



Coordinated United Nations support for the thematic programmes of the African Union

Introduction

1. The work of RCM-Africa is organized around the eight new clusters as adopted at its seventeenth session, in 2016. Issues of peace and security, governance and human rights will be reviewed in the context of the United Nations Office to the African Union, as agreed by the RCM-Africa stakeholders. The present report captures the major activities and achievements in the thematic cluster areas. Recommendations emerging from the report may be found in section [XXXXX] of the report on coordinated United Nations support at the subregional level (E/ECA/RCM/18/XXXXX), together with recommendations from other related reports.

I. Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industry, trade, agriculture and agro-processing and regional integration

A. Policy dialogue of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development on regional economic development

2. The dialogue was designed to consider issues pertinent to the advancement of the economies of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region, through deeper regional integration, cooperation for sustainable development and economic transformation. In the dialogue it was recommended that the IGAD secretariat should develop a comprehensive strategy on agribusiness to tap into the global agriculture value chain; should support its member States in their efforts to integrate Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in their national development plans and strategies, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); and should undertake the mapping of the major natural resources and their contribution to sustainable development in the region.

B. Strategy for the industrialization of Africa

3. ECA and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) have worked closely with the African Development Bank on the formulation of a strategy for the industrialization of Africa that takes into account advocacy, investment finance and technical assistance. The African Union Commission is also leading several cooperation initiatives with the regional economic communities on issues in support of inclusive and sustainable industrial development, such as: the regional centres of renewable energy and energy efficiency, with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC); the West Africa quality initiative, with ECOWAS; the regional programmes for industrial capacity upgrading at ECOWAS and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); and the Economic Partnership Agreements with the European Union.

C. Promotion of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

4. At the Commission for Social Development, the Department for Economic and Social Affairs continues to give prominence to, and raise awareness on, the importance of the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), along with the African Union Agenda 2063. The report by the Secretary-General to the Commission for Social Development at its fifty-fifth session highlights the progress that Africa has made in implementing various NEPAD programmes and priorities, such as reducing poverty and hunger, investing in agriculture, promoting employment creation, improving education and health outcomes, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and infrastructure development. The report notes that, despite some notable gains in these areas, key challenges remain, such as high levels of extreme poverty, hunger and unemployment, and increasing inequality.

D. Implementation of the CAADP/Malabo Declaration

5. Together with other international agencies and technical and financial partners, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency of the African Union Commission, the regional economic communities and national Governments provided advisory services and technical assistance in the three regional initiatives listed below.

1. End hunger by 2025

6. This initiative supports the implementation of the Malabo Declaration on Nutrition Security for Inclusive Economic Growth and Sustainable Development in Africa by strengthening programmes, coordination mechanisms, capacities and the delivery of actions needed to operationalize the commitments to end hunger by 2025. The support mainly focuses on the roll-out of the Declaration's implementation strategy and road map and the delivery of priority interventions, in particular with regard to intersectoral linkages and synergies.

2. Sustainable intensification of production and value chain development

7. This initiative focuses on food systems, recognizing the overarching role of the Malabo Declaration and its target to end hunger by 2025, reducing poverty through inclusive agricultural growth and transformation, and also boosting intra-African trade in agricultural commodities and services.

3. Building resilience in the drylands of Africa

8. The focus of this initiative is on supporting specific resilience actions, analysis, strategies, programmes and measurement at the national level; providing technical support for the implementation of the predictive livestock early warning system; strengthening the capacity of Governments to carry out price monitoring and analysis; supporting emergency response for crisis-affected households (following the effects of El Niño and other situations); building national capacities for evidence-based decision-making and policy planning for the Sustainable Development Goals and the results framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme.

E. Food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition

9. The World Food Programme (WFP) engaged with the NEPAD Agency to articulate a biennial work plan to build, develop and strengthen national and regional capacities on issues of food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition. The Africa Day of School Feeding, which is marked every year under the leadership of the African Union Commission, together with an increasing number of partners, and also the continent-wide study on school feeding that will be completed in mid-2017 are good examples of the support provided for the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme.

F. African Green Revolution Forum

10. IFAD is a strategic partner of the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF), designed as to ensure accountability in efforts towards the achievement of the Malabo Declaration and the results framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has approved a grant of \$300,000, as a contribution to the Forum, for a three-year cycle from 2015 to 2017.

