United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

Study on Measures to Enhance the Functioning of the Regional Consultation Mechanism of UN Agencies and Organizations working in Africa towards Accelerating the Implementation of NEPAD and the UN-AU Cooperation Programme

Compilation of the Minutes of the Consultant's Meetings with Stakeholders
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 26 to 30 May 2008

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Table of Contents

Introduction

The Eighth Meeting of the RCM held in November 2007, emphasized the centrality of the effective functioning of the cluster system of the RCM to enhancing efficiency and coherence in the delivery of support to AU and its NEPAD programme. The Meeting inter alia, recommended that clusters should be refined and further aligned with AU programmes and with the UN Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. It was also agreed that cluster activities should take into consideration the strategic plans of the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and relevant decisions of AU and RECs. The meeting also called for the evaluation of existing arrangements at the subregional level, with a view to putting in place an institutional framework for collaboration in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme at that level.

In this context, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) commissioned a study on Measures to Enhance the Functioning of the Regional Consultation Mechanism (RCM) of United Nations Agencies and Organizations Working in Africa towards Accelerating the Implementation of NEPAD and the UN-AU Cooperation Programme. An important output of the study will be a well-informed and objective report, with specific, practical and action-oriented recommendations aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the RCM in the delivery of support to AU and its NEPAD programme.

To assist in carrying out the study, ECA secured the services of Dr. Alioune Sall, Executive Director of the African Futures Institute based in Pretoria, South Africa to undertake the study. The Terms of Reference (TORs) of the study (Annex 1) require that the consultant consults widely with relevant stakeholders, including ECA (Headquarters and SROs), cluster conveners, participating agencies, the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat, the RECs, and the AfDB. To this end, Dr. Sall undertook a one-week mission to Addis Ababa to meet and exchange with various stakeholders on issues related to the study.

The consultations were held from 26 to 30 May 2006. All the stakeholders listed above except for the [1]NEPAD Secretariat and RECs participated in the consultations in one form or the other. The final programme of the consultations is provided in Annex 2. The consultations were in the form of general meetings, focus group meetings with individual clusters and telephone discussions. A list of discussions points (Annex 3) was prepared for the meetings with clusters.

This report records the consultant's meetings with stakeholders.

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[1] Following the Addis Ababa consultations, the consultant held discussions with the NEPAD Secretariat in Midrand South Africa, and designed questionnaires for completion by RECs and ECA SROs

Preliminary Discussions with NRID

Date: 26 May 2008
Time: 09:45hrs
Venue: NRID Conference Room

In attendance:

Antonio Pedro
Isatou Gaye
Rawda Omar Clinton
Siham Abdulmelik
Mesfin Haile
Tiblet Tesfaye
Alioune Sall (consultant)

Introduction

Antonio Pedro welcomed the consultant Dr. Alioune Sall, and introduced staff of the NEPAD Support Section. He provided a brief overview of the work of NRID, and proceeded to explain the purpose of the meeting. He indicated that the preliminary discussions were to confer on:

- Areas that needed clarifications in the TORs;
- Expected outcomes of the study;
- Institutions and organizations to meet; and
- The role of ECA SROs in coordinating the participation of RECs.

Clarifications on the TORs and related issues

TORs

Dr. Sall opined that there was need to revisit the goals of the mission. He stated that from the TORs, the study seemed to have two objectives: accelerating the implementation of NEPAD; and that of the UN-AU Cooperation Framework. The clarification sought was whether the study would explore the substantive outputs of the clusters or simply investigate their functioning.

It was clarified that the structure and functioning of the cluster system of the RCM should be examined in relation to supporting the implementation of NEPAD and the UN-AU Cooperation Programme. However, given the monitoring and evaluation task stipulated in the TORs, the study would invariably look at the results and impacts of the clusters, hence the need for also evaluating the substantive aspects of cluster functioning. In addition to other documentation, the periodic progress reports prepared by clusters provide insights into the substantive aspects of cluster functioning. While the alignment of the RCM to the priorities of the African Union and NEPAD is an important component of the study, a critical review of the functioning of the entire cluster system is required in order to ensure that it is well placed to support the implementation of NEPAD and the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU.

Although NEPAD is a programme of the AU, its explicit mention in the TORs is due to the fact that this institutional aspect is yet to be fully internalized by all actors. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that NEPAD does not become "lost" in the phrase "UN-AU Cooperation Programme". However, the Framework Agreement under which the Programme is drawn stipulates that UN support to NEPAD should be aligned with the Programme. It is important to examine how this alignment could be achieved.

Related issues

Dr. Sall sought clarifications on the following:
- At what level do the RCM/clusters intend to develop capacity, bearing in mind that capacity development could be at three levels; policy, organizational and individual?
- What do clusters want to achieve collectively, and at what level do they want impact to be felt?
- What is the meaning of alignment and what is to be aligned?
- What is the thinking on moving away from a supply driven to a partnership mode?

He emphasized the need to be clear on the issues raised above. It was opined that capacity should be built and impact felt at all levels. However, all the issues raised should be clarified at the · general meeting.

Objectives of the general meeting and format

It was agreed that the objective of the general meeting was to enable participants interrogate the TORs, including the expected outcomes. In addition the meeting was intended to discuss the study road map, obtain the views of all stakeholders and reach a common understanding on all aspects of the study, including conceptual, methodological and analytical issues and the approaches to be adopted. The meeting would therefore set the stage for the study and provide an overall picture of the key issues, what needed to be done and how. The follow-up one-on-one discussions with the clusters would provide the opportunity for in depth discussions.

The meeting format was agreed as follows:
- Opening remarks (Antonio)
- Self introductions by participants
- Presentation of the TORs (Isatou)
- Submission on the study (Dr. Sall)
- General discussions
- Closing remarks (Antonio)

Participation of SROs

It was envisaged that all the SRO's would participate in the general meeting. All four had confirmed, except for the SRO-Southern Africa that could not be reached up to the time of the preliminary discussions. It was agreed that SROs should be probed on their involvement in the study process- their views on the establishment of subregional coordination mechanisms, the role

of SROs in facilitating their establishment, and in coordinating the participation of RECs. Clarifications would also be sought on the multiyear programmes with RECs that have been prepared, including the participation of other UN agencies in their elaboration.

Action points

- Contact SRO-SA and the conveners of the Governance and the HRD, Employment and HIV/AIDs clusters to confirm their participation;
- Send the TORs by email to the SROs and reproduce for distribution to the meeting participants; and
- Provide Dr. Sall with a copy of the AU-NEPAD African Action Plan, the multiyear programmes of SROs with RECs and the draft proposal on strengthening the RCM Secretariat.

General Meeting

Date: 26 May 2008
Time: 15:30hrs
Venue: United Nations Conference Center (CR5)

In attendance: (see Annex 4)

Opening

Mr. Antonio Pedro of ECA's NEPAD and Regional Integration Division (NRID) welcomed participants to the meeting. He reminded them that the meeting was the beginning of a weeklong consultation on the study on measures to enhance the functioning of the RCM towards accelerating the implementation of NEPAD and the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. He reminded participants that the study was being conducted in response to a key recommendation of the 8th Meeting of the RCM, which emphasized the centrality of the effective functioning of the cluster system of the RCM to enhancing efficiency and coherence in the delivery of support to the AU and its NEPAD programme.

He recalled related recommendations of the 8th Meeting of the RCM and informed the meeting that an important output of the study would be a well-informed and objective report, with specific, practical and action-oriented recommendations aimed at enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the RCM in its delivery of support to the AU and its NEPAD programme. The meeting, he said, was convened to enable participants reach a common understanding on the study objectives, its expected outcomes, the study roadmap, as well as expectations from different stakeholders. He expressed confidence in the active engagement of all agencies and organizations participating in the RCM throughout the course of the study.

He introduced the consultant as a leading researcher and development thinker in Africa. Mr. Pedro then invited Ms. Isatou Gaye to take the meeting through the terms of reference. This was followed by a round self-introductions before the consultant made his submission:

Consultant's Submission

Conceptual framework

The study should provide a strategic and forward-looking assessment of the RCM and its repositioning in the context of change. This should take into account recent and ongoing initiatives such as the anticipated new strategic plan of the African Union Commission (AU Commission), ECA's recent repositioning, UNDP's new strategic plan and the UN Initiative on Delivering as One.

Alignment of the RCM with NEPAD and AU priorities goes beyond aligning the formal structures; it is part of a broader agenda for the RCM to become a means of operationalizing the partnership between AU and the UN System with a view to moving away from the supply driven 'collaboration'. The relevance of the alignment should be questioned taking into account

efficiency, effectiveness and ownership. Also important is the need to examine the operationalization of partnerships between agencies with different mandates and uneven resource endowments.

Methodological Framework

A desk study is pertinent. In this regard, it is important to source the most important documents.

Interviews will be conducted with a broad spectrum of key informants such as the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat, the Pan African Parliament (PAP), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), ECA Subregional Offices (SROs), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and UNDP Subregional Resource Facilities (SRRFs).

Questionnaires will be designed for qualitative and quantitative analysis. The questionnaire will include four elements:

1. Relevance of the RCM's mandate compared to other coordination mechanisms?
2. The efficiency of resource allocation, includng adequacy, possible improvement and lessons learned?
3. The effectiveness of the RCM- to what extent has the RCM achieved its main objectives and how? What other results have the RCM achieved that was not part of the original objectives? What innovative approaches could be used to make it more effective?
4. What approaches have been used or could be employed to ensure sustainability?

Analytical Framework

UN support to AU and NEPAD presents a basic challenge of capacity building. It is therefore important to examine how to go about assessing capacity at different levels- policy, organizational and individual.

- Impact on enabling environment such as policy, governance, norms
- Impact on the organization, internal efficiency of the organization and its performance
- Impact on individuals, including knowledge, skills and behavior

It is also important to define the different types of results, monitor and evaluate effect/relationships and assess the complexity of results chain (what is critical to having perfect change). Also pertinent are views on satisfactory results chain, tools to be developed and qualitative and quantitative indicators.

Questions to be asked include:

- The likelihood that AU will improve its efficiency as a result of UN System support?
- The likelihood that improved individual capacity translates into organizational performance/efficiency?

Main issues arising and recommendations

Conceptual Aspects

- The study is very timely. However, it is important to understand where we are coming from, where we are now, before mapping out the area of possibilities.

- The guiding principle of the RCM should be working and delivering as one at the regional level. The RCM could learn from the operations of UN Country Teams and the Initiative on delivering as one at the national level.

- Leadership, both at the level of AU and UN is key, as it allows individuals space and inspiration to be creative.

- UN agencies should harmonize mandates, ensure complementarity, and align programming cycles.

