

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

### **Support to NEPAD**

#### **Period of Report: 2005 to 2006**

As the regional arm of the United Nations, ECA carries out analytical studies, advisory services, policy advocacy, capacity-building programmes and operational activities. ECA's convening power also allows it to mobilize stakeholders to discuss and implement actions in relation to Africa's development agenda. At the core of the objectives and priorities of NEPAD, as well as ECA's work programme, are poverty reduction, promotion of peace and security, promotion of good governance, regional integration in Africa and measures to help reverse Africa's marginalization in global trade and ensure environmental sustainability.

#### **Support for areas relevant to the implementation of NEPAD**

##### ***Monitoring and analysis of macroeconomic policy for poverty reduction***

ECA, through its Economic and Social Policy Division (ESPD), has been at the forefront of implementing two kinds of activities: developing PRSPs and pro-poor growth analytical work, including research on issues of mainstreaming employment, education, health and youth in national development policies; and the creation of the Learning Group on Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP-LG), which provides a forum for actors in the PRSP process and for member States to share experiences, coordinate their activities, assess progress, and build common positions. Innovative ways to improve the African HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis situation in the context of severe fiscal constraints have been proposed. ECA has also produced useful analytical tools to help countries in their activities in domestic resource mobilization and private capital flows. The issues of debt relief also feature prominently in the Commission's work.

##### ***Trade and regional integration***

ECA is implementing various programmes to enhance member States' capacities for effective participation in bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations. ECA's activities include training workshops and High-Level Brainstorming Sessions that bring together experts and negotiators to build common positions and strengthen the negotiating position of African countries. The Commission conducts analytical studies and proposes policy recommendations and strategies to improve competitiveness and market access, mainstream trade in development policies at the national, sub-regional and regional levels, and speed up regional integration on the continent. The work of ECA in the area of trade and market access has been feeding directly to the positions of African countries at the on-going Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations. The work of the Africa Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) is adding value to trade-related research, training and information dissemination, and assisting member States to mainstream trade issues in development policies and programmes.

## ***Transport***

ECA has played an active role in this sector, through its extensive work within the framework of the UN Transport and Communications Decades, and through its continued assistance to successor arrangements to the Decade programmes, including the NEPAD infrastructure component. ECA is actively involved in monitoring the implementation of the “Yamoussoukro Decision for Air Transport Liberalization”. The Commission has also been instrumental in the preparation and adoption of competition rules for air transport liberalization in the different RECs.

As chair of the “Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Programme” (SSATP), the Commission has been working with SSATP to encourage countries to adopt sound transport policies and strategies, as well as institutional and financial reforms. ECA organised a workshop on trade and the promotion of major international transport facilitation conventions in Bamako, Mali from 12 to 17 November 2005.

In particular, ECA’s Office in Central Africa has been very proactive since 2005 in assisting ECCAS and CEMAC to prepare and adopt a consensual transport development plan and introduced the Geo Information System (GIS) for projects identified by member States. The system will help development partners to assess the physical road projects associated with the economic and socio development factors.

## ***Sustainable development***

Through its Sustainable Development Division (SDD), ECA is playing an active role in sectors such as agriculture, population, human settlements, water resources, energy, science and technology and issues relating to the environment. ECA has partnered since 2001 with the AU/NEPAD Secretariat to develop and implement the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). In this regard, ECA played an active role in the five regional implementation meetings, and the Accra Summit in August 2005 that resulted in the adoption of the Post Accra Action Plan.

ECA is actively involved in monitoring and coordinating the implementation of African Water Vision 2025. In this respect, ECA has successfully organized the Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference (PANAFCON). Of particular interest has been the support to the African Union Commission for preparing the Sirte Declaration on Agriculture and Water; the African Minister’s Council on Water (AMCOW); and the River/Lake Basin Organizations such as Lake Chad and Niger.

The Commission has spearheaded the efforts of UN agencies to establish UN Energy/Africa, a collaborative inter-agency mechanism in support of the NEPAD Energy Agenda. Activities implemented to date include the development of a UN/ Energy/Africa web information sharing and clearinghouse forum; the development of the first mini/micro hydropower capacity building and investment project in Africa; the implementation of an African Stakeholders’ Policy Dialogue Forum; and joint programming between IAEA and ECA for training programmes on capacity building in Integrated Resource Planning.

In the area of Science and Technology (S&T), the Commission, under the leadership of UNESCO as convener, provides active support to the NEPAD S&T Action Plan, as well as

monitoring AU/NEPAD developments in areas of science, technology and innovation policy; and the African Green Revolution and biotechnology.

