEPAD Secretariat on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat in 2006. ECA's programmes reflect the nature and scope of its support to the NEPAD programme, including analytical studies, advisory services, policy advocacy and capacity building. ECA participates actively in meetings organized by the NEPAD Secretariat and provides technical advice and inputs. It regularly holds consultations with and attends meetings of the NEPAD Secretariat and vice versa. Within this framework, ECA plans to support the NEPAD Secretariat with at least one technical expert in the very near future.

### **Advocacy work by ECA in support of African development**

As part of its biennial programme of work, ECA carried out a number of activities supporting Africa's development. The session of ECA's Annual Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development held from 26 March to 2 April, 2008 was jointly organized, for the first time, with the African Union Commission. The conference deliberated on the development challenges of the continent. The meetings of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) prepared by ECA's five SROs also provided an important platform to advocate for Africa's development. ECA produces different types of publications covering various sectors

of development advocating for Africa's development. Its flagship publications such as the Economic Report on Africa (ERA), Assessing Regional Integration in Africa (ARIA), African Governance Report (AGR), provide a holistic appraisal of where the continent stands in terms of its economic performance, integration and governance agenda. These publications have been used as important sources of data and information, as well as for policy recommendations for the continent's development.

African Development Forum (ADF) devoted to the theme of gender equality took place from 19 November to 21 November, 2008. It attracted participants from the government sector, Regional Economic Communities, community-based organizations, research and academic institutions, media networks, the private sector, civil society organizations, development partners, the diaspora and others. The record attendance and diversity of participants at this forum underscore the great importance of the forum and of the issues affecting women in Africa.

Technical cooperation activities such as workshops, seminars and training courses contribute to enhancing awareness on the many sectoral issues under the focus of ECA. Advisory missions are also carried out to raise awareness, build capacity and garner support for the implementation of programmes and activities at national, regional and sub-regional levels.

As a strategic partner of the APRM process, ECA promoted international understanding of the APRM concept and the peer review process by (i) providing guidance for the review of the APRM methodology and instruments, (ii) advocating for the integration of APRM National Plans of Action (PoA) with existing national development strategies, and providing a strategic financing framework for the PoA by devising a costing, (iii) making presentations at many forums, and (iv) actively participating in country review missions.

In the context of its NEPAD Support Unit, ECA established the knowledge-networking platform in July 2008 and enabled e-discussion around the RCM thematic areas for increased coordination and collaboration. Currently, there is an ongoing e-discussion on the theme "Integration of NEPAD into the Processes and Structures of the AU" organized in response to the request of the AU Commission NEPAD Coordinating Unit. The platform is also used to facilitate and enhance knowledge sharing and collaboration among and between clusters.

ECA's flagship publications – the *Economic Report on Africa* and *Survey on Economic and Social Development in Africa* as well as *Assessing Regional Integration in Africa*, are prepared in collaboration with the AU Commission, supporting NEPAD's agenda on growth and poverty reduction. Its annual conference of African ministers of finance, planning and economic development, is organized in collaboration with the AU Commission, discussing and making recommendations on key development issues in Africa, in line with the NEPAD agenda. In collaboration with the AU Commission, WTO, the AfDB and others, ECA contributes to raising awareness on the importance of trade for African development, identifying priorities, highlighting the need for effective financing and strengthening coordination and consensus on African negotiating positions.