



United Nations  
Economic Commission for Africa  
Office for North Africa

Consultative meeting in support to the activities  
of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM-AFRICA)

Rabat, Morocco, 24 - 25 June 2014

**Consultation on Strengthening  
and Coordinating of Supports to UMA**

**Introductory Note**

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## 1. Context and objectives of the meeting

By resolutions 57/2, 57/7 and 61/296, the United Nations' General Assembly enshrined the New Partnership for the Development of Africa (NEPAD) as the action and support framework for the development of the continent, and called the organizations and institutions of the United Nations System (UN System) to support the implementation process of projects related to this initiative<sup>1</sup>, mainly through the elaboration of common projects at the regional level. A regional coordination mechanism was established for that purpose, and articulated in nine sub- thematic groups, in line with the sectoral priorities as outlined in the NEPAD agenda:

- (i) Development of water, energy, transport and ICT infrastructures ;
- (ii) Governance ;
- (iii) Environment, population and urbanization ;
- (iv) Science and technology ;
- (v) Peace and security ;
- (vi) Agriculture, food security and rural development ;
- (vii) Human resources development, employment and HIV/AIDS ;
- (viii) Industry, trade and access to market ;
- (ix) Awareness raising and communication.

In the same vein, the resolution 62/277 of the General assembly enshrined the "UN Delivering as one" initiative, as recommended in the 2006 report of the high level panel on United Nations system-wide coherence. The general objective is to strengthen the synergy between activities of the system agencies and bodies to optimize actions while reducing fragmentation and costs in connection with the various partnerships implemented to support development efforts of the member States.

The main goal of the RCM-Africa is to strengthen coherence and synergy between the activities of UN System agencies and other partner institutions that support the AU-NEPAD Programme. ECA is in charge of the coordination and secretariat of this mechanism.

Hence, the annual meetings of the RCM-Africa held between 2003 and 2008 re-identified the thematic groups, to align their programmes with the objectives and priorities established for the continent within NEPAD. In particular, the 2006 meeting highlighted the need to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the UN System, the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat, AFDB Group and the regional economic communities (RECs). It reaffirmed the importance of the thematic groups (clusters) to enable the coherence of support programs to the AU/NEPAD, the need for better alignment with the priorities of this programme, and underlined the lack of coordination of actions of all actors in the continent's sub-regions. Thus, it was recommended the establishment of sub-regional coordination mechanisms, given the role of RECs in the development and integration agenda of the continent as a whole.

To implement this recommendation, coordination mechanisms are progressively being established upon the initiative of ECA sub-regional offices, with the participation of other institutions and bodies which support the African RECs.

The organization of this first consultative meeting for the region of North Africa is planned in this perspective. Its ambition is to suggest and elaborate a consultative action framework to support the main REC in the sub-region –namely the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) - which includes five countries: Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia.

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1 Resolutions 57/2 and 57/7 of September and November 2002

The elaboration of such a framework should result from the following analytical approach:

- A shared analysis of the development issues and challenges in the sub-region,
- A consensus on priority actions for the Maghreb integration,
- The choice of areas of intervention in the medium term
- Identification of action methods,
- The definition of a coordination mechanism between partners.

## 2. Integration and development challenges in North Africa

An analysis of the prospects of the Maghreb integration was performed in the framework of a consultative meeting held in January 2013 by ECA, UMA institutions, affiliated bodies and other NGOs in the sub-region. The aim was to participate in the ongoing thoughts and efforts to accelerate the process to establish an integrated economic area in North Africa. The meeting had to (i) analyze development challenges in North Africa and the medium term priorities for the regional integration, given the political transformations occurring since 2011, and (ii) providing decision makers, facilitators of the Maghreb project and their partners with approaches to thoughts and action, for better efficiency and visibility of the regional cooperation process.

The specific objectives were mainly:

- To discuss the optimum conditions to reactivate the Maghreb integration project and priority focuses for action for a more sustained process and tangible progress towards the creation of an integrated economic area;
- To draw up recommendations to the attention of actors and partners to provide a joint and efficient support for accelerating the regional integration process.

The summary document<sup>2</sup> of this meeting will be taken into account in the agenda of the consultative meeting. It outlines the issues and current limits of the integration process in North Africa, as well as development challenges in the sub-region. The following developments give a substantive summary of this document.