### ***Information and Communication Technology (ICT)***

Major activities carried out by ECA in this area deal with the STAP section on “Programme to enhance Africa’s Participation in the Global ICT Policy and Decision-making Forums”. Consequently, ECA convenes and facilitates meetings of the sub-cluster, encourages online discussion for members to exchange ideas and coordinate activities on ICT issues. As an outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), ECA will work with the AU in implementing the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy. ECA also facilitated various negotiations on contentious WSIS issues faced by the Africa Group and between the Africa Group and other continents. Some of the concrete results of the ECA facilitation and involvement in this area have been: the adoption by the WSIS of the Digital Solidarity Fund as a NEPAD initiative, and the adoption by the African ICT Ministers of the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE), developed by ECA as Africa’s Roadmap on ICTs up to 2015.

### ***Gender Mainstreaming***

ECA has developed the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI) designed to measure relative gender equality in member States. This index has so far been tested in 12 countries, to be extended to 15 more countries by next year. The Commission is actively assisting countries to mainstream gender in various sectors through workshops, advisory services and its leadership and catalytic role in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

### **Response to specific requests from NEPAD organs and structures**

ECA established an APR Support Unit, which coordinates all ECA’s APRM-related activities, including support to the APR Secretariat and technical assistance to APR-participating countries as necessary. By December 2005, ECA had participated in the 9 APR country support missions, 2 country follow-up support missions and the 3 review missions organized by the APR Secretariat. ECA continues to support the process in many ways, including reviewing and producing APRM-related documents; country self-assessment reports, country programmes of action; background papers.

### **Innovative approaches for funding the priorities of NEPAD**

Since the start of its strategic partnership programme, ECA has managed to obtain a shift in the funding modalities - away from partner support for specific projects to “budget support” for its overall work programme and for specific themes or sectors. This shift has provided the Commission significant flexibility to respond to emerging priorities of NEPAD and demand of member States.

In addition to collective efforts, individual programmes have taken steps to find innovative approaches to fund key activities of NEPAD. ECA has been strongly advocating for the creation of an investment climate that is conducive to increased mobilization of domestic

resources through public-private partnerships for investment in key sectors. In addition, in partnership with other UN agencies and regional organizations (especially the ADB), ECA has contributed to establishing financing mechanisms in NEPAD priority areas (e.g. the African Water Facility). The Investment Forums organized by the ECA's SROs in October 2005 through March 2006 also raised awareness and advocated for resource mobilization in favor of NEPAD priorities.

### **Challenges and constraints**

Despite efforts towards budget support over the past years, sector and thematic support represent a substantial proportion of the total extra-budgetary resources of the Commission. For the period of 2005-2007, ECA received firm funding commitments of US\$11 million. Of this amount, only US\$1.47 million is flexible budget support. The direct consequence of this is a decline in the Commission's ability to respond to emerging critical needs of member States.

This state of affair is compounded with the many factors inhibiting ECA in its effort to coordinate UN overall support to NEPAD. Clearly, the lack of coordinated approach among UN agencies, programs and funds for resource mobilization in support of the NEPAD priority areas reduce the overall performance of UN support. In addition, there seems to be insufficient focus on promoting the mobilization of private domestic resources for investment in key NEPAD priority areas. The un-coordinated efforts at mobilizing resources in support of the same priorities through the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat add to the already low level of existing resources at regional and country levels.

The Regional Economic Communities (RECs), as the official implementing institutions for NEPAD initiatives, lack financial as well as human resources and; therefore, cannot lead the articulation and implementation of priority sub-regional programs/projects within the NEPAD framework.

### **Advocacy and awareness-raising**

ECA has made progress in several areas. In the field of publishing ECA outputs, a committee has been set up to ensure better coordination and planning. At the level of outreach and public information, a lot of effort is being made to improve dissemination lists, to encourage staff to go for e-discussions and information sharing. ECA websites have built impressive traffic. In 2005 the number of site visitors increased by over 45%. ECA continues to render assistance to NEPAD communications people in the area of capacity building, publications, and video/radio. With the active collaboration of OSAA, UNDP, DPI, UNESCO, and ECA, about 120 journalists will be trained during the course of 2006 across Africa. For the rest of 2006, ECA will continue to develop and maintain a website on NEPAD, including the e-discussion list for each of the seven thematic clusters with the objective to improve intra-cluster dialogue and facilitate cross sectoral programming and implementation within clusters. Collaboration with other agencies from the inception of the Advocacy and Communication Cluster will be strengthened.