11. The Forum is convened by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and other partners such as NEPAD, as a catalytic forum where commitments are made, good practices are shared, partnerships are formed and deals are conceived, to help stimulate increased public and private sector investments in African agriculture. Moreover, through a grant of \$325,000, IFAD supports the Land Policy Initiative, a joint programme of ECA, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank. IFAD is also collaborating directly with the NEPAD Agency in the context of the Platform for Agriculture Risk Management.

G. African Union Protocol on the Continental Free Movement of Persons and operationalization of the Horn of Africa initiative

12. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have been rendering technical support for the adoption and operationalization of protocols and initiatives in their areas of concern.

H. Capacity-building

13. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) provided training and capacity-building under the Djibouti Code of Conduct on the repression of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden. The technical assistance covered human and drug trafficking, and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. IMO facilitated a demonstration

project using a case study from Cameroon to show the potential role of maritime traffic facilitation in improving ship turnaround time in ports and enhancing economic activities and, in so doing, contributing to the reduction of poverty.

I. Blue economy

14. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), working in collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Indian Ocean Commission, implemented several technical assistance activities to improve understanding and management of the African oceans and coastal ecosystems, with a view to ensuring sustainable development and safety of the coastal populations. The primary focus of these activities was on capacity development for marine science and technology. These efforts and ocean observation proposals from various parts of the African coasts provide a basis for the development of a proposal for an African Ocean observing network. UNESCO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) organized a meeting of experts to develop a joint programme on the monitoring of potential harmful algal blooms in Africa. The aim of the programme is to generate regional baseline data, to develop an inventory of all harmful algal bloom events since 2010, to assess capacities and facilities to manage the effects of such blooms and to tabulate the monitoring of harmful algal blooms in Africa.

J. Maritime training and education

15. IMO provided a number of fellowships to nationals from least developed countries and small island developing States to undertake maritime training and education at the World Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden, and the International Maritime Law Institute in Malta.

II. Infrastructure development

16. The principal achievements in the period under review are, first, the technical assistance provided by IMO in the review and updating of the Somali Maritime Code, designed to bring the Code in line with current realities and industry best practices and thus facilitate the establishment of the Somali National Maritime Administration; and, second, input by ECA and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and their participation in the Secretary-General's Global Sustainable Transport Conference, at which a side event for African countries was held and the financing advocacy tool for the 16 PIDA infrastructure projects that are ready for implementation was presented. This has resulted in increased interest in financing the projects.

III. Human capital development, health, nutrition, science, technology and innovation

A. Establishment of the African Medicines Agency

17. At their meeting in April 2014, African ministers of health agreed to establish the African Medicines Agency. Subsequently, in 2015, they created a task team comprising the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Agency and the World Health Organization (WHO), to work on the establishment of the Agency. The task team conducted a series of meetings, which culminated in the

drafting of three key documents as critical milestones towards the establishment of the Agency, namely, a legal framework, an institutional framework and a business plan. A first series of consultations has been scheduled for Midrand, South Africa, from 20 to 22 February 2017, at which the three documents will be considered by stakeholders, including legal and medicines regulatory experts from all 54 African Union member States and the eight regional economic communities, with a view to:

- (a) Providing a platform for all member States and regional economic communities to take stock of the progress made to date in the implementation of the executive council decision on the establishment of the African Medicines Agency;
- (b) Deliberating on the draft legal, institutional framework, and also on the Agency's business plan as prepared by the task team;
- (c) Agreeing on a road map for the next series of consultations.

B. Establishment and operationalization of the Africa Centre for Disease Control

18. On 31 January 2016, during its twenty-sixth ordinary session, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union formally endorsed the statute of the Africa Centre for Disease Control. In August 2016, the framework for collaboration between WHO and the African Union Commission on the establishment and operationalization of the Centre was signed. In February 2016, nine African epidemiologists, recruited through the African Field Epidemiology Network, underwent a 10-week training programme designed and coordinated by the technical experts of the United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention and with the contribution of the WHO Regional Office for Africa.

19. In March 2016, a team comprising experts from the African Union Commission and WHO, and supported by experts from the centres for disease control in China and the United States, led a multi-partner assessment mission to the five countries whose institutions were nominated for consideration as regional collaborating centres for the Africa Centre for Disease Control, namely Egypt, Gabon, Kenya, Nigeria and Zambia.

20. In 2016, WHO has been working closely with the Africa Centre for Disease Control to facilitate the Centre's membership of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network. The Centre has also been invited to attend the Network's meeting in London on 13 and 14 February 2017. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) participated in the technical taskforce to establish the Africa Centre for Disease Control, set up the AIDS situation room at the Centre, equipping it with hardware, software and data visualization tools to track the AIDS epidemic across on the entire continent, and has pledged additional support to expand the situation room to cover other diseases, and also to set up such rooms in the regional collaborating centres.