- It is important to understand what is to be aligned and the different variables involved. In addition, alignment should take into account the interface between UN and AU programmes, the programming cycles and the need to ensure continuity. The whole programming cycle-from planning to monitoring, evaluation and reporting, may be examined.

- The study should examine the engagement of some clusters with ministerial bodies such as the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the African Ministerial Councils on Water, and on Science and Technology in order to gain insights into ongoing alignment initiatives and to recommend ways of up-scaling them.

- In situating the study in the context of change, it is important to understand that change is a continuous phenomenon. Therefore, recommendations on practical measures for the functioning of the RCM should take account of the fact that change is a continuous phenomenon and that the Mechanism should be able to adapt to change and function effectively under continuously changing circumstances.

- The study should examine the functioning of the RCM in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. In doing so, it should assess what is being done and how, what works, what doesn't and why? The multiple memberships of agencies in different clusters should be assessed in terms of participation and effectiveness.

- It is important to move away from processes to outcomes and impacts and to concretize achievements that have been made. A monitoring and evaluation framework should be developed for this purpose.

- The AU and UN agencies should critically assess their comparative advantages under the changing circumstances and effectively partner with other players to enhance delivery on their respective mandates.

9

- Civil society, the private sector and donors have been participating in the activities of some clusters (e.g. Water). The study should examine such partnerships and explore the possibility of up scaling them. It is to be noted that some donors such as the European Union are interested in working as equal partners with other development actors such as UN agencies to support the AU and NEPAD.

- The AU Commission is in the process of developing a new strategic plan. It is important to engage the Commission in discussions on their programme orientation and priorities. Also important is the need to engage the leadership of the AU Commission in discussions on the continued relevance of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU for the organization.

- Paragraph 2 of the Programme centers on partnership between the UN and AU. It is therefore important that the AU Commission assumes leadership and ownership of the process. A retreat should be organized with the AU Commission to discuss the accelerated implementation of the Programme.

- A concrete action plan should be developed in order to make the Programme operational. A delivery strategy, which takes into account the programming cycle of UN agencies, AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat should also be developed. The strategy should be clear on what is to be achieved and how.

- The multiyear programmes that ECA SROs have developed with RECs, provide a good basis for coordination of UN Support to the AU and NEPAD at the subregional level. The study should make recommendations on concrete and practical measures needed to establish and operationalize subregional coordinating mechanisms. It should also take into account the need for ownership by the beneficiaries. In this regard, the consultant should undertake adequate consultations with the SROs for in-depth discussions on issues pertaining to subregional coordination mechanisms.

Methodological Aspects

Documentation

- The Science and Technology cluster is working seamlessly with the AU Commission. The cluster could provide rich material on alignment with the decisions of the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST) and on the AU-NEPAD Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA).

- The Audit of the AU and the inaugural speech of the new AU Commission chairperson would provide insights into the operations of the Commission and the new policy direction.

Consultations

- The Permanent Representatives Council to the AU, selected civil society representatives, academia, the Regional Directors Teams (RDTs) and the donor community should be added to the list of bodies to be consulted.

- Focused group discussions instead of individual interviews should be employed, as they are less subjective.

Analytical Aspects

- Impact should be at all levels- policy, organizational and individual.

- Questionnaires should be designed in relation to the parameters to be measured.

- Proper sampling should be used to come up with intended outcomes.

- Terms such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coordination and collaboration in the context of the RCM should be clearly defined.

- Efficiency of the RCM should be measured against its set objectives.

- The framework should interrogate the alignment of the RCM with AU and NEPAD priorities.

- Measurement indicators to be used at various levels should be clearly defined.

- There should be clear linkages between the conceptual, methodological and analytical frameworks.

Wrap up

The consultant thanked participants for their useful suggestions and recommendations, which he said would help refine the conceptual framework. He said that alignment should come with additionality and should take into account what is possible. He added that:

- The set of indicators to be developed will include process and product (qualitative and quantitative) and should be able to measure change; and

- Partnerships mean different things to different people and it is important that this is clearly defined in the context of the RCM and support to AU and its NEPAD programme.

- Incorporation of some of the suggestions that are outside the scope of the TORs would require additional time and resources.

Mr. Pedro thanked participants for their active participation and useful contributions and reminded them that the consultant would be engaging them in in-depth discussions at the level of the clusters.

Infrastructure cluster

Date: 27 May 2008
Time: 10:00hrs
Venue: NRID Conference Room

In Attendance:

Antonio Pedro, ECA/ NRID
Strike Mkandla, UNEP
Chukwudozie Ezigbalike, ECA/ISTD
Jacgues Moulot, ECA/ ISTD
Milha Desta, UNEP
Hopestone Chavula, ECA/ ISTD
Bedir Ayderus, UNEP
Rose Munyiva, UNEP
Marie Theresa Guiebo, ECA/ NRID
Isatou Gaye, ECA/ NRID
Mesfin Haile, ECA/ NRID
Alioune Sall, Consultant

Following the round of introductions, Mr. Antonio Pedro, Chief of the Infrastructure and Natural Resources Development Section of NRID and convener of the Infrastructure Cluster provided an overview of the structure and functioning of the cluster. He informed participants that the cluster is more active at the sub-cluster level, in particular the sub-clusters on Water and Energy. These were organized around inter-agency frameworks for collaboration known respectively, as UN-Water/Africa and UN-Energy/Africa. He observed that there was no sub-cluster on transport and that the ICT sub-cluster functioned on an ad-hoc basis. The UN-Water and UN-Energy arrangements have been lauded as the best forms of inter-agency collaboration in the context of the RCM.

Mr. Pedro highlighted the nature of the activities covered by each sub-cluster, and then gave representatives of the respective sub-clusters the opportunity to provide more detailed information.

Transport Sub-Cluster

The transport sub-cluster is not yet functional. Several UN agencies including ECA play a pivotal role in the implementation of the NEPAD and AU programmes on transport, including the NEPAD Short Term Action Plan (STAP) and the AU Transport Infrastructure Master Plan. Otherwise, collaboration with the African Union Commission is mostly on an ad hoc basis. Transport is subdivided into several sub-sectors and apart from ECA, UNDESA and the World Bank; agencies do not work in all the different sectors. However, the possibility of establishing a sub-cluster on transport will be explored.

A main outstanding activity in this cluster was associated with the implementation of the Sub Saharan African Transport Policy (SSATP), which is a joint programme of ECA and the World Bank. The ultimate objective of the SSATP is to promote policy coherence and development of the transport sector in Africa, with a focus on road management and financing, making transport services affordable, and trade facilitation.

Water Sub-Cluster

The key objectives of the Water sub-cluster are to contribute to the implementation of the Africa Water Vision 2025 and the African Union Sirte Declaration on Water and Agriculture. The sub-cluster produces two publications, namely, the African Water Journal and the African Water Development Report (AWDR).

UN Water/Africa, which is designated as the sub-cluster on water, predates the cluster system of the RCM and evolved from the partnership between the Interagency Group on Africa (IGOA) and the UN Water Task Force. UN Water/Africa supports the agenda of AMCOW. UNEP, which is a member of the sub-cluster, hosts the AMCOW Trust Fund. The sub-cluster assisted AMCOW to establish the African Water Facility (AWF) hosted by the AfDB. The sub-cluster has an Addis Ababa sub-group chaired by UNEP to facilitate regular consultations among Addis Ababa-based UN agencies. ECA serves as the Permanent Secretariat of the sub-cluster, but the Chair rotates.

UN Water/Africa supported the African Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW) in organizing the Pan African Implementation Conference on Water (PANAFCON) in 2003. The outcomes of the Conference fed into the Sirte Conference on Water and Agriculture held in 2004. The Sirte Conference took stock of the water agenda in Africa, as well as those in related sectors and came out with comprehensive outcomes. The Conference was very instrumental in bringing together the UN inputs with those of other partners such as River Basin Organizations (RBOs) and donor agencies working in the water sector. The meeting recognized the African ministerial bodies on Environment, Water, and Agriculture emphasized the need for their designation as specialized committees of AU.

Donors such as GTZ, JICA and others participate as observers in meetings of the sub-cluster in order to understand the positions taken. Non-donors such as the Global Water Partnership (GWP) also participate. This contributes to policy coherence and better coordination between the actions of the members of the sub-cluster and those of donors and other stakeholders. It was recommended that other clusters of the RCM adopt this approach.

Energy Sub-Cluster

UN-Energy is collaborating with the African Union to formulate the Africa Energy Vision 2030. In addition, several joint activities were implemented, including a non-recurrent publication on power sector reform in Africa, formulation of Africa's position on power sector reform for Fourteenth and Fifteenth Sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-14 and 15), capacity building on integrated energy planning, among others. The AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and the AfDB are members of the cluster. The sub-cluster has been very

13

successful in working with the AU Commission. Some UN agencies including ECA sit in the policy organs of the Africa Energy Commission (AFREC).

To facilitate dialogue, there is need to match ECA representation in this sub-cluster with that of other UN agencies, which are represented at high-level, including at the level of Heads of Agencies.

ICT Sub-Cluster

The sub-cluster focal point was not present, but his representative provided the consultant with a written report of the various activities that the sub-cluster had undertaken, as well as the plans of the sub-cluster for 2008.

Issues arising and recommendations

- The infrastructure cluster, which was termed a puzzle of four pieces, has not held meetings since 2006 and there is no mechanism to foster collaboration among its four sub-clusters. While attempting to develop joint programmes between the four sub-clusters might not be realistic, efforts should be deployed to establish a platform for the sub-clusters to share experiences on their functioning.

- The different sub-clusters are at different levels of operationalization and can learn from one another. For example, most of the agencies that participate in the water sub-cluster also participate in the sub-cluster on energy. The rich experience of the water sub-cluster could be shared with the energy sub-cluster to enhance its functioning. This provides a good basis for coordinating the activities of the different sub-clusters at the cluster level.

- The NEPAD Infrastructure Short-Term Action Plan (STAP) provides a framework for the intervention of the cluster. The Medium to Long Term Strategic Framework (MLTSF), once adopted, would provide the roadmap for high-level strategic planning. However, the effective functioning of a cluster depends on the mandate given. The various sub-clusters have clear mandates from ministerial conferences and relevant AU declarations and this should facilitate their work.

- The AU/NEPAD dichotomy can at times pose problems for clusters. There is need for a smooth integration of NEPAD into AU structures and processes to ensure continuity in the work of the clusters. UN agencies can play a role to facilitate a smooth transition.

- The minutes of the last meeting of the AU technical committee on transport, which includes several UN agencies, will be shared with the consultant.

Subsequent to the meeting, the list of discussion points was shared with the cluster convener to elicit his views on the functioning of the RCM and related matters.

