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PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK FOR ECA/CSOs/RELATIONS ANNOTATED OUTLINE (DISCUSSION DRAFT)

21-23 MAY 2001, NAIROBI, KENYA

Introduction

1. The ECA, in its process of making civil society a strategic client and partner requires a clear and pragmatic partnership framework to base its future relationship. There are important institutional, management and programmatic implications, which need to be defined and acted upon if the relationship is to be successful. There will be need to adopt institutional arrangements that facilitate the building of healthy working relations between ECA and CSOs. There will be the need to adopt programme planning and implementation procedures that leverage on the strength of each in a mutually re-enforcing manner. Given the limitations to ECA's regular budget, most opportunities for financing activities will come from resources mobilized to which a new partnership between ECA and CSOs could strengthen the capacity to identify and access development resources.

2. This paper is an annotation of proposals on how to build ECA/CSO relationship. The annotated outline is relevant to preparing and finalizing the framework that would form the basis for partnership between ECA and civil society organizations. It lays the broad guidelines and context for promoting partnership. The purpose of this annotated outline is to broaden the discussion surrounding the fut e relationship between ECA and CSOs. The final version of this paper will incorporate recommendations and conclusions with members of the ACCS Steering Committee. As a partnership-enhancing document, this paper is intended to tease the issues that should be considered in defining ECA/CSO relations. It is a formal invitation to share our thinking with you and dialogue on a framework for enhancing ECA/CSO relations. The proposals on how to build ECA/CSO partnership are presented under the following broad sections:

- **Background**: It provides an overview of the many initiatives promoting participatory approaches to development and its prospects in addressing the many development challenges facing the region. The importance attached to the building of partnership and the many issues in moving towards a more effective citizen engagement and participation are intended to re-enforce the relevance of partnership.

- **ECA/CSO partnership for Development: issues and challenges**:. A discussion on the many issues influencing the relationship building process underpinning the importance of partnership for development intended as a guide for developing ECA/CSOs relations.

- **Enhancing ECA/CSO Relations: options and modalities:** Drawing on the aforementioned, this section proposes modalities for strengthening ECA/CSO relations. It identifies and elaborates on best approaches and strategies for enhancing ECA/CSO partnership and relations. Among issues to be considered are the institutional mechanisms that promote interaction between ECA and CSOs, areas and types of activities that optimize ECA/CSO cooperation. An enhanced ECA/CSO partnership and relationship will entail significant changes in programme elaboration process, decision –making, resource mobilization process and programme focus and thrust.

- **The way forward:** Reviews existing modalities with a view to defining measures to operationalizing them to have significantly added impact on ECA/CSO relations.

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— *Mission - Statement*

Partnership Framework for ECA/CSOs Relations

1. Background

i.   CSO participation is central to Africa's development

3.   This paper is the outcome of a process of consultation and reflection that started in 1990, when participants at the International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa, recognized the importance of participation as a vehicle for development. It was clear then, as it is now, that the efforts of grassroots and people's organizations are central to Africa's development. Consequently, the forces that are expected to define the condition in which African countries can achieve development include increased participation of the civil society community as a more effective means.

4.   The Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa, (CSSDCA) initiative of African governments and non-governmental organizations elaborated a process to inspire African peoples and governments to re-engage collaboratively to address the problems of security and stability in Africa as prerequisites for the development of the continent. The Initiative is a landmark event not simply because it mapped out a comprehensive and holistic approach to Africa's economic development, more significantly, it showed what can be achieved when people and governments come together to find solutions to common problems- a programme that reflects the real needs of society. Recently, the Millenium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP), an initiative of Presidents Mbeki of South Africa, Shegun Obbasanjo of Nigeria and Bouteflika of Algeria, called on African governments to constructively engage its people in addressing the development challenges of the region. Similarly, President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal in his OMEGA Plan for Africa identified human capital as one of the key prerequisites for sustained and balanced growth and made the case for the full participation of civil society.