C. Pharmaceuticals manufacturing plan for Africa

21. This plan has been adopted by the Assembly of the African Union and is being implemented by a consortium of parties that includes the United Nations Industrialization Development Organization (UNIDO), WHO and UNAIDS and is led by the African Union Commission. Its aim is to build capacities for the local production of quality and affordable medicines. Work has been under way in support of both the regional economic communities and African countries in general. Initial work will begin in 2017 in the ECOWAS region to develop a framework for a road map on good manufacturing practices (GMP) based on

the UNIDO GMP road map methodology. This follows the conclusion of an agreement between the West African Health Organization (WAHO) and a range of organizations, including UNIDO, WHO, the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency, UNAIDS and the ECOWAS Commission.

22. A high-level round table held at the World Investment Forum in Nairobi, co-hosted by UNAIDS and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), focused on investment in the pharmaceutical sector and included the signing of the Nairobi Declaration by the Executive Director of UNAIDS, the Secretary General of UNCTAD, the Minister for Industry of South Africa, the Cabinet Secretary for Health of Kenya and the Commissioner for Trade and Industry of the African Union Commission. 2016 also saw the publication of the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Access to Medicines, coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme and UNAIDS. A number of United Nations entities formed part of the expert advisory group, including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WHO, UNIDO, UNCTAD and others, and UNIDO and WHO submitted a joint paper on the critical role that can be played by the strengthening of local production in improving access to safe, effective and affordable essential medicines in Africa.

D. Review, update and popularization of continental health policy instruments

23. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF, UNDP, WHO and UNAIDS provided technical support to the processes of reviewing, developing, publishing, monitoring progress and advocating the continental health policy instruments of the African Union, such as the Africa Health Strategy (2016-2030), the Maputo plan of action on sexual and reproductive health and rights (2016-2030), the Catalytic Framework to End AIDS, TB and Eliminate Malaria in Africa by 2030 and the concept document on the establishment of the African health volunteers corps. These policy instruments were validated by African health experts in April 2016 and endorsed by African health ministers in May 2016. Following the endorsement, UNFPA and UNAIDS supported the publication and translation of the extended Maputo Plan of Action and the Catalytic Framework, respectively.

1. Common African position on ending AIDS

24. In preparation for and mobilization of the United Nations 2016 high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS, UNAIDS and cosponsors supported work by the African Union Commission to develop the common African position on ending AIDS, which was endorsed by African ministers of health at a meeting of the working group of the Specialized Technical Committee on Health, Population and Drug Control, in May 2016. The common position was the central negotiating document for Africa, and the resulting Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS (June 2016) was significantly inspired by the common position. The African Union Assembly decision 619 (XXVII) on the report of AIDS Watch Africa (July 2016) welcomed the Political Declaration, which was aligned with and supported the continental guidance documents.

2. Catalytic Framework to End AIDS, TB and Eliminate Malaria in Africa by 2030

25. UNAIDS and UNDP supported work by the African Union to hold dialogue sessions with its organs, the pan-African parliamentarians and the regional economic communities on how to operationalize the Catalytic Framework. UNAIDS and UNDP continued their support by ensuring that members of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the HIV committee) were represented. Together with all its co-sponsors, UNAIDS also took part and supported the meeting of African Union partners and stakeholders

on AIDS. Recognizing that young women and adolescent girls remain the most affected key population in Africa, UNAIDS continues to provide support to the African Union's pre-summit processes on gender, supporting civil society, partners and Governments in their efforts to uphold sexual and reproductive health rights and to provide access to HIV services as tools to maximize the demographic dividend.

3. AIDS Watch Africa

26. UNAIDS and UNICEF provided support for the AIDS Watch Africa process in the form of technical assistance, studies and briefs. A report on HIV, the law and human rights in Africa was produced by UNDP. Three technical briefs focusing on future directions in advancing law and human rights goals within the African Union policy frameworks, ensuring that environmental and social impact assessments resulted in increased domestic financing for health and stronger health outcomes for communities, and co-financing for health, HIV and development were developed by UNDP. UNICEF supported efforts to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV-AIDS and to protect children from the disease. It was also involved in initiatives focusing on keeping adolescent girls and young women HIV-free, and helping Governments to understand and manage the disease better. These efforts led to the adoption in July 2016 by the African Union Assembly of the aforementioned decision on AIDS Watch Africa.

4. Maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health

27. The first Ministerial Conference on Immunization in Africa, jointly organized by WHO and the African Union Commission, was held in Addis Ababa on 24 and 25 February 2016. The ministerial conference, a landmark event in its field, culminated in a declaration on universal access to immunization as a cornerstone for health and development in Africa, with a request to the Government of Ethiopia to submit the declaration for endorsement by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. UNFPA provided financial support to the African Union Commission and technical support for the production of the 2016/17 report on maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health, focusing on the unfinished business and the demographic dividend. The report will serve as a background document for both the experts and ministerial segments of the second meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee on Health, Population and Drug Control to be held in March 2017.

5. Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, New-born and Child Mortality in Africa

28. United Nations agencies continued supporting this initiative during its launch in Mauritius in November 2016, as part of the commemoration of the Campaign's week by the African Union Commission, on the theme: "Celebrating progress in implementing CARMMA in the island States of Africa: no woman should die while giving life".

6. Cross-border disease outbreaks

29. UNICEF and WHO coordinated at regional and country level with partners and Governments on cholera preparedness and response planning, and also on the prior delivery of health and water, sanitation and hygiene supplies to hot-spot areas, and support for social mobilization efforts.

7. African Task Force on Nutrition Development

30. Working in collaboration with UNICEF, FAO, IFAD and other stakeholders, WFP continued supporting efforts by the African Task Force on Nutrition Development for fulfil its mandate, which included the development and implementation of the African Regional Nutrition Strategy under the leadership of the African Union Commission. Through South-South

engagement, WFP cooperated with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in building continental capacity for the analysis of the Cost of Hunger in Africa study, through a regional training course in Maputo in June 2016. Four such studies were launched in 2016 in Chad, Ghana, Lesotho and Madagascar, while a further six are in progress.

IV. Labour, employment creation, social protection, migration and mobility

31. IOM, ILO, UNECA and UNDP, under the leadership of the African Union Commission, have been implementing the programme on labour migration governance for development and integration in Africa, also known as the Joint Labour Migration Programme. The programme focuses on such critical areas as facilitating the free movement of workers as a crucial means of advancing regional integration and development in Africa. It is also aimed at improving labour migration governance in the continent by tackling challenges in key specific areas in close collaboration with the regional economic communities.

32. IOM provided technical support for the evaluation of the Migration Policy Framework for Africa. The evaluation is critical in terms of providing policy guidance to the regional economic communities and member States and checking its relevance in the current global, continental and national contexts. The plan of action for the implementation of the Framework continues to be evaluated, with a view to assisting the continent to realize the development benefits of migration and minimizing its negative impacts within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063. In addition, IOM continues to provide support for the development of the Migration Management Strategy for 2016, which outlines key intervention areas as identified by the African Union in line with existing instruments, programmes and frameworks.

33. In close cooperation with the African Union Commission and relevant partners, IOM has instituted an annual forum of African regional consultative processes on migration as a platform for an all-inclusive, open, and comprehensive dialogue on migration issues among member States, regional economic communities, partners and relevant stakeholders in an informal and non-binding setting. This platform plays an important role, among other areas, in promoting and deepening inter-State dialogue and cooperation both within and between regions on migration and related issues, including the laws and regulations on regional human mobility and the free movement of persons.

34. UNICEF has established a partnership with the Danish Refugee Council to collect data on the experience and protection needs of children who are moving from East to Southern Africa. UNICEF continued working closely with IGAD, SADC and other partners in terms of advocacy, coordination and technical inputs for a broader resilience agenda. Following the El Niño phenomenon and drought in the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa, there was need to respond to conflict, refugee influxes and other humanitarian situations such as disease outbreaks, in particular cholera, across the affected subregions. Support was provided for efforts to mobilize resources and to enhance preparedness for influxes of refugees and internally displaced persons, with an emphasis on the protection and needs of child refugees in terms of education, access to safe water and improved sanitation facilities.

V. Gender equality and the empowerment of women and youth

A. 2017 session of the Assembly of the African Union

35. In preparing for the session of the Assembly held in January 2017, under the theme “Harnessing the demographic dividend through investments in youth”, development partners worked closely with the African Union Commission in undertaking a multi-stakeholder consultative process leading to preparation of the road map, which reflected the inputs and aspirations of a wide range of key stakeholders. United Nations agencies, in particular UNFPA, played a key role in driving the launch and popularization of the theme by working closely with the African Union Commission, specifically in formulating key deliverables and milestones for the road map, to guide member States and regional economic communities in specific actions to be undertaken in 2017 and beyond, and in the dissemination and implementation of the road map.

B. Commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the African Youth Charter

36. UNFPA worked closely with the African Union Commission and other partners and contributed technically and financially to events to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the African Youth Charter, which was held in Banjul in May 2016. In addition to providing technical and financial support, UNFPA promoted the participation of young people in the events and solicited their views and inputs, together with those of government officials attending the events, for preparation of the African Union demographic dividend road map, which was at its consultation phase at that time.

C. Gender equality and women’s empowerment and development

37. FAO launched activities to enhance the contribution of women in the formal agriculture and agribusiness value chains and developed gender-responsive indicators for integration in the results framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme. It supported the development of 39 country gender assessments, providing the basis for gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the results framework and targets, and also providing a baseline for the second generation of national and regional agricultural investment plans currently under development, which will be consistent with the framework. WFP, in collaboration with ECA, UNAIDS and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), supported a series of webinars to build upon the efforts of various gender forums by creating a platform for discourse on the alignment of the global 2030 Agenda and the African Union Agenda 2063, and to advance and popularize the continental and global gender equality and women’s empowerment agenda.

D. African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage in Africa

38. Working in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, UNFPA contributed substantively to the overall planning, implementation and evaluation of this campaign. In particular, it supported country launches of the campaign, of which there have been 18 since 2014; gave financial and technical support for a number of capacity-building workshops; and contributed to the campaign’s evaluation meeting.

E. United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

39. ECA has been participating in the action plan and submitting annual reports since 2013, detailing how it has been implementing the United Nations commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. In addition, ECA is using gender equality markers, to code outputs or projects, indicating the extent to which results or changes relating to gender equality and women's empowerment are supported. The use of gender markers is envisaged to provide an indicative estimate of resources used by the Commission in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. ECA is one of the 21 United Nations entities which are piloting the revised performance indicators under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

F. Women in the maritime sector in East and Southern Africa

40. IMO facilitated the seventh Conference of the Association of Women in the Maritime Sector in Eastern and Southern Africa (WOMESA) and the associated training session, held in 2016 in line with the IMO programme on the integration of women in the maritime sector. The conference and training session were held in Ethiopia and attended by representatives from the Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa and the United Republic of Tanzania.

41. The United Nations Volunteers Programme is supporting the African Union Commission in the implementation of the regional initiative to enhance the capacity of the African Union Youth Volunteer Corps in integrating peacebuilding and development in Africa, through the assessment and strengthening of the capacities of the Corps at regional, subregional and national levels.

VI. Humanitarian matters and disaster risk management

A. Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

42. The Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) supported the implementation of this framework in Africa, in collaboration with member States, the African Union Commission, the regional economic communities and development partners. Following a series of consultations, including through two sessions of the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction, in November 2016, the Mauritius Declaration was adopted at the fifth high-level meeting of African ministers responsible for disaster risk reduction, which set out a programme of action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa. The programme of action was subsequently endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union at its twenty-eighth session in January 2017.

B. East African Community Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act

43. The EAC Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act represents the first ever piece of legislation on regional disaster risk reduction in Africa. In addition, a regional disaster preparedness and response strategy for Southern

Africa has been adopted by SADC. UNISDR also supported the formation of a parliamentarians network for resilience to disasters in Central Africa, and conducted a capacity-building initiative with the World Bank Group for parliamentarians of member States, provided technical support for the formulation of the ECOWAS policy for disaster risk reduction in Western Africa, and worked on enhancing early warning capacity by conducting climate outlook forums in the Greater Horn of Africa.

C. Capacity-building measures

44. UNISDR provided training for 250 government officials from seven African countries on disaster loss accounting and for media personnel on effective disaster risk reduction reporting. It also held leadership development forums for effective disaster risk reduction governance for regional economic communities, and conducted a training-of-trainers session for the implementation of the Sendai Framework in Mauritius. For its part, IMO delivered a regional training course on search and rescue in Africa, which was attended by representatives from Benin, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Morocco, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

D. Campaign on disaster risk reduction

45. On 13 October 2016, the new Sendai Seven campaign was launched, promoting each of the seven targets of the Sendai Framework. UNISDR, in support of small island developing States, island countries and countries with coastlines, coordinated the celebration of the first World Tsunami Awareness Day, with a focus on effective education and evacuation drills. In addition, at events held to mark World Radio Day in 2016 focused on the role of radio in times of emergency and disaster, UNISDR worked together with UNESCO to highlight the role played by radio in disseminating disaster risk reduction knowledge and early warning messages.