### (i) A poorly integrated regional area.

The main findings of the meeting show that the Maghreb integration project remains faced with many obstacles, maintaining the fragmentation of the economies of the sub-region and impairing a part of the growth potential. After two decades from the signature of Marrakech Treaty, the UMA free trade area never went further the planning stage and the North African market is currently one of the least dynamic markets in the Continent, with an intra-regional trade of 3,35% of the total imports of its member states<sup>3</sup>. The achievements in terms of free movement of people are limited and reversible, the community law is insufficiently known and implemented, and the institutional mechanism is hampered primarily by the irregular meetings of the deliberating bodies and the insufficient human and financial means mobilized. However, and despite the delay, the issues and objectives of the Maghreb integration are still relevant, given the nature and similarities of the development challenges with which Maghreb countries are faced. Indeed, the sub-region holds most of the structural factors for a dynamic market (per capita income, geographical continuity, transport infrastructure, cultural and linguistic affinities, etc.). These findings are combined with a willingness to relaunch the regional dynamics, which is gradually shown in the political debate. However, to be relevant, this new impetus should take into account the main challenges of the sub-region, resulting from the new political context and the structure of the economies of member states.

2 ECA-NA; consultative meeting with UMA and IGOs in North Africa on the prospects of the Maghreb integration within the new socio-political context in the sub-region; summary document; January 2013.

3 Report on the economic and social conditions in North Africa, ECA-NA, 2014.

**(ii) At the socio-political scale, the new environment resulting from the 2011 mutations leads to the issue of the relation of a new and more inclusive governance and the strengthening of the rule of law.**

The changes occurring were underpinned by a strong demand of peoples for a better political, economic and social governance, more democracy and decent jobs. The early reforms initiated by states to address these events focused on the expansion of spaces of freedom, the opening of the political field, the establishment of new institutions and the organization of pluralistic and more transparent elections. This change in the political environment will necessarily be accompanied by helping citizens learn the culture of the rule of law, the proper use by all of public freedoms, acceptance of the rules of democracy and respect of human rights. Countries in the sub-region will be asked to promote such programs of capacity-building and development, for both the state bodies and the civil society actors.

Furthermore, the developments of the 2011 political crises were accompanied by an escalation of security risks in the major part of the Sahel-Saharan region bordering the Maghreb countries. This change carries the potential of questioning some achievements in terms of free movement of people and facilitation of interstate trade, including through the partial or occasional land border closures, the increase of road checks within the regional space or the direct threats to the security of persons and goods. It could also delay the resilience of the regional tourism industry and reduce -to varying extents- the investment attractiveness.

At the economic, social and environmental scales, six (6) major challenges should be taken into account, having the characteristic of being -to varying degrees- common to all the countries of the sub-region.

**(iii) Economies remain poorly diversified.**

The Maghreb countries have engaged in policies to transform the structure of their economies since the 60s and 70s through import-substitution strategies (Morocco, Tunisia) or heavy industrialization strategies (Algeria). This effort continued throughout the decades from 80s to 2000, and the share of industry and services' sectors developed favorably in most states, mainly through a dynamic relocation of labor-intensive activities from European countries. But despite this progress, primary products are still the main drivers of growth in North Africa. In Algeria, for example, oil sector represents over one third of GDP and 96.6% of exports; in Mauritania, primary and extractive industries account for about 45.8% of GDP. Similarly, crude oil and other commodities dominate the structure of the regional foreign trade. In proportionate terms, their significance increased during the decade 2001-2010, from 75.6 to 79.3% of total exports in the whole region<sup>4</sup>. The evolution of national indexes of exports, imports and diversification confirms this structural weakness of the North African economies, compared to other developing economies. The volume of exports index in particular has made little progress between 2001 and 2010, from 97.5 to 121.1, vs. 232.4 for developing Asia<sup>5</sup>.

**(iv) The significant growth in GDP over the last five years has had a limited impact on employment and the reduction of social inequalities.**

Labor markets of the sub-region countries show a relatively low activity rate of the population, on average 46 to 51%, against 71% in the European Union, quantitative and qualitative imbalances between supply and demand, higher unemployment and under-employment among young people and women, especially in urban areas, a predominance of informal employment and a steady rise in the unemployment rate among graduates. With an average rate of 11% in 2012<sup>6</sup>, the sub-region continues to experience one of the highest unemployment rates in the world.

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4 Reports on the economic and social conditions; ECA-NA; 2008-2013.