5.   The case for bringing civil society in the center of Africa's development process was even made stronger by the United Nations Secretary General in his comprehensive initiative for Africa-the UN System-Wide Special Initiative for Africa, which made the strengthening of civil society and the promotion of popular participation core priorities. He also requested United Nations system

organizations to build alliances with organizations of civil society, promoting development, democracy and peace building.

ii.   Important contributions of CSOs to Africa's development.

6.   In the context of the reduced capacity of governments to deliver services, especially social services in the framework of structural adjustments polices, civil society's role and influence is expanding. In the social spheres, civil society has a growing influence on governance and has become a front-line service provider. Among the specific sectors where CSOs have made remarkable contributions include development, health and social services, education and the like. *ADVOCACY* *redefining policies* *marketplace gvt*

iii.   The genesis of ECA/CSO relations

7.   This relationship though not formal and structured dates back to the 1990's following the adoption of the Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation. The new thinking encapsulated in the Charter reflected the importance given to citizen's participation in the development and governance.

8.   Keeping in mind the recognition of civil society as an important development player, the ECA, as it addressed the development issues of the 90s, has strategically focused some of its activities on promoting participation of civil society in the development and governance process in Africa. The following are examples of activities ECA has undertaken to promote civil society's participation in development:

- Implementation of a Popular participation in Development Project within which it has organized and conducted regional, subregional and national workshops and seminars on various issues related to CSOs participation and published numerous research studies, technical papers and publications designed to reinforce the role of CSOs in development and governance.

- Facilitating national dialogue on government/CSO relationship to create an enabling and supportive environment for civil society participation.

- Strengthening capacity of indigenous CSOs to enhance their contribution to Africa's development and democratization process through a mix of

practical ways including utilizing partnership approaches that enhances operational collaboration with CSOs, providing technical expertise from which CSOs could benefit from the advice and involvement of external experts, etc.

- Providing prominence to the work of civil society by learning and documenting what works and strengthening best practices in civil society participation.

- Strengthening ECA's relations with CSOs was reflected in the establishment of the African Centre for Civil Society (ACCS) to provide institutional framework for CSO/CSO and ECA/CSO collaboration. The primary purpose of establishing the centre was to expand ECA's assistance to the civil society sector in a number of areas including documentation of civil society activities and dissemination.

9.   Against this background and in the context of serving Africa better, there is need to explore all ways to improve on partnership, especially with civil society organizations, who are both beneficiaries and facilitators of development. Simply put, the nexus between participation, partnership, ownership and development should be exploited. The partnership framework for ECA/CSO relations is an attempt to put into practices the principles of participation and partnership for development.

iv.   Objectives of enhancing ECA/CSO relations

10.   The ECA, through an enhanced partnership with CSOs can assist in harnessing the force of civil society. We are convinced that ECA and civil society organizations working together can ouild a better future. In this respect, the objectives of the ECA/CSO relations is to collaboratively seek solutions to Africa's development by studying, promoting, documenting and disseminating best examples of civil society participation in development. It is expected that through the enhanced ECA/CSO relationship, government, business sector, other development actors and people in general could oe mobilized to address the development challenges facing the Africa region. Improved ECA/CSO partnership is about dynamizing the relationship that empowers the development of a stronger more involving civil society.

2. ECA/CSO partnership for Development: Issues and challenges

i.   The contextual environment

11.   The proposals for enhancing ECA/CSO relations are made against the background of change in the development arena. With political and economic transformation, the role of government is gradually changing from central command to democratic; economies are being transformed into market-oriented economies requiring transparent and accountable governments. For instance, public sector is scaling down on its production of goods and the provision of services and taking more strategic approach to its role in society and development. Governments' role is increasingly focussed on creating the enabling environment conducive to participation and mobilization of social forces and energy from all stakeholders. These create opportunities and room for other players deemed more effective to come in and fill the gap.

12.   The private sector is progressively gaining importance as an engine for growth and requires change in orientation, which brings with it increasing opportunities but also risks. If the opportunities are to be seized and the risks avoided, then it is necessary that development partners act collaboratively to meet the challenges of development. Consistent with this change in orientation, the private sector is combining the role of wealth creation and public services provider. With privatization, today, private sector is expanding into power and telecommunication, education, etc, previously considered as public sector domains. They are also supporting a range of development activities as part of their social responsibility.