E. Protecting children against violence and harmful practices

46. UNICEF and other partners provided critical child protection services to children and women affected by crisis and emergency situations across Eastern and Southern Africa. UNICEF and UNHCR continued to implement a regional information-sharing protocol for cross-border tracking and family tracing systems as part of a broader response to support unaccompanied and separated children. Such issues as sexual exploitation and the abuse of children, violation of children's rights affecting both boys and girls, and the protection of children affected by armed conflict were major concerns. UNICEF gave support for the roll-out of the 2015-2017 strategic plan of the African Union on children affected by armed conflict and the study on the impact of armed conflict on children.

VII. Environment, urbanization and population

A. African Population Experts Committee

47. As part of the joint endeavour to promote implementation, monitoring and accountability of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development beyond 2014, UNFPA and ECA provided support for the first meeting of the African Population Experts Committee, successor to the African

Population Commission. The establishment of the Committee will be critical important in ensuring monitoring and accountability relating the Addis Ababa Declaration, advocacy regarding its implementation and advancement of the agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development in Africa.

B. 2017 report on the state of the population of Africa

48. UNFPA has been at the forefront in supporting the preparation, reproduction and dissemination of the biennial report on the state of the population of Africa, which in 2016 focused on the topic of keeping the rights of girls, adolescents and young women at the centre of Africa's demographic dividend. The report will serve as a background document for both the expert and ministerial segments of the second meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee on Health, Population and Drug Control, to be held March 2017.

C. Civil registration and vital statistics

49. Together with WHO and the World Bank, UNICEF played a strategic role in successfully advocating the critical importance of functional civil registration and vital statistics systems linked to the health sector, and in finalizing the 2016-2018 strategic plan of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics.

D. Capacity-building

50. IMO organized a national workshop on the development of national oil-spill contingency plans and sensitivity mapping in Sao Tome and Principe, attended by 43 officials. It also organized a subregional workshop in Namibia on the use of dispersants and the concept of net environmental benefit analysis in oil-spill response and preparedness, which was attended by 32 participants from nine countries in the subregion.

E. Support for the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements

51. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and ECOWAS assisted countries in the ECOWAS region in enhancing national capacities for coordinated implementation of the global and regional multilateral environmental agreements related to chemicals and waste. Similar support was provided by the secretariat, together with the SADC secretariat, to SADC member countries. A key achievement of this undertaking was that focal points of the multilateral environmental agreements were trained in the synergetic national implementation of the chemicals-related conventions and a regional network established to strengthen such implementation. UNIDO assisted African countries in meeting their obligations under such agreements as the Montreal Protocol on Ozone-Depleting Substances, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

F. Cleaner production and green industry

52. Through the UNIDO network of resource-efficient and cleaner production centres, and also through the regional centres for renewable energy and energy efficiency, support has been provided to ECOWAS, EAC, SADC

and entities in the Middle East and North Africa. Furthermore, UNIDO assisted in developing methodologies and instruments for the sustainable cities of tomorrow, addressing energy, transport, housing, economic activity, water and waste issues in a coordinated manner.

G. Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa

53. UNEP and the Department for Infrastructure and Energy of the African Union Commission signed an aide memoire on better coordinated and synergized engagement in the area of sustainable energy development in Africa. They will collaborate to this end with ministries responsible for the geothermal sector, universities and research institutions, member countries, regional investment and development banks. In this context, the two organizations identified core strategic and priority areas of cooperation in the African Renewable Energy Initiative, PIDA and regional geothermal programmes, including the African Rift Geothermal Development Facility and the Geothermal Risk Mitigation Facility.

H. Africa Environment Day:

54. UNEP, FAO, the Government of Ethiopia, the Green Belt Movement and the African Union Commission held events to mark Africa Environment Day on 3 March 2016. The theme identified for the events was “Strengthening women’s access to and control over natural resources”. The events were preceded by a two-day forum on women and the environment, on 1 and 2 March 2016. The objective of the forum was to examine the role of women in environmental stewardship, along with the challenges faced and opportunities arising in strengthening the rights of women over natural resources.