Human Resource Development, Employment, Health and HIV/AIDs Cluster

Date: 27 May 2008
Time: 11:00hrs
Venue: NRID Conference Room

Attendance:

Mohammed Cherif Diarra, UNESCO
Sandra Zawedde, ECA/ACGS
Elleni Haddis, ILO
Abdoul Dieng, UNAIDS
Michaela de Sousa, UNICEF
Alioune Sall, Consultant
Isatou Gaye, ECA/NRID
Siham Abdulmelik, ECA/NRID

Following the introductions, the cluster convener, UNICEF provided an overview of the activities of the cluster from 2007. The cluster progress report presented at the 8th Meeting of the RCM provides details of the cluster functioning and activities and its plans for the next couple of years.

The guiding documents for the activities of the cluster include: The Second Decade for Education, Universal Access, African Development Forum (ADF), 2006 and Africa Fit for Children. The cluster is also guided by the Declarations and Decisions of the African Union and its relevant ministerial bodies. It works with the relevant Departments of the AU Commission, such as Economic and Social Affairs in the implementation of its activities. The cluster also participates in the activities of other clusters, since it deals with crosscutting issues.

Highlights of key activities:

In March 2007, the cluster held its first consultative meeting on how to effectively engage with the AU Commission, and examined the role of the UN in this regard.

In June 2007, the cluster identified key activities for joint implementation of relevant recommendations of the ADF with the AU Commission.

Main outputs of the cluster:

- Prepared an information tool kit that contains all relevant reference materials and documents pertaining to its work as part of its documentation and knowledge management initiative. These are disseminated in all meetings.

- Conducted a mid-term review on the "Africa Fit for Children" Initiative with the involvement and participation of the RECs, UN agencies, NEPAD Secretariat, AU Commission, UNCTs and civil society.

15

- Participated and provided inputs into relevant AU Ministerial meetings. Key decisions and declarations of the AU were identified to inform future activities.

- Developed a draft work plan that would be finalized at the level of the cluster following the receipt and validation of information on contributions (in kind and monetary) aimed at strengthening the capacity of the AU Commission.

Main issues arising and recommendations

- The role of the AU Commission in the clusters needs to be reoriented to providing direction and guidance in the process of accelerating the implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU.

- The AU Commission should be requested to provide information on the orientation of its new strategic plan to ensure that alignment takes into account the relevant priorities of the Commission. In addition, priorities identified in a number of recent AU Commission sectoral strategic plans should be taken into account in the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU.

- There is a need to explore how to involve the RECs in the implementation of the various action plans. It is important to strengthen their capacity to ensure their effective involvement.

- The shortage of staff at the AU Commission limits the collaboration with the cluster.

- There is need for a global assessment of the capacity needs of the Commission, including a clear articulation of the relationship between the Commission and the other organs of the Union, including their different roles. This would ensure the further development of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU in a holistic manner.

Subsequent to the meeting, the list of discussion points was shared with the cluster convener to elicit her views on the functioning of the RCM and related matters.

Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD) of ECA

Date: 27 May 2008
Time: 12:00hrs
Venue: GPAD Conference Room

In attendance:

Kaleb Demeksa, ECA/GPAD
Guillermo N Mangue, ECA/GPAD
Gonzague Rosali, ECA/GPAD
Emebet Mesfin/ ECA/GPAD
Isatou Gaye, ECA/NRID
Rawda Omar-Clinton, ECA/NRID
Alioune Sall, Consultant

The meeting with GPAD was convened to provide the consultant with insights into ECA's support to the governance component of the NEPAD programme, as the convener and key members of the Governance clusters were on mission during the consultation period and could therefore not be consulted.

Following the round of introductions, Mr. Kaleb Demeksa provided an overview of GPAD's involvement in NEPAD. Mr. Demeksa stated that GPAD's involvement is at three levels: mutual review of aid effectiveness, jointly monitored by ECA and OECD; the APRM exercise, ECA being a key strategic partner; and civil society engagement in the implementation of NEPAD, particularly APRM. The Division's cooperation with the AU Commission is limited to specific activities and is usually on an ad hoc basis. Involvement in the RCM process is limited to the focal point in the Division.

Main issues raised and recommendations

- ECA's role in supporting the AU and its NEPAD programme are two-fold: ECA as the coordinator of UN system-wide support to the AU and its NEPAD programme; and ECA as a UN entity and as part of the African institutional landscape, providing direct support to the AU and its NEPAD programme.

- Effective support to the AU and its NEPAD programme requires the mobilization of XB resources, as RB resources are usually limited. The study should therefore make recommendations on innovative financing mechanisms.

- The study on the cluster system of the RCM conducted in 2007 was limited in the sense that it did not provide concrete and actionable recommendations to enhance the functioning of the RCM. It also did not address subregional coordination issues and the implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. These reasons necessitated the commissioning of the current study.

- The participation of ECA Divisions in the RCM should not be limited to focal points. The focal points should be the points of entry, but issues pertaining to the functioning and activities of the RCM should be shared with all staff as they are also in a position to contribute. Coordination in all Divisions of the Commission is key.

- The AU/ECA/AfDB Secretariat if revitalized could play a key role in ensuring effective support to the AU and its NEPAD Programme. This should therefore be done as a matter of priority.

Peace and Security Cluster

Date: 27 May 2008
Time: 15:00 hrs
Venue: NRID Conference Room

In Attendance:

B.B.I Jagne, UNLO-AU
Helen Bekele, WFP
Bedir Ayderus, UNEP
Rose Munyiva, UNEP
Strike Mkandla, UNEP
Sara Mohammod, IOM
Befikadu Berhanu, UNHCR
Patrice Vahard, OHCHR
Mohamod Cherif Diarra, UNESCO
Abdoul Dieng, UNAIDS
Isatou Gaye, NRID
Mesfin Haile, NRID
Alioune Sall, Consultant

Following the introductions, Mr. Baboucarr Blaise Jagne provided an overview of the structure and functioning of the cluster. United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA) is the convener of the cluster, but the United Nations Liaison Office with the AU (UNLO-AU) has been designated to coordinate the activities of the cluster. The cluster comprises three sub-clusters, namely: Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) chaired by UNHCR; Peace and Security Architecture of the AU, chaired by the UN-AU Peace Support Team (UN-AU/PST); and Human Rights Justice and Reconciliation, chaired by OHCHR.

The cluster is very active and meets as often as required. It deals with peace and security issues in a comprehensive manner and within the framework of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. The Programme places emphasis on peace and security issues for the first three years. All sub-clusters work closely with counterparts in relevant Departments of the AU Commission, such as the Peace and Security, and Political Affairs Departments.

Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD) sub cluster

The cluster works within the greater framework of the AU's Peace and Security Architecture. It employs a three-track approach: defining the conceptual framework; assessing the status of PCRD; and building AU capacity. Progress has been made on the first two- the concept of human security is now shifting from state security to human security; and the PRCD policy is being disseminated widely with the involvement of RECs and civil society. As regards the third- building AU capacity- there are challenges. The AU Commission has very little capacity and because of this, not much progress is being made in building the capacity of the Union in PCRD.

A consultant had been engaged to help, but due to systemic problems, the consultant had to leave.

Issues raised and recommendations

- The capacity to be built has not been clearly articulated. There is need to know the kind of capacity that is required in order to determine what should be delivered on.

- The RCM is working as a political consensus body and not as an operational body, hence the reason for little delivery. The Mechanism should be able to respond more to the demands at hand. The main problem is systemic.

- Its open-ended nature does not promote responsibility and accountability. In order to promote accountability, the cluster system should be closed with specific inputs and outputs. A few areas should be prioritized and resources mobilized around those areas for implementation and effective delivery of support.

- The work of individual agencies should not be reported as cluster work at Regional Consultation Meetings. Reports should center on joint activities undertaken in the context of the cluster system.

Human Right, Justice and Reconciliation (HRJR) sub-cluster

- The cluster is open-ended and its members comprise agencies in and outside Addis Ababa. While regular meetings are held with members in Addis Ababa, consultations with members outside Addis Ababa are via email and telephone.

- The cluster works closely with the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) of the AU Commission and with other AU organs. It carries out joint planning with the Commission. The relevant Departments of the Commission (DPA and the Department of Peace and Security (DPS)) provide their work programmes to the cluster indicating areas of possible collaboration for the implementation of joint activities. The submissions are considered by the cluster and adequate consultations undertaken to ensure buy-in by all.

Main issues raised and recommendations

- Challenges: Conceptual issues- while there is agreement on the issue of human rights, agreeing on the concepts of justice and reconciliation has been problematic. Furthermore, justice is not being addressed by any of the AU structures. There is need to take decisions on these conceptual issues sooner, rather than later.

- Alignment is not an issue for the cluster, as planning is done in close consultation with the AU Commission. The Human Rights Committee and the AU Commission now communicate regularly.

- There is merit in synergistic collaboration. Agencies participating in the cluster address issues with the AU Commission in a collective manner. The lead agency is determined on the basis of the issue at hand. At the level of ECA, the ES addresses AU Summits taking into account inputs from the different agencies.

- It is important to examine how best UN subregional offices can work together to deliver as one at that level. The RCM provides an opportunity that needs to be seized.

- The availability of a consolidated business plan for the RCM will promote UN working together at the regional level. Its preparation should therefore be expedited.

General discussions

Main issues arising and recommendations

- The preparation of a consolidated business plan is the way forward. The business plan would facilitate the alignment of priorities and make the desired goal of delivering as one into reality. It would provide a clear direction as to where the RCM is heading, promote sharing of responsibilities, facilitate the mobilization of resources and enhance delivery, as well as impact. The AU Commission should be fully involved in the preparation of the business plan.

- In its communication to cluster conveners to prepare their respective business plans, the RCM Secretariat had provided an outline for the plans. It is important that clusters prepare and transmit their plans to the Secretariat for consolidation into one RCM business plan.

- In order to deliver as one, agencies should be willing to surrender their individual identities to be subsumed under one identity. It is important that collaboration grows to the level where one logo would be used for all agencies.

- Time should be allocated at Regional Consultation Meetings for clusters to reflect on issues such as coordination and collaboration, delivery and impact.

- Efforts should now concentrate on conflict prevention rather that peacekeeping, so that funds that are currently allocated for humanitarian purposes could be diverted for development purposes.

- A retreat should be organized with the AU Commission outside Addis Ababa to facilitate and expedite the articulation of the remaining priorities pertaining to the peace and security.

- ECA's SROs should be sensitized on the different sector action plans and their capacities should be enhanced, to enable them take on the responsibility of coordinating UN work at the subregional level.

Subsequent to the meeting, the list of discussion points was shared with the cluster convener to elicit his views on the functioning of the RCM and related matters.