13.   The participatory role of civil society in development and governance is widely recognized and rapidly expanding within the regional and international arena, thus justifying the consolidation and galvanization of all capacities. In doing so, the need to define a framework for collaboration with civil society is very necessary. The framework is an important step in defining ways in which all development actors can work concertedly to achieve development goals. Partnership with civil society, government, private sector and other multilateral partners, each playing to their respective strength forms the basis for the perceived ECA/CSO enhanced relationship.

ii.   The principles guiding ECA/CSO relations

14. The proposed framework has four basic principles underpinning the ECA/CSO relations, which are outlined as follows:

- The first principle guiding the relationship building process is the recognition of the magnitude of the development challenges facing the Africa region and the unprecedented need for collective and collaborative actions that would improve on development outcomes. Achieving development targets is enhanced if all partners act simultaneously and cooperatively to scale up development results. Building incrementally on each other's activities is needed for accelerating Africa's development.

- The second is the strength that each brings to the relationship and the need to exploit creatively the potential contribution of each other. This underlines the equality in the relationship- a key factor for enhanced partnership.

- The third principle is partnership that is based on mutual responsibility for addressing Africa's development challenges through an envisaged mechanism for consultation and collaborative engagement, in agreed-upon development priorities, willingness to share expertise and experience and jointly mobilize resources to solve development problems through partnership.

- Finally, as a general principle, activities with CSOs will be to complement efforts of government and not to substitute or compete.

iii. Conditions/factors influencing the partnership/relationship

15. Efforts to enhance ECA/CSO relations should take into consideration the need to include actions aimed at ensuring the existence of certain conditions within which partnership would thrive and our collaborative actions generate impact. The existence of an enabling environment is crucial and would be given significant attention and treated as an integral part of the relationship building process. In this respect, ECA and partner CSOs will build strategies to address critical conditions and factors including the following:

- Legal and regulatory aspects of the working environment as a general prerequisite for strengthening ECA/CSO relations.
- Relationship with government- how should it manifest itself for cooperation rather than competition. Appreciation and understanding of partnership.
- Resource mobilization to ensure financing of activities undertaken either jointly or independently and how these could facilitated or constrain ECA/CSO relations.

iv.   Opportunities for partnership

16.   Partnership with CSOs is desirable for addressing the many development challenges of the region. Partnership could be useful in sharing insightful ways that would bolster programme content and impact on critical development concerns including issues of:

- Special significance to vulnerable groups including poverty concerns.

- Basic survival, which has continent-wide development implications including HIV/AIDS pandemic, basic health services, education, etc.

- Economic globalization and its impact on Africa's economies; the central role of CSOs in the international economic policy-making process including facilitating North-South dialogue to safeguard Africa's interest; policy advocacy, addressing the effects on Africa's economies, its unfairness and debt-related concerns.

- Capacity-building.

3. Enhancing ECA/CSO Relations: options and modalities

17.   There are issues to be addressed to enhance ECA/CSO relations. The basic challenge is the adoption of workable strategies and approaches that would shape the partnership/relationship between ECA and CSOs. This includes the following:

- Coalition /alliance building with CSOs at subregional and Regional levels through strategic partnerships and networking. - for playing

mutually supporting roles in defining strategies for mobilizing the civil society community.

- Building programme linkages and network between ECA and the CSOs in agreed-upon areas including initiating concrete programmes to be jointly under-taken by ECA and CSOs.

- Strengthening of existing institutional arrangements (CHDCS and ACCS) and networks to ensure interaction and constructive engagement with CSOs. The institutional changes, if any, needed to make partnership between ECA and CSOs operational including, the role/contribution/status of ACCS and the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society as institutional and operational links.

- Building the capacity of CSOs to enhance their role and contribution to development and governance.

- Promoting collaborative strategies in resource mobilization for building the financial resource base including the establishment of a CSO Foundation or Fund to finance civil society initiatives.