I. Africa Drylands Week

55. UNEP, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, FAO, the World Bank, UNDP, the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative organized events to commemorate the third African Drylands Week, held in Windhoek from 8 to 12 August 2016. Participants were drawn from global, regional, and national institutions involved in drought mitigation and drylands management in Africa. Participants at the events held under the Week reviewed opportunities and successes in this area, and also challenges facing the development of drylands, including the interface between science and policymaking, resilience to drought, land restoration, sustainable land management and preservation of historical cultural heritage. A key recommendation emerging from the discussions was that commemoration of African Drylands Week should be instituted as a formal work programme of the African Union Commission, organized on a regional basis every biennium, to serve as a platform for raising awareness on drylands and drought matters. African Union member States were requested to offer to host the event and partners to support its organization.

J. Follow-up to recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

56. Working in collaboration with member States, UNEP, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, ECA and UNDP are contributing to the development and implementation of the regional flagship programmes as a

means of assisting in the implementation in Africa of the outcomes of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. UNEP is facilitating the development and implementation of three flagship programmes, namely the African Green Economy Partnership; the Partnership for Sustainable Consumption and Production in Africa; and the Africa Integrated Environmental Assessment for Sustainable Development.

VIII. Advocacy, information, communications and culture

57. At its fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth annual sessions, RCM-Africa highlighted the need to strengthen regional and subregional coordination and partnership between the regional economic communities, intergovernmental organizations, the African Union and United Nations organizations and agencies through timely information sharing and management. In response to this need, a communications strategy for the mechanism has been developed. An information-sharing platform will be developed alongside a framework and implementation plan for enhancing the effectiveness of regional and subregional joint programming through the use of information and communications technologies.

58. In the margins of the General Assembly debate on the development of Africa in October 2016, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa co-organized with United Nations and African Union strategic partners, including the Department of Public Information, ECA, the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Agency, the secretariat of the African Peer Review Mechanism and the regional economic communities, Africa Week 2016, which comprised several high-level events and press briefings on strengthening partnership and galvanizing international support for the continent's transformational agenda. These high-level events covered such themes as: strengthening partnerships for inclusive sustainable development, good governance, peace and stability in Africa; strengthening partnerships for peace, security and stability in Africa; a renewed global partnership for entrenching good governance and the rule of law in Africa; and leveraging partnerships for the effective implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in Africa. Through those events, and a high-level meeting of the Inter-Departmental Task Force on African Affairs, Africa Week underscored the importance of strengthening partnerships to implement the two development agendas in Africa. All these events fed and enriched the debate at the General Assembly on the development of Africa around the nexus of peace, security and sustainable development, where African countries and their development partners (traditional and new and emerging development partners) reaffirmed their commitments to implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

59. Prior to that, in April 2016, in cooperation with the African Union Commission and the Government of Sweden, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa co-organized a high-level forum on the theme of "The Africa we want in 2030, 2063 and beyond". The forum raised global awareness of the synergies between both agendas and stressed the importance of partnerships to support their implementation.

60. The United Nations Department of Public Information, in close collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, ECA and RCM-Africa, used an array of public information platforms and tools, including the magazine *Africa Renewal/Afrique Renouveau*, its multilingual news platforms and social media accounts, to promote public awareness of the aims and achievements of the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency.

61. In addition, the involvement of young people in seafaring careers, maritime education and training is being actively encouraged and promoted in

member States, through institutions of higher learning, under the IMO Maritime Ambassadors scheme.

62. UNESCO supported the ratification and implementation of the UNESCO culture conventions, in particular those relating to the issues of illicit trafficking of cultural goods and to the protection of heritage sites in the events of armed conflict. It also assisted with the development with SADC of a joint programme of action for the period 2016-2020, which is considered as a model document covering the entire UNESCO mandate for culture and emphasizing partnership development and links with other strategic documents, such as Agenda 2063 and the national development plans of concerned countries. In addition, it provided technical assistance and capacity-building to countries and their regional economic communities in their efforts to safeguard cultural heritage, and to protect the underwater cultural heritage and resources. UNESCO is building a partnership around Sustainable Development Goal 11 on sustainable cities, while also aiming to create a country-based cultural indicators framework. Cooperation with UNDP and UNIDO has been initiated, with the aim of mobilizing partners for joint programming in the framework of PAIDA and providing a platform for a coordinated response to address the priority needs of the continent in the areas of culture.