Science and Technology Cluster

Date: 28 May 2008
Time: 09:00 hrs
Venue: NRID Conference Room

In Attendance:

Mohamed Cherif Diarra, UNESCO
Rose Munyiava, UNEP
Bedir Aydems, UNEP
Milha Desta, UNEP
Strike Mkandla, UNEP
Kodjo P Abassa, ECA
Rawda Omar Clinton, ECA
Theodros Ababte, UNFPA-LO
Hassan M. Yousil, ECA
Alex Tindimubona, ECA
Isatou Gaye, UNECA
Mesfin Haile, UNECA
Alioune Sall, Consultant

Following the round of introductions, Mr. Mohamed Cherif Diarra introduced UNESCO as the convener of the cluster and ECA as the vice convener. The cluster comprises 12 thematic groups organized around a clear vision with well-defined priorities. He then presented the cluster's activity report, which comprised four areas.

Synergy of action: Members of the cluster worked hard in the last couple of years to enhance synergy among different components of the cluster. Members clarified what the cluster should do and how. These milestones were discussed at the Science with Africa Conference held in March 2008 in Addis Ababa. Efforts and inputs are now concentrated on delivering on concrete outputs and making impact.

New model/format of clustering: The cluster has established contacts at the highest levels of the AU Commission, UNESCO and ECA. The new model promotes integration and synergy of actions.

Regular meetings: Three way meetings are regularly held with UNESCO, ECA and the AU Commission. So far, three have been held (two in Addis Ababa and one in Paris). The meetings discussed issues such as priorities to be focused on, problems encountered and how to resolve them. Key players such as UNESCO, ECA, UNDP, FAO, and ILO attended the third meeting convened by the AU Commission. Key cluster and sub-cluster activities were reviewed in the presence of the incoming and outgoing commissioners of the AU Commission. The Commission's Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology attended the cluster meeting. Among the key outcomes of the meeting, was the decision for the cluster to be closely associated with the decision-making organs of AU.

Creation of an African Cluster on Science and Technology: Cluster members include African Scientists not only at the continental, but also at the regional and national levels.

Following Mr. Diarra's intervention, Mr. Alex Tindimubona provided additional information on the functioning of the cluster.

- The cluster has implemented the decision of the 8th Meeting of the RCM on the co-chairing of clusters by the AU Commission.

- Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) indicators have been elaborated in collaboration with the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat. This has helped achieve the objective of alignment.

- The African Cluster on Science and Technology is now integrated into AU decision-making structures. The cluster meets every six months and serves as the technical arm of the African Ministerial Council on Science and Technology (AMCOST). The convener (UNESCO) and vice convener (ECA) of the UN cluster are members of the African cluster, thus enhancing alignment.

Mr. Kojo Abassa, a member of UN Biotech/Africa briefed the meeting on the activities of the body. UNCTAD coordinates UN Biotech/Africa, which has developed a website and publishes a newsletter. The body will be officially launched by the end of July 2008. Mr. Abassa expressed interest to participate in meetings of the Science and Technology Cluster. He opined that UN Biotech/Africa should be a sub-cluster of the cluster.

Main issues arising and recommendations

- The RCM Secretariat requested the Science and Technology convener to communicate in writing to the Secretariat, the number of meetings the cluster has held and dates and the main issues discussed. In addition, the Secretariat requested for the minutes of the meetings and the cluster's activity report.

- The cluster should discuss the modalities for incorporating UN Biotech/Africa as one of its sub-clusters.

- The cluster has different access points at the AU Commission. There is need for the different Departments of the Commission involved to also coordinate.

- UN interagency mechanisms can help coordinate activities that are assigned to more than one African ministerial body. A case in point is the task of setting up an African Panel on Climate Change, jointly assigned to AMCEN and AMCOST.

- Clusters should report on activities that have been planned and implemented in the context of the cluster system of the RCM. The RCM Secretariat will forward the format

for reporting on progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the 8th Meeting of the RCM, which had already been shared with all cluster conveners.

The list of discussion points was shared with the cluster convener to elicit his views on the funding of the RCM and related matters.

Environment, Population and Urbanization Cluster

Date: 28 May 2008
Time: 10:00hrs
Venue: NRID Conference Room

In attendance:

Strike Mkandla, UNEP
Hassan Musa Yousif, ECA/ACGSD
Mohammed Cherif Diarra, UNESCO
Milha Desta, UNEP
Bedir Ayderus, UNEP
Rose Munyiava, UNEP
Thedros Abate, UNFPA-LO
Kwadwo Tutu, ECA/FSSD
Siham Abdulmelik, ECA/NRID
Rawda Omar-Clinton, ECA/NRID
Isatou Gaye, ECA/NRID
Alioune Sall, Consultant

Following the introductions, Mr. Strike Mkandla provided an overview of the functioning of the cluster. The activities of the cluster are guided by declarations and decisions of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), the African Ministerial Conference on Housing, Urbanization and Development (AMCHUD) and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) framework. UN-HABITAT is the convener of the cluster and there are no sub-clusters. The cluster used to hold meetings in the margins of the governing councils that deal with issues related to its different thematic areas. However, since the 8th Meeting of the RCM, the cluster has not held meetings.

The cluster worked well in the past and there used to be a lot of interagency collaboration within the cluster. These included the holding of regular meetings, the implementation of joint activities and the sharing of information and views on planned activities. Examples of joint activities are: the production of the World Population Report, the implementation of climate change related activities, and the provision of inputs into meetings of the African Ministerial Council on Housing and the Commission on Sustainable Development.

Main issues arising and recommendations

- There is a need to revitalize the cluster to enable it regain its status as a properly functioning cluster. Discussions to this end should commence immediately.

- The added value of the cluster is clear, as it would help engender collaborative work. The different themes addressed by the cluster and their importance in the region provides many opportunities for collaborative work.

25

- The African ministerial processes related to the different thematic areas provide different access point at the AU Commission. This would be enhanced once the specialized technical committees relevant to the cluster's thematic areas have been established.

- The cluster needs to be subdivided into sub-clusters, as the different thematic areas are handled through different governing bodies. The creation of sub-clusters would allow for greater delivery of outputs and would improve management, and facilitate the holding of regular meetings, particular by Addis Ababa-based agencies.

- In addition to being the convener of the cluster, UN-HABITAT also hosts the Secretariat. However, there is need to rethink the management of the cluster. There is need to rotate the position of convener among the different participating agencies. The terms of reference of the cluster should be drawn and the aspect of rotating the convener position should be embedded into it.

- The effective functioning of the cluster is determined to a greater extent by the dynamism of the convener, and to a lesser extent, by his/her location.

- The work of organizing the cluster and coordinating its activities should not be the sole responsibility of one individual, as was the case in the past. The functioning of the cluster should be a team effort. This is to ensure that a vacuum would not be created once the individual is no longer there.

- Information sharing is key to the functioning of the cluster. More information exchange would enhance collaboration. In this regard, a communication strategy should be developed to facilitate the exchange of views and information and to organize and enhance delivery.

- Joint programming is key to effective collaboration. In this regard, members of the clusters should share their respective draft work plans for review and inputs prior to finalization. A joint work plan that would include a monitoring and evaluation framework should then be developed and implemented on the basis of each agency's comparative advantage. Funding should be sourced collectively on the basis of the joint work plan.

- RECs should be involved in the work of the cluster. ECA's SROs could help to facilitate their involvement.

- UNESCO should be welcomed as a member of the cluster, as education is crosscutting and the cluster is open ended.

- The cluster will communicate its views on the discussion points that were circulated by 30 May 2008.

Industry, Trade and Market Access (ITMA) Cluster

Date: 28 May 2008
Time: 13:30hrs
Venue: NRID Conference Room

Participants:

Abdoulahi Mahamat, ECA/TFED
Stephen Karingi, ECA/TFED
Eric Lacanlale, UNIDO (via telephone from Vienna)
Alioune Sall, Consultant
Isatou Gaye, ECA/NRID
Siham Abdulmalik, ECA/NRID
Mesfin Haile, ECA/NRID

Ms. Isatou Gaye thanked members of the cluster for attending the meeting. She introduced them to the consultant and to her NRID colleagues. Following the introductions, Ms. Gaye briefed members about the purpose and objectives of the study and the consultations. She invited them to raise any issues they wished to discuss before turning to the discussions points.

Mr. Eric Lacanlale stated that UNIDO, as convener of the cluster remains committed to its effective functioning. He added that the Director General of UNIDO had held discussions with the Executive Secretary of ECA and the then Chief Executive of the NEPAD Secretariat on issues related to the functioning of the cluster system. UNIDO had been in contact with ECA regarding support to the AU and its NEPAD programme and to discuss issues pertaining to the next ITMA cluster meeting to be held in Addis Ababa in September 2008. As part of its capacity building drive, UNIDO is prepared to second an expert to the NEPAD Secretariat.

Further, Mr. Lacanlale informed the meeting that the Chief Executives Board (CEB) inter-agency cluster on trade and productive sectors aims at streamlining the activities of the UN system under one framework at the global level. He said that since the membership of the global-level cluster and ITMA is the same, it provides a good opportunity to coordinate global level and regional level initiatives and actions. A concrete example of successful collaboration between the two bodies was the coordination of efforts towards their participation in an AU meeting on the implementation of an action plan for the industrial development of Africa. A group of experts will meet in July 2008 to further the implementation of the action plan.

Following this intervention, Ms. Gaye referred members to the discussion points, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

1   Purpose and functioning of the RCM

The RCM is an excellent mechanism to bring together UN agencies to support Africa's development agenda. It is therefore very relevant. In terms of functioning, the working methods are efficient and there is good attendance at regional consultation meetings, which is an

indication of the level of interest in the mechanism. However, indicators are needed to measure effectiveness.

2 Functioning of the ITMA cluster in the context of the RCM

The cluster is not really effective. Even though there are continuous interactions among agencies, these are not happening in the overall context of agencies' work programmes. However, a consultant has been engaged to put together a joint work programme to facilitate the implementation of joint activities on capacity building for the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat.

3 Multiple membership in clusters

Membership of agencies in global-level and regional level clusters is considered complementary. Multiple memberships in various clusters at the same level (eg. regional) can also be quite useful given the interrelationships among the different thematic areas. It can be an advantage if managed well. For example, UNIDO's work in the Science and Technology cluster complements its work in the ITMA cluster.

4 Improving intra and inter cluster coordination

- Intra cluster coordination could be built around specific activities that clusters agree to undertake together. A matrix of deliverables could be drawn up and updated regularly. This would keep everyone at the same level of information in order to avoid duplication.

- There should be periodic sharing of information on what each agency plans to do to facilitate the planning and implementation of joint activities. This is happening at the level of the CEB cluster and the regional level cluster can learn from it.