5 UNCTAD Stat; Database; updated in December 2011

6 Country Data (ECA-AN annual survey- 2012), world labor trends 2012 ILO

#### **(v) The correlation between youth unemployment and the escalation of extremism.**

Access to education has increased significantly in North Africa over the past three decades, but education system provides a training insufficiently geared towards the economy needs. The high levels of unemployment result mainly from the steady increase in the number of first-time job-seekers and the lack of intermediation or support services to youth entrepreneurship. The resulting high proportion of inactive youth (approximately 27%)<sup>7</sup>, combined with an unattractive or poorly diversified leisure supply, results in higher vulnerability of youth, expressed by the rise in risk-prone behavior in the form of petty crime, illegal immigration, and extremism under the cover of religion. In addition to the difficulty of finding a job, there is, over time, a lack of involvement of young people in the process of policy making, including in areas of interest specific thereto. Education to citizenship -where it is initiated- has often not been consolidated by the provision of a space for intergenerational dialogue, nor adequate representation of youth in family, community or state decision-making bodies.

#### **(vi) Dependence on imports of basic foodstuffs.**

Agricultural models developed so far have focused on extensive agriculture, with yields that remained generally low, about half the average of global yields for cereals. The coverage of cereal needs by domestic production can significantly vary from one year to another. In an average year, it stood at 30% in Mauritania, 40% in Tunisia, 60% in Morocco, 30 to 35% in Algeria and less than 10% in Libya (World Development Indicators, 2011). According to the FAO<sup>8</sup>, "even in years of good harvest, the countries of North Africa are heavily dependent on grain purchases in the international market to cover their consumption needs". The region thus has a structural cereal deficit and its supply of basic foodstuffs is based very heavily on imports. North Africa alone accounts for 16-17% of world imports of wheat and 10 to 12% for corn. This dependence is expected to grow in the upcoming years, given the population growth and the lack of productivity.

#### **(vii) Desertification and adaptation to climate change.**

North Africa is a predominantly arid and semi-arid area, prone to recurrent droughts and large spatial and inter-annual rainfall variability. Desertification affects about 85% of lands that are increasingly threatened by erosion and unsustainable agricultural practices. Agricultural irrigation uses more than 80% of all surface water and groundwater and the non-agricultural water demand is growing fast. The sub-region is also among the most vulnerable areas to climate change (IPCC, 2007). The General Circulation Models (GCMs) indicate a likely regional warming of about 2°C to 4°C during the 21st century, especially with more than 1°C warming between 2000 and 2020<sup>9</sup>. Extreme climate events (droughts, heat waves, floods) could become more frequent, with an acceleration of climate cycles and lower average rainfall could reach 10% in the next 50 years (World Bank, 2008) and induce in some countries (Algeria, Morocco) a decrease by 40% of agricultural production in dryland farming (World Bank & FAO, 2009).

#### **(viii) The challenge of a regional energy transition.**

North Africa presents the paradox of a sub-region with abundant and diverse energy resources (oil, gas, solar, wind) but with a power consumption increasingly higher than the electricity supply capacity<sup>10</sup>. Flows of exports and imports of energy products are still dominated by trade with Europe, and according to several estimates (World Bank 2010, AUPTDE 2010), all countries in the sub-region have to double their electricity production capacity over the period 2010-2020 to cope with a significant increase in their domestic

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African Economic Outlook, ECA, AFDB, OECD, World Economic Outlook, April 2012 IMF

7 ECA-NA ; Report of the regional and international agenda; December 2012

8 FAO : Harvest forecasts and food situation N°4 ; December 2013

9 IPCC, 4th report (2007).

10 AFDB : Unlocking North Africa's potential through regional integration ; May 2012

demand, mostly covered by fossil fuels. Electrical interconnections do exist between several Maghreb countries (Libya-Tunisia, Tunisia-Algeria, Algeria-Morocco), but electricity trade is still very limited (5% of the available capacity between Algeria and Tunisia, 16% between Algeria and Morocco), and national grids are more synchronized with those of European countries. In addition, ECA<sup>11</sup> notices that despite the abundance of renewable energy sources (RE), their share in the regional energy mix is still marginal, below 3% of the current electricity generation capacity.

A sustainable response to these multiple challenges will require that UMA countries (i) implement economic and social reforms at the national level for a greater diversification of the production systems and (ii) a revitalization of the integration project to take advantage of the opportunities of an expanded market and common or harmonized sectoral policies. This announced relaunch of the Maghreb integration process should be part of this perspective. However, its effectiveness depends on an appropriate definition of priorities, mobilization of resources in line with ambitions and a more sustained commitment of all actors in Maghreb integration and partners.