4. The Way Forward

18. As a first step in building ECA/CSO relationship would be the review of existing modalities for improving partnership including how to make the African Centre for Civil Society (ACCS) and the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society (CHDCS) viable institutional instruments for strengthening the participation of CSOs in development and governance. The secon_ step in the relationship enhancement process would be the development of an agenda of ECA/CSO cooperation that would provide an operational meaning to partnership. This will include process to jointly maintain and monitor some important commitments made at the subregional, regional and international levels such as the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, the Abuja.... on HIV/AIDS, etc.

Review of Existing Institutional Arrangements

19. You may recall that the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Economic and Social Development at its 1997 session established the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society (CHDCS) as a

legislative organ providing a forum to enhance policy dialogue in the member states in the areas of sustainable development and popular participation. The Committee's mission is to help strengthen civil society and human development by enabling ECA draw on opinions of experts in the public and private sectors and civil society, in its operations. The first meeting of CHDCS, which some of you had the opportunity of participating in was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 21-23 June 1999.

20.   Whereas ACCS is ECA's vehicle for strengthening the participation of civil society organizations in development and governance, the Steering Committee represents the voice of civil society in the Centre's organizational structure. As has already been agreed upon in previous consultations between ECA and representatives of the ACCS an institutional arrangement and modality of cooperation and governance was adopted.

21.   The modality of co-operation agreed on at the 5- 6th April meeting of the Steering Committee of ACCS reflecting the legislative responsibility of the CHDCS is outlined for our collective review to see how to work towards making these institutional arrangements more effective and useful instruments for cementing ECA/CSO relations. Details of the functions of each organ is given below:

- The Committee on Human Development and Civil Society of ECA is the highest organ responsible for setting general policy goals and guidelines and legal standing and operation of the Centre. The Committee is comprised of representatives of member states and CSOs and reports to the conference of African Ministers Responsible for Economic and Social Development, the highest governing body of ECA.

- The Executive Secretary of ECA, or his Deputy, is accountable for the operation, performance and finances of the Centre. Appoints the management and staff of ACCS and determines the programme content, budget and activities of the Centre.

- A Steering Committee of 15 member organizations is selected to advice the Executive Secretary on operation, management and programme of ACCS. The Steering Committee is comprised of 10 representatives of CSOs and 5 of ECA. It will have co-responsibility with ECA for fund raising for the Centre and will also monitor ACCS quality and

performance. The committee will periodically meet with the management and staff of the Centre to review programmes accomplishment, approve successive biennial programme of work and assess financial situation of the Centre.

❑ The Director of the Development Management Division (DMD) and the Chief of ACCS will have the responsibility of daily executive management of the Centre. They will also have operational and management responsibilities as specified in the figure provided in the annex1.

Governance Arrangements for ACCS

Conference of Ministers	Governing body of the ECA
Committee on Human Development and Civil Society	1. Assist Member States promote measures in implementation of regional and globally agreed programmes of action pertaining to civil society. 2. Provide advice to the Commission in formulating its work programme. 3. Encourage the integration of civil society dimensions into development policies, plans and programmes at both macroeconomic and sectoral levels. 4. Identify and highlight the major economic and social issues and concerns affecting civil society with a view to promoting policies and strategies for human development and popular participation..
Executive Secretary of ECA	Chief executive of ECA Accountable for ACCS operation, performance and finances. Responsible for ECA financing and financial reporting. Appoints the management and staff of the centre. *in Consultah with Steering committee*
ACCS Steering Committee	Advises ECA Executive Secretary and ACCS Chief on organisational, programme and operational issues. Co-responsibility for fund-raising initiatives. Recommends and reviews content of ACCS programme and budget allocations. Monitors ACCS quality and performance. Reviews ACCS Annual report

Bureau

Director, DMD	Daily executive management of ACCS. Representation of ACCS within ECA and liaison with relevant external bodies and initiatives. Fund-raising and negotiation with donors. Identifying new programme initiatives.
Chief of ACCS	Responsible for preparing plans, budgets and reports. Responsible for programme implementation. Responsible for staffing and their performance. Activating and promoting contacts with CSOs.

Bureau   *Staffing*