- Clusters should develop strategic calendars that would spell out planned activities and events for uploading to a common server- e.g. shared drive that can be accessed by everyone. ECA, as the Secretariat of the RCM, could be a repository of such information. However, there should be an incentive for sharing such information.

5 Difficulties, challenges and constraints

- Clusters are not doing very well in terms of coordination and collaboration. Agencies have been seen working in similar projects at the same time.
- Support is not structured and systematic. It is mainly provided on an ad hoc basis in response to requests from the AU Commission, RECs and member States.
- Communication is not effective.
- The ITMA cluster is at the organizational phase and identity and ownership is yet to be clarified.
- There is the challenge of ensuring buy-in and developing a common work programme.
- Getting in touch with Geneva-based organizations participating in the cluster is difficult, as they are quite busy most of the time.

6   Impacts and lessons learned

It is too early to talk about impacts. However, in terms of **achievements:**

- There is higher visibility of industry and trade in the context of the RCM. Heads of institutions have signed joint press releases on the work underway.
- There is recognition of the role of the UN in pushing Africa's trade and industry agenda, such as the African Partnership Forum (APF) and Aid for Trade (AfT).
- Linking industry and trade would help advance the economic development of Africa.

However, the challenge remains very high. The cluster should work towards tackling all the issues related to industrialization and AfT – two important issues at the top of Africa's development agenda.

7   Current and future involvement of AU Commission, NEPAD Secretariat and RECs

- Involvement should not be limited to participating in regional consultation meetings. Participation should be continuous and aimed at building synergies.
- The regional and subregional bodies should participate as partners. The AU Commission needs to identify focal points that would be actively engaged in each of the clusters.

8 Improving the functioning of the RCM for the effective implementation of NEPAD and The ten-year capacity program

- The RCM should serve as a platform for coordinated resource mobilization. Otherwise, individual agencies will continue competing for donor resources.
- A monitoring and evaluation system should be established to measure progress, effectiveness and impacts at cluster and RCM levels.

9   Improving the functioning of the ITMA cluster

- There should be joint mobilization of resources and their synergistic utilization. Pooled resources ensure optimal utilization.
- Within the framework of ITMA cluster, it is possible to organize a meeting for African countries to deal with trade policies. To this end, UNIDO can help through its productive capacity building budget for Africa.

10 Alignment of clusters and their activities with AU programmes and priorities (including NEPAD) and with those of RECs

- A comprehensive inventory of ongoing ITMA related regional programmes should be undertaken. The extent to which programmes are aligned and the need for such alignment should also be determined.
- Joint surveys of ITMA related issues should be conducted together with the African Union Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat.

- Joint studies and publications (AU Commission, NEPAD Secretariat and ECA), on selected ITMA related issues should be promoted
- A calendar of ITMA related events such as workshops, and conferences should be posted on the ECA and NEPAD web sites
- A web-based directory of experts providing information on who does what should be established. This would facilitate networking among experts working on ITMA related issues.
- The multiyear programmes of ECA SROs with RECs could be used as a basis for aligning cluster activities with the priorities of RECs.

11 Changes foreseen in the configurations of clusters

- No changes are foreseen in the ITMA cluster. However, the private sector, to the extent possible, could be invited to participate in the activities of the clusters.

- As regards other clusters of the RCM, discussions during the 8th Meeting of the RCM suggest that there is no need for drastic changes. The configuration of the clusters is based on AU and NEPAD priorities and therefore remains relevant.

12 Development of consolidated business plan and a monitoring and evaluation system for the RCM

- A consolidated business plan drawn from the work plans of individual clusters should be prepared. The business plan would provide an overview of what each cluster is doing and would serve as a mechanism to promote accountability. It would also provide a sense of how the system is moving collectively.
- The business plan should be strategic. It should not be an aggregate of agencies' plans. It should spell out the collective support being provided to the AU and its NEPAD programme and should serve as a mechanism for joint resource mobilization.

13 Resource mobilization

- The consolidated business plan is the right way to proceed.
- It is important to start looking at new modalities such as multi donor trust funds, pooled funding, which is the trend in the current aid architecture. It is therefore important to examine how multi donor trust funds can be applied at country and at regional levels.

14 General sustainability of the RCM

- The sustainability of the RCM would depend on what it is able to produce and the value added. Therefore, it is important to measure the effectiveness of the RCM and to know the difference it has made.
- The wisdom of delivering as one is certainly a justification for the existence of the RCM, but it is not enough. Lessons could be drawn from the experiences of UNSIA. However, it should be remembered that UNSIA was established when ODA had just started declining. The two contexts are different.

- It is also important to question what alternative is available in the absence of the RCM. Even if there is an alternative, there is need to assess if that alternative is more efficient than the RCM.

15   The establishment of sub regional coordination mechanism

- There is need for subregional coordination mechanisms, which should be linked with the RCM. The ITMA cluster is already working with RECs and it makes sense to continue working with these bodies.

16 Involvement of AfDB in the implementation of the Ten Year Capacity Building Programme

- AfDB needs to be involved in this process, given the importance of financing development in Africa, including NEPAD priorities. The bank is helping to finance the implementation of individual country and regional projects, which support the regional integration agenda.
- The mandate of the UN system and that of AfDB are complementary. Beyond that, the cluster system could be used to leverage Official Development Assistance (ODA) and to increase financial flows through loans and investments.
- UNIDO has established a unit to work with international financial institutions focusing on AfDB, IFAD and WB. The idea is to develop specific investment programmes that can be supported by these financial institutions. This is a very good lesson for the cluster system with the AfDB as a major partner.

Advocacy and Communication Cluster

Date: 29 May 2008

Time: 17:00hrs

Participants:

Cheryl Larsen, OSAA
Alioune Sall, Consultant
Rawda Omar-Clinton, ECA/NRID
Siham Abdulmelik, ECA/NRID
Isatou Gaye, ECA/NRID

Ms. Isatou Gaye thanked Ms. Cheryl Larsen for availing time to participate in the discussions. She introduced the consultant and the ECA colleagues that were present, following which, the discussion proceeded around the following issues.

Purpose of the RCM and its functioning

The purpose of the RCM is well-defined as supporting NEPAD and she did not wish to add anything other than NEPAD Secretariat should provide input into what they need from the clusters and the RCM as they are the beneficiaries.

Functioning of the Advocacy and Communication Cluster (including difficulties, constraints and challenges)

Advocacy and Communication is not explicitly included in the NEPAD framework as a "sector". In general, advocacy and communication efforts are under funded and not accorded priority. Greater clarity as to what ways the cluster might support NEPAD advocacy and communication efforts would be helpful.

It has been also difficult to get information on NEPAD programmes, progress and achievements though this has improved in the past year with receipt of the regular NEPAD Online Weekly Newsletter.

There is lack of dedicated financial and human resources and communication among cluster members has been weak with a limited number of members actively engaged in the cluster.

To-date funds from the regular budgets of agencies have not been allocated to cluster activities and to a certain extent contributions of staff time are not recognized as contributing to the implementation of regular budget programmes. Accordingly, the role cluster focal points play and the time it requires is not adequately recognized as part of the regular budget programme and is therefore more in the nature of an "add-on" to existing responsibilities and work plans of the individuals involved. Communication has at time been rather difficult, as substantive discussions need to be held which have not always been covered through email exchanges and teleconferences.

It should be noted that the 8th regional consultations incorporated support to the AU and the RECs before truly consolidating and implementing the recommendations of the 7th RCM.

Multiple memberships in clusters

Multiple memberships is not a problem, as it facilitates inter cluster coordination and information flow. This is particularly relevant for the Advocacy and Communication cluster, which needs to work with all clusters.

The current and future involvement of the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and the RECs

The involvement of the NEPAD Secretariat and the AU in the work of the cluster has increased, with both institutions having dedicated focal persons that consistently participate in the Advocacy and Communication cluster, but contact with RECs has not yet been developed. The AU Commission regularly sends information on updates of what they are doing.

Supporting the AU is not explicitly part of the legislative mandate of OSAA, but the cluster recognizes the recommendations of the 8th RCM. Alignment with and support for priorities requires better understanding of objectives and areas where support is needed and could be provided.

Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU

The focus to-date seems to have been on peace and security as per the original agreement that this would be the focus in the first three years following signature (2006). The status of capacity-building efforts should be shared more widely with all clusters

The extent to which UN agencies have the capacity to build/strengthen capacity of regional and subregional organizations is not known and may well vary between agencies. However, staff exchange among institutions could be explored as a means of improving capacity.

Development of a consolidated business plan and a monitoring and evaluation system for the RCM

The UN normally develops work plans rather than "business plans". The cluster has developed a work plan, but there was limited input by members in its development. The Department of Public Information (DPI), ECA, OSAA and UNDP contribute regularly to the work of the cluster.

Since advocacy and communication efforts aim to increase awareness and influence policy, concrete and specific indicators for monitoring and evaluation for evaluation purposes are difficult to achieve.

Meetings with the African Union Commission

Date   29 May 2008
Venue   AU Commission Offices

1   Cabinet Office

Time   09:00hrs

In attendance:

Ambassador Shinkaye	AU Commission
Professor Johnson	AU Commission
Pierre Moussavou	AU Commission
Alioune Sall	Consultant
Isatou Gaye	ECA
Rawda Omar Clinton	ECA
Siham Abdulmelik	ECA
Mesfin Haile	ECA

Ambassador Shinkaye welcomed the ECA delegation and thanked them for involving the AU Commission in the consultations. Ms. Isatou Gaye thanked Ambassador Shinkaye and his colleagues for organizing the consultations with the Commission at very short notice. She explained the purpose of the study and called for the Commission's active participation in the study process. She emphasized the importance of partnership between the AU Commission and UN agencies for the successful implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the African Union (AU).

Ambassador Shinkaye stressed the importance of the UN-AU Cooperation Agreement and confirmed that the AU Commission considered the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU very relevant. He observed that the Commission should be more actively engaged in the Regional Consultation Mechanism (RCM). He lauded the Commission's full involvement in the activities of the Peace and Security Cluster and said that there was need to ensure the same level of participation in the other clusters of the RCM.

He informed the ECA delegation that a general meeting with all AU Commission Departments would take place immediately after the meeting with Cabinet. He urged the delegation to clearly state what was required from the Commission and to request for written comments from the different Departments. In addition to the general meeting, he advised that the delegation should consult with Commissioner Gawanas who coordinated the AU Commission's participation/inputs during the elaboration of the Ten year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. He promised to secure an appointment with the Peace and Security Commissioner who, fortunately, was in the office. The other Commissioners were on mission.