### 3. Strategic areas to stimulate the Maghreb integration project

The consultation meeting in January 2013 has identified four priority areas and two cross-cutting focuses on which efforts should dwell on the short and medium term (five years), to give a new impetus and visibility to the Maghreb project.

*The first priority area is mobility of factors among Member States.* The stimulation of the Maghreb integration process should result primarily in the implementation of structural parameters of a regional market, namely a free trade area, facilitation of trade and the free movement of persons. The scheme of lifting tariff and nontariff barriers to interstate trade should be accompanied with implementation tools (rules of origin, documentary evidence, equalization mechanisms) that meet the conditions of production companies in the sub-region and the concerns of all partner states. To be efficient, this FTA will necessarily have a wide scope going beyond the limits of existing trade agreements, and strengthened by a regional program to reduce the costs of cross-border transactions and the progressive lifting of hurdles to the free movement of persons.

*The second priority should be youth employment and labor mobility.* Despite their large number, young people still face several constraints to their participation in the development process, especially due to a lack of adequate training to the economy needs, job insecurity, or difficult access to fund self-entrepreneurship. The sensitive and common characteristic to all countries of this issue of young graduates employability justifies the need for a regional employment strategy structured around the following components: (i) a gradual and joint review of the national training curricula to adapt them to the economy needs, (ii) gradual harmonization of curricula, together with a mutual recognition of diplomas, and (iii) a synergy of skills and complementarities with intra Maghreb mobility of workers that help regularly matching migratory interstate flows with the real needs of national labor markets.

*The implementation of the agricultural strategy and the sub-regional plan against desertification PASR-LCD.* The 2030 Maghreb agricultural vision and the 2011-2020 Action Plan adopted in December 2010 at the 16th session of the Ministerial Committee for Food Security have identified several areas of cooperation, including: scientific research, sustainable management of natural resources, improving productivity, access to market and investment. The existence of the vision and action plan is a good step, however they have not yet been broken down into regional programs. Priorities over the medium term should focus particularly on:

- Alignment of the national programs with the 2030 Maghreb vision;
- Identification and implementation of regional programs with high integrating impact;

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11 ECA-NA ; Framework paper of the regional policy for the development of renewable energies ; 2013

- The establishment of a regional mechanism for monitoring activities and sharing the results of scientific and technological research;
- The implementation of the PASR-LCD.

The fourth priority should be the establishment of a regional electricity market. The energy sector, in particular 'Electricity' and 'renewable energy', aims to be one of the main catalysts for the dynamics of the Maghreb integration. The increase in local consumption of electricity (+ 6-8% per year)<sup>12</sup>, the gradual depletion of fossil energy sources, the implications of the sustainable development agenda regarding the reduction of carbon emissions and the strong demand from the European Union for clean energy from North Africa argue for an energy transition that would be a major driver of growth, economic diversification, technology transfer and job creation. According to AFDB (2012)<sup>13</sup>, the installation in the sub-region of a production capacity of 20 GW of solar thermal energy would generate a job creation of about 235,280 annum-person. Priority actions in the short and medium term should include:

- The gradual harmonization of regulations and codes of grids;
- The acceleration of the process of elaborating a Maghreb renewable energy strategy that promotes the emergence of regional industrial clusters;
- The development of common regional programs, particularly in the field of scientific research dedicated to renewable energies.

The re-assessment of these four sectoral policies should be accompanied by capacity building and greater functionality of the institutional framework. This prerequisite should be broken down into four areas: raising the level of human and financial resources of UMA Secretariat General and affiliated organizations; regular meetings of the deliberating bodies and the devolution of decision-making powers; coordination at the national level of actions of the authorities in charge of community programs and greater involvement of non-state actors, including the private sector, in national and regional processes of elaboration and management of Community law.

The devolution of decision-making powers would be coupled with decentralization of powers by *promoting functional cooperation between other actors*. The Maghreb integration, in its socio-economic dimension, should be further supported by actors which are the parastatal sector, the private sector and civil society, with various forms of partnership, ranging from the simple coordination of programs to the implementation of joint projects in the field of market services in particular (energy, transport and logistics, telecommunications, banking and insurance). This functional cooperation would be borne by corporatist networks of Maghreb actors, already existing or to be created (Maghreb Union of Employers (UME), Maghreb Union of Banks (UMB), MU for Packaging, MU of Farmers ...), specialized IGOs (COMELEC, BMICE, Maghreb Academy) or sectoral partnerships between autonomous semi-public institutions. In the same vein, networking of civil society organizations dealing with sustainable development, good governance and strengthening the rule of law would facilitate the formulation of common responses to the challenges of a coordinated management of the regional public goods, the participation of youth in development, the deepening of democratic culture and human rights.