IX. Peace and security, governance and human rights

63. The United Nations Office to the African Union continued to work with the African Union Commission and member States to enhance the strategic partnership between the African Union and the United Nations in the area of peace and security and to support the full operationalization of the African peace and security architecture, in line with the 2016-2020 road map. During the reporting period, the annual joint consultations of the African Union Peace and Security Council and members of the United Nations Security Council were held in New York in May. To mark 10 years of joint consultations, members of the two councils held an informal retreat to reflect on those 10 years and to discuss ways to improve partnership, including in the area of conflict prevention. In August 2016 the African Union Peace and Security Council issued its communiqué 628 promoting a more strategic partnership, which was followed in November 2016 by Security Council resolution 2320 in support of partnership, inviting the African Union and the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council in May 2017 on progress towards more effectively supporting peace support operations on the continent. In his inaugural address to the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa in January 2017, the Secretary-General announced that he would like to raise the level of the strategic partnership in promoting peace and security and human rights together.

A. Conflict prevention and management

64. The United Nations Office to the African Union and the African Union Commission strengthened their working-level and principal-level engagement on early warning and conflict prevention, including preventive diplomacy, through regular horizon-scanning meetings, monthly director-level video teleconferences between United Nations Headquarters and the African Union Commission and meetings of the Joint Task Force at the Under-Secretary-General and Commissioner level. All these mechanisms help the two organizations to develop a common analysis and harmonized approaches to the prevention and management of conflict across Africa, in collaboration with the United Nations and African Union presences in the subregions.

B. African Standby Force

65. In the area of conflict management, the United Nations Office to the African Union supported the continuing efforts to strengthen the African Standby Force, in line with the five-year Maputo work plan adopted by the African Union in October 2016. The United Nations Office to the African Union likewise worked closely with the African Union to strengthen current peace operations, namely the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), at which a joint United Nations-African Union working group was formed in April 2016 to strengthen the effectiveness of AMISOM. Through the African Union, the Office is likewise lending support to the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram and the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army, among other measures through joint assessment missions and reviews.

C. African Union Peace Fund

66. As part of the African Union endeavour to revitalize the funding for African Union peace operations, led by the African Union High Representative for the African Union Peace Fund, the United Nations Office to the African Union and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) took part in consultations to share United Nations lessons learned on strengthening delivery on the protection of civilians and adherence to international humanitarian law in peace operations. At the 2016 African Union Assembly of Heads of State and government in Kigali, African Heads of State agreed to put in place a comprehensive human rights and code of conduct compliance framework for peace support operations as part of the agreement on the African Union Peace Fund.

D. Strategic security and peacebuilding issues:

67. The United Nations Office to the African Union is likewise working closely with the African Union in the area of strategic security and peacebuilding. In particular, the Office supported the African Union in the revision of its 2003 post-conflict reconstruction and development policy and in updating its 2002 counter-terrorism plan of action.

E. Human and peoples' rights

68. Engagement by OHCHR with the African Union Commission during the reporting period is marked by renewed commitment from the African Union to promote and protect human and peoples' rights in the continent. This aspiration is exemplified, among other undertakings, by the decision of the Assembly of the African Union to declare 2016 as the Africa Year of Human Rights, with a particular focus on the rights of women in 2015, and its decision in July 2015 to declare 2016-2026 as the African Decade of Human Rights and to adopt a 10-year action and implementation plan on the promotion and protection of human and peoples' right in Africa. OHCHR provided technical and financial support for the development of the 10-year action and implementation plan, designed to enhance the effectiveness of African Union human rights mechanisms by harmonizing the work of the Union's human rights organs and creating synergy with key stakeholders. Working in collaboration with ECA and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, OHCHR organized a workshop on the implementation of recommendations of the human rights impact assessment of the continental free trade area. OHCHR also facilitated missions and organized training programmes on the monitoring of and reporting on human rights situations in South Sudan and Burundi.

F. Peacebuilding, education and advocacy

69. UNICEF provided technical support for integrating conflict-sensitive education approaches into education sector programming in Burundi, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda. It contributed to generating evidence around the impacts of peacebuilding through education in fragile and conflict-affected States, by developing and publishing four research case studies on education, conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding for Kenya and Ethiopia. In addition, three major studies were completed on education, conflict and peacebuilding, with evidence-based advocacy tools generated to support cross-sectoral programming. A regional information management system (IMIS) for tracking programme performance and peacebuilding impacts was updated to support countries in Eastern and Southern Africa. The system includes a modality for measuring performance and impact. In addition, a pan-African interministerial symposium on education sector policy and programming was completed, with 16 countries mainstreaming lessons learned about conflict-sensitive education programming. This resulted in the release of an interministerial policy commitment, signed by ministers from 13 countries, to integrate conflict-sensitive and peacebuilding approaches in education.