Professor Johnson recalled that immediately after the 8th Meeting of the RCM in November 2007, the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the UN Liaison Office with the AU (UNLO-AU)

and ECA, held a meeting with the Commission on the further development and implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. The meeting, he said, agreed that the Commission would identify additional priorities and propose concrete actions in relation to the further development and implementation of the Programme. He stated that the Commission would take the necessary steps towards implementing this agreement.

Agreements reached

- The AU Commission will play a leadership role to ensure that the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU is fully operational;
- The AU Commission will designate technical focal points to all the clusters of the RCM and an overall focal point (at the senior level) to provide guidance and oversight in the further development and implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU;

2   General Meeting

Time   10:00hrs

In attendance: (see Annex 5)

Professor Johnson welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the ECA delegation. He provided an overview of the Ten Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU, the coordination role played by ECA and steps that have been taken towards the operationalization of the Programme. He said that the AU Commission was yet to demonstrate in concrete terms, its ownership of the Programme. As regards the Commission's participation in the RCM, he stated that the Commission's active engagement in the activities of the Peace and Security cluster was an example worth emulating. He informed the meeting that discussions would revolve around the configuration of the RCM thematic clusters, their alignment with AU programmes and priorities and the designation of focal points to the different clusters. He then invited the ECA delegation to address the meeting.

Ms. Isatou Gaye outlined the objectives of the meeting and study. She highlighted the TORs of the study and placed emphasis on the expected outcomes. She raised a number of issues to guide the meeting discussions. These included: the status of development of the AU Commission's new strategic plan and its relationship with the first; the leadership role of the Commission in the further development of the Programme; the alignment of the RCM clusters with AU priorities and programmes; and the designation of AU cluster focal points. The list of discussion points is provided in Annex 6.

Main issues arising

- The new AU strategic plan was under development, but there would not be much departure from the first. The four priority areas identified are: institutional transformation; peace, security and governance; regional integration; and shared vision for the continent. However, in comparison to the first strategic plan, the second will place less emphasis on institutional transformation.

- The Peace and Security component of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU is fully operational. This is understandable since the peace and security component was considered priority at the time of signing. The Peace and Security Department of the Commission has useful experiences that it could share with other Departments.

- Without the vision and political leadership of the AU, the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU will not have direction or meaning and UN support will not be effective.

- The AU Commission needs to articulate its capacity gaps and drive the process of operationalizing the Programme. The Commission should also scrutinize the UN-AU Cooperation Framework, reflect on the lessons learnt and suggest ways of improving it.

- It was observed that the Ten-Year Capacity Programme is focused on the AU Commission's capacity needs and does not address the programmatic dimension of human resource development. In this regard, the Human Resources Department was encouraged to be fully involved in the internal AU Commission consultation process on the further development and implementation of the Programme, in order to ensure that its concerns are taken on board.

- An action plan spelling out the different components, related activities, responsible parties, timelines, targets, indicators of achievements, costs and funding sources is required to fully operationalize the Programme.

- The thematic clusters of the RCM are dominated by UN agencies. The AU Commission should be more involved and be engaged as an equal partner.

- The Commission's Department of Social Affairs has already embarked on the alignment exercise. The Department proposed that the current cluster on Human Resource Development, Employment, Health and HIV/AIDs be renamed the Social and Human Development Cluster. The proposed cluster would comprise eight sub-clusters, namely: Health and HIV and AIDS; Education and Human resources; Urban development, Population and Migration; Gender Justice and Development; Social Welfare/Protection, Labour and Employment; Child and Youth participation; and Sports and Culture for human development. The initiative was considered laudable. However, it was cautioned that the alignment needed to be done in a holistic manner (taking into account all nine thematic clusters and all the Commission's priorities) in order to minimize conflicts and overlaps and to harness synergies.

- The need for effectively mainstreaming gender issues in different clusters of the RCM was emphasized. It was proposed that in addition to having gender focal points in all clusters, a stand-alone cluster on gender be created.

- Advocacy and communication was also regarded as crosscutting and effective coordination of the Advocacy and Communication cluster with the others was called for. The question of

how to integrate advocacy for the AU into the work of the Advocacy and Communication cluster was raised, as the cluster's mandate was only to advocate for NEPAD.

- It was opined that apart from the HRD, employment, health and HIV/AIDs cluster, the other clusters did not appear to be problematic.

- It was remarked that although ECA is the Secretariat and convener of the RCM, some UN agencies do not recognize this mandate. This results in the Commission being badgered with initiatives from different agencies, thereby posing a lot of difficulties for the Commission, particularly in terms of meeting competing demands amidst huge capacity constraints.

Agreements reached

- The UN-AU Cooperation Agreement and the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU are still relevant. It is hoped that the study will provide concrete and practical measure towards accelerating the implementation of the Programme.

- The AU Commission will provide political and intellectual leadership for the further development and implementation of the Programme. This will entail vision, commitment, communication and action, as well as policy continuity. The Commission will establish an internal coordination mechanism for this purpose.

- ECA will communicate the priorities of the AU Commission to the consultant, who will develop an action plan for the Programme in consultation with the Commission, ECA and other UN agencies.

- The RCM clusters will be aligned with the priorities of the AU Commission and not its portfolios. UN agencies will be guided by priorities articulated by the Commission. In this regard, the different Departments of the Commission will identify their priorities and transmit to the Commission's Strategic Planning Unit for compilation and presentation in the form of a matrix. This will be submitted to ECA for consultation with agencies participating in the RCM. The final document will be annexed to the Programme.

- The AU Commission will adopt a holistic approach in its consultations on the alignment of clusters with its priorities.

- The proposal on gender mainstreaming will form an integral part of the Commission's proposal to be communicated to ECA.

- The UN-AU Cooperation Agreement and the outcomes of the 7th and 8th Meetings of the RCM provide a basis for extending the activities of the Advocacy and Communication Cluster to undertaking advocacy support for the AU. The Commission's focal point to the cluster should communicate this understanding to the cluster convener. However, the consultant will examine this issue in the study.

- The AU Commission will designate an overall focal point for the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. The Commission will also designate technical focal points to the existing clusters and where possible, sub-clusters. The names and contacts of the focal points will be communicated to ECA by 15th June 2008.

- The leadership of the UN system will be sensitised on the need for improved coordination among UN agencies.

- The AU Commission and ECA (in the context of the RCM) will monitor and evaluate the outcomes and impacts of the partnership within one year.

Views expressed by the consultant

- The cluster system of the RCM should be restructured around the notion of human security and should comprise four distinct clusters, namely: Human resources (demography, migration etc.); Economy (environment, natural resources, infrastructure, trade, industry and market access); Social (education, health, employment, gender, and culture); and Political (governance, peace and security). Other players such as NGOs and the private sector should be invited to participate in the RCM.

- The UN and the AU should assess their cooperation with a view to enhancing their partnership. In addition, the AU should conduct a review/assessment of the impact of its cooperation with the UN since the establishment of the OAU.

- UN prominence in the development arena is gradually waning. There are more influential players, including other multilateral agencies, bilateral agencies, the private sector and NGOs. The AU Commission should therefore include other stakeholders such as civil society and the private sector into its partnership fold.

3 Discussions with the Peace and Security Commissioner

Time: 14:00hrs

Ms. Isatou Gaye introduced the ECA delegation and briefed the Commissioner on the purpose of the study and consultations. She outlined the structure and functioning of the RCM and pointed out that the Peace and Security cluster, which functions quite well, benefits from the active participation of the AU Commission. The Commissioner thanked the delegation and assured them of his Department's continued engagement with the cluster.

He provided an overview of the Commission's work on peace and security, the assistance received from various UN agencies and the partnership with the UN Security Council. He said that the areas of cooperation with the UN and capacity building support should be extended to mediation, prevention and curative measures. He emphasized the importance of developing the AU peace and security architecture similar to that of the UN. The delegation assured him that these concerns would be conveyed to the convener of the peace and security clusters.

4   Discussions with the Social Affairs Commissioner

Time: 15:30hrs

Ms. Gaye thanked Commissioner Gawanas for receiving the ECA delegation and stated the purpose of the consultations. She briefed the Commissioner on the results of the consultations with Cabinet and the agreements reached at the general meeting. Commissioner Gawanas reiterated that the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU is an evolving framework, which should be continuously developed to take on board emerging concerns and priorities. She said that the further development of the programme calls for the active involvement of all AU Commission Departments. She said that her Department has a huge portfolio, which includes servicing up to seven ministerial bodies. In this regard, the Department had prepared a proposal on the reconfiguration of the Human Resource Development, Employment and Health and HIV/AIDs to support its priorities. This initiative was lauded. However, it was mentioned that the general meeting had agreed that alignment and reconfiguration of the clusters needed to be done in a holistic manner in order to ensure coherence. She said she would participate in the internal coordination mechanism that would be established for the further development of the programme, and for the alignment of clusters with the Commission's priorities.

The Commissioner agreed that the AU Commission's engagement in the RCM needed to move away from that of a mere participant, to a stakeholder and an active partner. However, she lamented the dire capacity constraints of the Commission, which she said, has limited participation in the RCM. She added that working with different UN agencies puts additional pressure on her already overburdened staff and called for more coordination among UN agencies. She said that capacity needed to be built at all levels- policy, institutional and individual.

ECA SROs North and West Africa

Date: 29 May 2008
Time: 17:30hrs
Venue: NRID Conference Room

In attendance:

Karima Bounemra	ECA/SRO-NA
Abdoulaye Niang	ECA/SRO-WA
Alioune Sall	Consultant
Isatou Gaye	ECA/NRID
Rawda Omar-Clinton	ECA/NRID

Specificities of the two subregions

SRO West Africa: 15 member States and 40 IGOs. The IGOs and the RECs of the subregion (ECOWAS, UEMOA and the Mano River Union) meet once a year to discuss issues that constitute a priority to the subregion.

SRO North Africa: 7 member States. Among these countries Mauritania and the Sudan are part of Sub-Saharan Africa while the others are part of the Middle East and North Africa grouping. UN assistance to countries belonging to SRO-NA is either coordinated through UNDP's Regional Bureau for Africa (Mauritania and the Sudan) or the Regional Bureau for Arab States (the others, including the Sudan). ECA should raise the issue of geographical coverage with UNDP so that the overall coordination of UN activities in support to the member States of SRO-NA does not pose difficulties.

Subregional coordination mechanisms for the implementation of NEPAD and for the assistance to AU

The two SRO Directors were of the view that such a mechanism could be useful. But they cautioned that their establishment required careful consideration and should not be seen as merely replicating the regional consultation mechanism at the sub-regional level. There is need to ensure that creating a sub-regional mechanism brings additional value. The two Directors suggested the holding of a parallel meeting, during the RCM, for RECs and other subregional organizations to discuss the relevance of a sub-regional coordination mechanism. This would help in rationalizing the organization of meetings and in determining whether or not the time is right to establish a subregional mechanism. If such a meeting comes up with enough justification to establish a subregional mechanism, then it can be established.