<sup>12</sup> ECA-NA ; Renewable energies sector: Current situation and prospects ; September 2012.

<sup>13</sup> AFDB : Unlocking North Africa's potential through regional integration ; May 2012.



## 4. Ongoing partnerships with UMA

Without prejudice to the additional information to be provided within the framework of the meeting, we notice that several institutions, including AFDB, IDB, WB, FAO and UNECA have initiated support initiatives or partnerships with UMA in many strategic fields such as the development of intra-regional trade, infrastructure, food security, the fight against desertification, micro-finance or capacity building. The 2012-2013 support of the World Bank covered in particular a study and the organization of an outcome workshop on trade facilitation and infrastructure between Maghreb countries. Over the period 2010-2013, cooperation with AFDB focused on several areas, such as the development of renewable energies, the institutional arrangements (study on the establishment of the Economic Maghreb Community), ICT legislative frameworks and statistical capacities of the Secretariat general. The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) funded some studies, particularly on the situation of young people in Maghreb and the development of microcredit in the sub-region.

Within the framework of its support mission to the African countries for the implementation of the continent's integration agenda, ECA concluded with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) multi-year programmes of work (MYP), that will serve as planning and programming frameworks in the medium-term for the priority cooperation areas, to allow predictability and effectiveness of the Commission's action. In this context, the ECA Office for North Africa and the Secretariat general of the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) have signed a memorandum of understanding on January 14, 2008 establishing a multi-year programme of work (MYP). This MYP brings up a formal partnership framework and identifies action fields and activities to be implemented, on the basis of a joint identification of the challenges in the sub-region and barriers to integration. The strategic objective of the 2014-2015 Programme -the third of its kind- is to strengthen the capacity of UMA for accelerating the agenda of economic integration in North Africa, with a more sustained support to the efforts of the Secretariat general for the elaboration and implementation of its priority strategies and programs<sup>14</sup>. Three (3) thematic focuses were taken into account for this purpose:

- Strengthening the institutional framework and capacity of the Secretariat general of UMA;
- Accelerating the regional integration, in particular promoting regional value chains, developing intra-regional trade, funding integration programs;
- Mainstreaming policies of 'Gender', 'Youth' and 'Migration' in the regional agenda.

These three areas of cooperation have been broken down into eleven (11) activities or groups of activities corresponding both to the needs identified jointly by the two institutions and to the key areas of action of ECA. For the 2014-2015 biennium, the substantive content of this program could provide a basis for a credible work for a wider partnership framework, taking into account the additional area of competency of all institutions that could support UMA and other medium-term priorities of the Maghreb agenda. In the process leading to the establishment of a Maghreb Economic Community, other areas of cooperation have indeed been identified as priorities by the UMA General Secretariat for the period 2013-2018<sup>15</sup>, based on the results of the 31st session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Union, held in Rabat (Morocco) on May 5, 2013.

They focus mainly on:

- The management of water resources and adaptation to climate change;
- Land and marine transport;
- The reform of national health systems;
- Education sciences and scientific research;
- Harmonization of the legislation on insurance and the development of micro-finance.

14 Multi-year Programme of work 2014-2015 ECA-UMA ; May 2013

15 UMA General Secretariat ; Memorandum on the funding system ; July 2013

## 5. Draft of a regional platform to strengthen the support to UMA

Based on the aforementioned analyses, and subject to confirmation by participants from different institutions, **a common platform in support to UMA** could be structured around the following seven thematic groups.