UN agencies and organizations do not have subregional representation based in Niamey. They are based in Dakar. Holding consultations with them require additional resources that the SRO-WA office does not have.

As far as NEPAD is concerned, Algeria and Egypt are members of the NEPAD Steering Committee. In general, little is done in the subregion regarding NEPAD. Morocco's withdrawal from the NEPAD programme further complicates the situation in North Africa.

At the level of Rabat, the Regional Directors Team (RDT) meets twice a year and SRO-NA participates in the meetings. The last such meeting took place in November 2007. For the next meeting, SRO-NA is planning to prepare two to three papers on a subregional coordination mechanism.

The two Directors concluded that:
o The establishment of subregional coordination mechanisms requires careful consideration and should take into account their added value;
o The specificities of each subregion have an important role to play in the creation of the subregional mechanism, whenever it is justified; and
o Additional resources need to be provided.

African Development Bank

Date: 30 May 2008
Time: 13:30hrs

Participants:

Lamin Manneh, AfDB
Alioune Sall, Consultant
Isatou Gaye, ECA/NRID
Siham Abdulmelik, ECA/NRID

Ms. Gaye thanked Mr. Manneh for availing time to participate in the consultations (via telephone) and introduced him to the consultant and her ECA colleague. Following the introductions, Ms. Gaye briefed Mr. Manneh on the purpose and objectives of the study and consultations and invited him to raise any issues he would wish to discuss before turning to the discussion points. Mr. Manneh opted to go straight to the discussion points.

1 Purpose of the RCM, its relevance, efficiency and effectiveness

The RCM is relevant and could help accelerate the implementation of NEPAD through a harmonized approach. However it is currently not operating as efficiently or as effectively as it should and the implementation of agreements needs enhancing. Support to NEPAD is provided on a piecemeal basis and impact is not evident. Information flow is not optimal and because of this, there is information gap regarding the functioning of the mechanism and the activities of the clusters. The formal communication mechanism should be enhanced. In addition, information on the clusters and their activities should be disseminated using a newsletter or bulletin such as the weekly NEPAD Briefs.

2 Functioning of the clusters

Commitment to the cluster system should be encouraged, as this seems to be inadequate. It is important to follow-up on recommendations. However, it is noted that there are resource constraints (financial and human), which could be responsible for inadequate implementation. More communication within and among clusters could help improve coordination.

3 AfDB's participation in the RCM Clusters

AfDB could be more actively involved in the activities of the Infrastructure Cluster, as it is the lead executing agency of NEPAD's Infrastructure Programme. Through the NEPAD Infrastructure Short Term Action Plan (STAP), the Bank is financing almost 58 projects involving the NEPAD Secretariat, the AU Commission and RECs. It is also supporting the development of the Infrastructure Medium to Long Term Strategic Framework (MLTSF) and the retention of two consultants in the NEPAD Secretariat for the past three years. In the area of governance, the Bank is a strategic partner in the implementation of the APRM process.

Information on the RCM would be shared with colleagues in other Departments of the Bank who would be encouraged to participate in the RCM. It is envisaged that focal points would be established in selected clusters such as those dealing with health, communication, infrastructure and trade. This would ensure the effective participation of the Bank in the 9th Meeting of the RCM.

4   AfDB's involvement in the implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme

The Bank is still interested in participating in the Programme. The Programme would be shared with colleagues at the Bank to facilitate buy-in. A meeting on the Capacity Development Initiative involving the AU Commission, ECA, RECs, AfDB and the World Bank will be held in July in the margins of the AU Summit at Sharm el Sheikh. An invitation will be extended to the RCM Secretariat who could use the opportunity to discuss the Programme.

5   Sustainability of the RCM (general and financial)

Clusters should develop business plans for consolidation into a single RCM business plan, with deliverables and timeframes for which they would be held accountable. Cluster members should be actively engaged in the elaboration and implementation of the business plan, including monitoring, evaluation and reporting. AfDB and other donors, as well as the private sector could be approached to fund concrete activities identified in the plan.

6   The proposed subregional coordination mechanisms

The rationalization of RECs is key to the successful establishment of the proposed mechanisms.

7   Status of the AU/ECA/AfDB Joint Secretariat

The parties involved should initiate discussions and come up with practical suggestions on its operationalization.

Action points:

- The RCM Secretariat to provide information on the UN-AU Cooperation Framework;
- The Secretariat to send the minutes of the tele-discussions for validation; and
- The Secretariat to provide Mr. Manneh with relevant agreements reached with the AU Commission following consultations.

Debriefing with NRID/NEPAD SUPPORT SECTION

Date: 30 May 2008
Time: 17:00hrs
Venue: NRID Conference Room

In attendance:

Isatou Gaye
Rawda Omar Clinton
Siham Abdulmelik
Mesfin Haile
Alioune Sall, Consultant

Consultant's views on the five-day consultation

The consultation in terms of process was an excellent initiative. The general meeting endorsed the TORs and clarified what was to be included in the study. The individual cluster meetings were also very useful in terms of providing up-to-date information, getting to know the concerns of individuals and their views on different aspects of the study.

In terms of product, while some of the clusters have been functioning quite well, others exist only by name and have nothing to show in terms of achievements or interactions with the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat.

The report will inter alia highlight the following:

- The purpose of the RCM- all stakeholders need to be clear about the purpose of the RCM. Basically, the RCM must do business differently.

- The RCM should not be seen as purely an interagency coordination mechanism; its scope should go beyond that. Some NGOs have more experience and resources than UN agencies in areas such as humanitarian affairs. Therefore, it is important to open up to NGOs, the private sector and other organizations.

- The role of the AU Commission seems to be restricted to co-chairing cluster meetings. However, the Commission needs to be involved as an equal partner.

- The agreement on the designation of focal points in the different clusters of the RCM by the AU Commission is very important and should be pursued. This needs to be reflected in the report on consultations with the Commission.

- The RCM needs to have resources on a sustainable basis instead of being limited to ad hoc arrangements, if the intention is to make a difference. In addition to financial resources, adequate human resources, access to information, effective communication strategies, appropriate administrative structures, and effective relations with the external world are pertinent.

Observations by the RCM Secretariat

- The consultations were indeed very useful and informative. There was a lot of good will and enthusiasm from all stakeholders.

- The report should speak to the TORs and take on board issues raised, recommendations and agreements reached during the consultations. The Secretariat looks forward to a fair and objective report that all stakeholders can identify with.

- The consultant should carry out a critical analysis of the proposed involvement of NGOs and private sector organizations in the RCM. The analysis should among others, interrogate the context of the proposed participation, how and at what level these organizations would be involved. Experiences of some clusters/sub-clusters (eg. water) would help inform the analysis.

- Several clusters and AfDB emphasized the need to have a consolidated business plan to facilitate the mobilization of resources and to enable the RCM implement joint activities that would have impact. This was considered critical to the sustainability of the RCM. A critical analysis of the sustainability of the RCM is important.

- The consultant should present concrete and relevant examples to provide a basis for recommendations to be made.

- The consultant should make reference to the very useful documents provided by the Secretariat, as well as others that may be deemed necessary.

- The consultant should design questionnaires for ECA SROs and RECs to facilitate and add value to the analysis that would be made on the establishment of the subregional coordination mechanisms.

- The Secretariat will provide additional information and clarifications that may be required. The rich information gathered during the five-day consultations will be compiled and shared with the consultant. The draft proposal on strengthening the RCM Secretariat will also be shared.

- The communication line between the Secretariat and the consultant will be kept open for regular consultations and exchange of information.

Action points for the Secretariat:

- Prepare a detailed briefing note on the consultations for ECA's Executive Secretary, including follow-up actions with the AU Commission.

- Draft a memo for the ES requesting SROs to provide the consultant with all the necessary support, including completing the questionnaire to be administered and acting as a liaison between the consultant and RECs.

- Communicate to the consultant results of further consultations with the AU Commission.

- Send the consultant the draft proposal on strengthening the RCM Secretariat.

- Follow-up with cluster conveners on the list of discussion points sent to them for their inputs.

Action points for the consultant:

- Send the revised methodology and work plan as soon as possible.

- Design the questionnaires for SROs and RECs in the first week of June.

- Consult with the NEPAD Secretariat in the second week of June.

Annex 1   Terms of Reference of the Study

Production of a Report on Measures to enhance the functioning of the Regional Consultation Mechanism of United Nations Agencies and Organizations Working in Africa towards Accelerating the Implementation of NEPAD and the UN-AU Cooperation Programme

I. Background

In 2002, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the framework within which the international community, including the UN system, would channel its support to Africa's development. In this regard, the UN system developed a comprehensive structure at the global, regional and country levels to support the initiative and ensure maximum results. In its capacity as the regional arm of the UN, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) was assigned the responsibility for coordinating UN support to NEPAD at the regional and sub-regional levels (GA resolution 57/7 of 2002). To this end, the Regional Consultation Mechanism (RCM) was established in 2002 for coordination of support to NEPAD by all United Nations agencies and organizations working in Africa. ECA was designated the coordinator of the RCM. Subsequently, thematic clusters were created within the framework of the RCM based on the priorities of NEPAD. These clusters have undergone continuous reconfiguration to effectively support the implementation of NEPAD. Currently, the nine thematic clusters are:

- Infrastructure Development, convened by ECA;
- Governance, convened by UNDP;
- Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development, convened by FAO;
- Environment, Population and Urbanization, convened by UN-Habitat;
- Human Resource Development, Employment and HIV/AIDS, convened by UNICEF;
- Science and Technology, convened by UNESCO;
- Advocacy and Communications, convened by OSAA;
- Peace and Security, convened by the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA); and
- Industry, Trade and Market Access, convened by UNIDO.

In 2003, based on the Maputo Declaration, African Heads of State expressed their desire to see a properly integrated NEPAD into the structures and processes of the African Union. This was reiterated in a series of meetings, brainstorming sessions and further declarations between 2004 and 2007. In response to this new reality, at the Seventh Regional Consultative Meeting held on the 14 and 15 November 2006 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, it was agreed that clusters of the RCM, which had up to then focused exclusively on the implementation of NEPAD, should undertake a clear and traceable alignment of programmes and resources with AU priorities. The meeting also called for improving cooperation and coordination between the UN and the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat, the AfDB and the RECs; and also endorsed the expansion of the RCM to include the AU Commission.

The signing of the Declaration on enhancing UN-AU cooperation in November 2006, by the then United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan and the Chairperson of the African Union

Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, sharpened the focus on the need for better alignment with the programmes and priorities of the AU and its NEPAD programme. The Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU under the Framework Agreement is aimed at enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and the Africa Union in their areas of competences and in conformity with their mandates. It was agreed that the Programme should serve as a framework for UN system-wide engagement with the AU on the basis of the latter's needs and strategic priorities, including but not limited to capacity building or peacekeeping matters. ECA was charged with coordinating this support.

The Eighth Regional Consultative Meeting held on 5 and 6 November 2007, emphasized that the effective functioning of the cluster system is central to enhancing efficiency and coherence in the delivery of support to AU and its NEPAD programme. In this regard, it was agreed that clusters should increase focus on, and align activities with the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. It was also agreed that cluster activities should take into consideration, the programmes and strategic plans of the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat, relevant decisions of the AU and Regional Economic Communities (RECs), as well as outcomes of AU Sectoral Ministerial bodies. The meeting called for the evaluation of existing arrangements at the sub-regional level, with a view to putting in place an institutional framework for collaboration in support of AU and its NEPAD Programme at that level.

In light of the foregoing, the current configuration and functioning of the cluster system of the RCM need to be reevaluated with a view to properly aligning it with both NEPAD and AU priorities and programmes to effectively support the implementation of NEPAD and the UN-AU Cooperation Programme.

II. Objective of the consultancy:

The objective of the consultancy is to produce a well-informed and objective report, with specific, practical and action-oriented recommendations aimed at enhancing the functioning of the RCM of UN agencies and organizations working in Africa, with a view to accelerating the implementation of NEPAD and the UN-AU Cooperation Programme.

III.   Description of tasks

In order to meet the above objectives, the NEPAD and Regional Integration Division (NRID) of ECA is seeking the services of a consultant to undertake the following activities:

1. Consult with relevant stakeholders, including ECA (Headquarters and SROs), cluster conveners, participating agencies, the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat, the RECs, and the AfDB.

2. Carry out a thorough review and analysis of all existing documents: the various review reports on assessing the effectiveness of the UN system's support to AU/NEPAD; progress reports compiled by ECA, the Department of Public Information (DPI) and the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa (OSAA); reports of meetings of the Chief Executives Board (CEB) relevant to the RCM; progress and activity reports of the nine thematic clusters; the

UN-AU Ten Year Capacity Building Framework, recommendations and outcome documents of RCMs, ad hoc expert group, and other relevant meetings; as well as relevant literature, including reports and documents of ECA, the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat, the RECs (particularly their respective strategic frameworks and the various reviews of NEPAD), the AfDB and other UN agencies.

2. Draft a report, including standard templates that adequately respond to the objective of the consultancy specified in Section II. The report shall provide an objective analysis of the functioning of the RCM, as it relates to the implementation of NEPAD and the UN-AU cooperation programme, and shall include the following, as well as other relevant issues:

- Practical measures to align activities of the cluster system of the RCM with both NEPAD and the UN-AU Cooperation Framework;
- Practical measure to ensure the effective participation of the AfDB in the implementation of the Programme;
- Mechanisms for cooperation and collaboration among UN agencies for the effective implementation of NEPAD and the UN-AU Cooperation Programme at the regional and at the subregional levels, and standard templates for the operationalization of the mechanisms proposed;
- A mechanism for resource mobilization that ensures the financial sustainability of UN support; and
- A monitoring and evaluation system to promote accountability and learning, and to guide UN agencies in making strategic choices and decisions regarding how best to collaborate and coordinate efforts, in order to promote coherence and effectiveness, in their support to the AU and its NEPAD programme.

Furthermore, the consultant shall:

3. Serve as the key resource person at the two-day Ad hoc Expert Group Meeting scheduled to be held in September 2008, in Kigali, Rwanda. The Expert Group meeting shall be guided by the report to be presented by the consultant.

4. Produce a final report, including the standard templates after the Ad Hoc Expert Group meeting on the same, taking into account comments and inputs provided during and after the meeting.

IV. Duration of the assignment and timelines

a.   Duration

The assignment is expected to last ten weeks spread over a five-month period (May to October 2008), commencing 1 May 2008.

b.   Timelines

Date	Consultant/ECA/NRID Actions
1 May 2008	Consultant submits methodology and work plan, indicating clear deliverables and milestones

6 May 2008	ECA/NRID reviews, comments and sends back to consultant
27 May 2008	Consultant submits an annotated outline of the report (following consultations in Addis Ababa and Johannesburg)
3 June 2008	ECA/NRID reviews, comments and sends back to consultant
2 July 2008	Consultant submits a first draft of the report to ECA/NRID for review
11 July.2008	ECA/NRID reviews, comments and sends back to consultant
25 July 2008	Consultant submits a revised draft report to ECA/NRID
9-10 Sep. 2008	Consultant serves as the key resource person at the AEGM
24 Sep. 2008	Consultant submits the final draft report
10 Oct. 2008	ECA/NRID reviews, comments and sends back to consultant
24 Oct. 2008	Consultant finalizes report, including templates and submits to ECA/NRID

V   *Deliverables and other provisions*

   i. A finalized comprehensive report, including template in hard and digital form, reflecting all the elements identified in Section III;

  ii. As indicated in Section III (3), the consultant shall serve as the main resource person at the Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting and shall present the draft report. Travel and per diem for participation in the meeting will be provided separately;

 iii. The consultant shall spend five working days in Addis Ababa to consult with ECA, the AU Commission and Addis Ababa-based UN agencies and organizations participating in the RCM. He/she shall also spend two working days in Johannesburg to consult with the NEPAD Secretariat. Travel and per diem associated with the consultant's consultations in Addis Ababa and Johannesburg will be provided separately;

 iv. The report shall not exceed 50 pages and shall be prepared using single line spacing, times new roman size 12 font, contain page numbering, list of acronyms, a table of contents, foot notes, references, relevant annexes and appendices.

Annex 2: Final Programme of the Consultations

Date	Time	Activities
Monday 26 May 2008	10:00 hrs – 11:00hrs	Preliminary discussions with NRID and staff of the NEPAD Support Section
	15:00 hrs – 15:30 hrs	Discussions on the General Meeting with the NEPAD Support Section
	15:30 hrs - 17:30 hrs	General Meeting with all stakeholders
Tuesday 27 May 2008	10:00 hrs – 11:00 hrs	Infrastructure cluster
	11:00 hrs – 12:00 hrs	HRD, Employment, Health and HIV& AIDs cluster
	12:00hrs – 13:00 hrs	Governance and Public Administration Division /ECA
	15:00 hrs- 16:00 hrs	Peace and Security cluster
Wednesday 28 May 2008	09:00 hrs - 10:00 hrs	Science and Technology cluster
	10:00 hrs – 11:00 hrs	Environment, Population and Urbanization cluster
	13:30hrs – 14:45 hrs	Industry, Trade and Market Access cluster
	17:00hrs- 18:00 hrs	Advocacy and Communications cluster
Thursday 29 May 2008	09:00 hrs- 16:30 hrs	Meeting with the AU Commission *Cabinet Office* *General Meeting* *Peace and Security Commissioner* *Social Affairs Commissioner*
	17:00 hrs – 18:00 hrs	ECA Subregional Offices- North and West Africa
Friday 30 May 2008	09:00 hrs – 10:00 hrs	Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development cluster
	10:00 hrs – 11:00 hrs	Debriefing with the Deputy Executive Secretary/ECA
	13:20 hrs – 14:45hrs	AfDB
	17:00 hrs- 18:00 hrs	Debriefing on the preliminary findings

Annex 3-   Discussion Points- Meeting with Clusters

Views on the purpose of the RCM

Views on the functioning of the RCM (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness)

Views on the functioning of your cluster in the context of the RCM

Views on agencies' multiple membership in clusters

Views on improving intra and inter cluster coordination and collaboration, meaning of collaboration

Difficulties, constrainst and challenges

Impacts made, lessons learned

Views on the current and future involvement of the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and the RECs

Views on improving the functioning of the RCM for the effective implementation of NEPAD and the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme

Views on improving the functioning of your cluster for the effective implementation of NEPAD and the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme

Views on the involvement of AfDB in the implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme

Views on alignment of clusters and their activities with AU programmes and priorities, including NEPAD

Views on alignment of clusters and their activities with the strategic plans and priorities of RECs

Changes foreseen in the configuration of the clusters

Views on the development of a consolidated business plan and a monitoring and evaluation system for the RCM

Views on funding mechanism and financial sustainability of the RCM

Views on the general sustainability of the RCM

Views on the proposed subregional coordination mechanisms

Annex 4: List of Participants of the General Meeting

No	Name	Department/ Organization	Telephone Number	Email
1	Abdoul Dieng	UNAIDS	0911502229	dienga@unaids.org
2	Abdoulahi Mahamat	ECA	0115445211	amahamat@uneca.org
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31	Jennifer Kargbo	ECA SRO Southern Africa	21345	jkargbo@uneca.org

Annex 5: List of Participants of the General Meeting with AU Commission

No	Name	Department	Telephone No.	E-mail
1	Ms. Magona Neri	Social Affairs		ickuam@africa-union.org
2	Ms. Katrina Liswani	Social Affairs		liswanik@africa-union.org
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Annex 6: Discussion Points- African Union Commission

UN-AU Cooperation Framework/ Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU

- The AU Commission's continued commitment to the UN-AU Cooperation Framework and to the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU in light of the recent leadership changes
- The new strategic plan being developed and whether there will be a major shift in orientation. If yes, how would this impact the UN-AU Framework Agreement signed in 2006 and the Programme developed under it
- How would the new strategic plan affect the many sectoral strategic plans developed in the recent past and which are still valid. (Some cluster activities are informed by these plans)
- AU leadership in the further development and implementation of the Programme
- Setting up internal coordination mechanism
- Designation of AU focal point for the Programme

The AU Commission and the Regional Consultation Mechanism

- AU current and future involvement in the RCM, (leadership, decision making and implementation process etc)
- AU views on cluster alignment with priorities and programmes, including NEPAD (align priorities vs. portfolios)
- AU decision on the creation of a sub-cluster on health
- Mechanism to systematically convey priorities to cluster conveners and to the RCM Secretariat (ECA)
- Need for holistic approach to alignment to avoid conflicts and overlaps and harness synergies (not to be done on a piecemeal basis)
- Views on the development of a consolidated business plan to include funding mechanisms and monitoring and evaluation systems
- Views on where AU wants UN support to have impact- policy, organizational, or individual level.
- Views on the overall sustainability of the RCM and AU' Commission's role in ensuring this
- AU views on the establishment of the proposed subregional coordinating mechanisms and their involvement
- Designation of AU focal points for the different thematic clusters of the RCM