| Areas of cooperation and thematic groups                                  | Priority focuses for 2014-2015   | Agencies and partner institutions                  | Coordinating institution |
|---|--|--|--------------------------|
| <b>Building institutional capacities</b>                                  | Statistical capacities of the Secretariat general<br>Support to the establishment of the UME secretariat<br>Support to civil society actors and promotion of functional cooperations                                   | ECA, AFDB, IDB, UNCTAD, WTO, ICC                   |                          |
| <b>Trade – Industry – Access to market</b>                                | FTA/UMA Project and capacity building about the rules of origin<br>Promotion of regional value chains<br>Financing integration<br>Trade facilitation<br>Harmonizing insurance legislations<br>Developing micro-finance | ECA, AFDB, CNUCED, ICC, WTO, MDG, UNIDO, ICDT, IDB |                          |
| <b>Agriculture- Food security – Rural Development</b>                     | Support to the implementation of the agricultural vision 2011-2020 Action Plan   | FAO, ECA, UNCCD, OSS, IDB, CR/UNCT                 |                          |
| <b>Environment, Population and Urbanization</b>                           | Support to the implementation of the PASR-LCD<br>Water resources management<br>Adaptation to climate change  | UNCCD, UNFP, IOM, UNEP, CR/UNCT, OSS, WB           |                          |
| <b>Development of human resources – Employment – Public health</b>        | Training and Youth employment – Migration -Gender ;<br>Health policies reforms   | ILO, ECA, UN-Women, IOM, ILO, CR/UNCT              |                          |
| <b>Development of infrastructures of water, energy - Transports – ICT</b> | Connectivity through maritime and land Transport<br>Developing renewable energies<br>Support to the creation of an electricity regional market   | AFDB, IDB, WB, ITU, ECA, UNCTAD                    |                          |
| <b>Science and Technology</b>   | Support to cooperation on Education Sciences and scientific research   | ITU, WHO, UNESCO, CR/UNCT                          |                          |

As a reminder, the purpose of the consultative meeting is to discuss ways and approaches (i) to strengthen the support to UMA, and thus further support the regional integration process, and (ii) promote synergy and coordination between the actions of partners for greater effectiveness. This requires to align areas of action efficiently with the priorities of UMA, targeting activities and therefore a high level of resource mobilization.

Given the number of prospective partners, the diversity of their programming budget cycles and their action terms and procedures, identifying specific projects and activities to be implemented should be done at the initiative of UMA Secretariat on forward bases at least two years, without prejudice to any annual update to take into account any emerging issues. The preparation and presentation of this biennial programmatic matrix would be followed - within a period to be agreed- by the notification of partners' commitment intentions.

Intervention methods remain at the discretion of each partner: grants, co-financing, timely technical assistance, performing studies and sectoral analyzes, thematic publications, organization of expert group meetings, round tables, seminars, technical advisory services ... For activities within each thematic group, the partners will emphasize -as far as possible- common or joint initiatives: co-financing, funding/ technical expertise, distribution of tasks per component, etc.

## **6. Coordination of action in support to UMA**

This platform outlined as such is intended to be -in a first stage- the framework to strengthen and enable synergy of actions in support to UMA. Its implementation, assessment of achievements and periodic updating of the priority areas of action will require a mechanism for consultation and coordination between UMA and different partners.

This mechanism could have a three-tier architecture:

- i. An annual meeting with UMA and all agencies and institutions involved in the platform;
- ii. A network of focal points designated for that purpose by each agency and partner institution; and
- iii. An ad hoc liaison cell led by the ECA Office for North Africa and the UMA Secretariat general which jointly provide the secretariat of the coordination mechanism.

The annual meeting of agencies and partner institutions would be the consultative framework for planning and coordinating support activities to UMA. Its main missions are to (i) identify activities to be implemented in a year, based on forecasted assistance needs by UMA and the commitments of partners, (ii) identify opportunities of common or joint actions, (iii) develop advocacy for resource mobilization, (iv) assess the progress in implementing the planned activities, and (v) report annually to the Regional Coordination Mechanism-Africa.

The network of focal points would be the structure responsible for the animation of the coordination mechanism, the optimal synergy of resources and regular monitoring of planned activities. For this purpose, each focal point develops a biannual summary report of actions in which the institution is involved, mentioning the results achieved, difficulties encountered and any adjustments required to the implementation strategy. These reports are submitted to the leading institutions and to the ad hoc liaison cell for upgrade of information and the elaboration of an annual assessment report.

The ad hoc liaison cell performs the following tasks:

- Preparing an annual assessment report to the attention of the meeting of agencies and partner institutions, on the basis of semi-annual summaries provided by the focal points;
- Providing the secretariat for the annual meeting of agencies and partner institutions;

- Assisting the UMA Secretariat general in the identification of new assistance needs, to adjust the ongoing activities or elaborate future programs;
- Representing the platform and submitting reports to the RCM-Africa meetings.

The efficiency of the suggested coordination mechanism will depend on both the sustained commitment of the partner institutions, and the appropriation of leadership by UMA General Secretariat. This appropriation should be reflected in the choice of priority areas and actions, through a good responsiveness of the process of implementing support activities, the participation in advocacy for resource harnessing, as well as readiness to regularly inform stakeholders on the development of the Maghreb integration agenda.