

**Guidelines for mainstreaming cross-cutting issues into
the activities of the RCM-Africa clusters and subclusters**

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Acronyms

ACPC	African Climate Policy Centre
AfDB	African Development Bank
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CEB	Chief Executives Board
CEDAW Women	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSocD	United Nations Commission for Social Development CSocD
DaO	Delivering-as-One
DWA	Decent Work Agenda
DWCPs	Decent Work Country Programmes
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
ILO	International Labour Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NEPAD	New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development
NRAs	Non-Resident Agencies
OSAGI	Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
PoA	Plan of Action
PRSs	Poverty Reduction Strategies
PRSs	Poverty Reduction Strategies
RCM-Africa	The Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Africa
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SDGEA	Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa
UNCTs	UN Country Teams
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

1. Background

1. The Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa) was established to improve coherence and coordination among the United Nations system organizations, at regional and subregional levels, so as to achieve its strategic objective of “Delivering as one” in support of the African Union and its New Economic Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD).

2. RCM-Africa has nine clusters providing technical and programmatic support to the African Union and the implementation of NEPAD. The clusters are organized in subclusters around thematic areas to sharpen the focus of their support for effectiveness.

3. The nine clusters are as follows:

- Infrastructure Development
- Governance
- Environment, Population and Urbanization
- Social and Human Development
- Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development
- Science and Technology
- Advocacy and Communication
- Peace and Security
- Industry, Trade and Market Access

4. Within the nine clusters there are the following subclusters:

- Water
- Education and Human Resources
- Gender and Development
- Labour and Employment
- Peace and Security Architecture of the AU
- Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development
- Human Rights, Justice and Reconciliation

5. At its consecutive annual meetings, RCM-Africa identified a number of cross-cutting issues as a way of improving inter-cluster coordination. The mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues into the activities of clusters and subclusters has featured as a key theme over the last six RCM-Africa meetings. All these meetings underlined:

(a) That gender and human rights issues should be systematically mainstreamed into the activities of clusters and subclusters;

(b) That regional integration should be adequately addressed by all clusters and subclusters;

(c) That youth, capacity-building, employment and decent work, particularly for youth, should be mainstreamed into cluster activities;

(d) That climate change should be mainstreamed into the work of all clusters: climate proofing of all United Nations programmes and coordination among climate-change initiatives is to be a component of this strategy;

(e) That health and culture issues should be adequately integrated into the RCM-Africa cluster system;

(f) That governance should be addressed by all clusters;

(g) That communication and advocacy should be mainstreamed into cluster activities.

6. On 30 June 2010, the RCM-Africa secretariat convened a one-day consultation of cluster and subcluster coordinators and co-coordinators (AUC and United Nations) on the functioning of the cluster system of RCM-Africa. At that meeting participants in particular requested the RCM-Africa secretariat to provide guidance on how climate change could be mainstreamed in the work programme of clusters and subclusters.

7. In order to provide strategic guidance, the RCM-Africa secretariat approached all cluster coordinators to prepare a short guidance note on how to mainstream the cross-cutting issues relevant to them in the activities of RCM-Africa clusters and subclusters. To date, five sets of guidelines have been received: on how to mainstream gender equality; human rights; health; employment and decent work; and climate change into the activities of clusters and subclusters.

8. On 11 and 12 November 2010, as part of the events held in preparation for the RCM-Africa meeting, the RCM-Africa secretariat invited all clusters and subclusters, among other activities, to consider the extent to which cross-cutting issues have been addressed and the type of support provided in terms of policies and actions.

9. Consultations on the matter suggested the need for a dedicated workshop to agree on the best approaches to the development of guidelines for mainstreaming cross-cutting issues into the activities of clusters and subclusters and clarifying the roles to be played by all RCM-Africa members. The workshop took place in October 2011 and was attended by cluster and subcluster members.

10. The workshop aimed to help clusters and subclusters develop guidelines and tools on how to mainstream cross-cutting issues that fall under their area of expertise. In particular, it assisted in explaining:

(a) What mainstreaming is all about;

(b) The rationale for and objectives of mainstreaming a cross-cutting issue;

(c) Guiding principles to be used in the mainstreaming process;

(d) The approaches to mainstreaming;

- (e) Practical actions to be taken to kick-start the mainstreaming process;
- (f) The templates to be used.

11. Following the workshop, RCM-Africa clusters and subclusters developed the guidelines that are presented in the following sections of the present report.

2. Mainstreaming gender equality in the work of the RCM-Africa clusters and subclusters

2.1 Rationale for mainstreaming gender

12. There is growing recognition that gender equality is not only a key human rights issue, but is also integral to achieving development goals. With this in focus, the issues of women's rights and empowerment have been re-conceptualized to concern all peoples and their societies in pursuance of their development and well-being. Gender mainstreaming is therefore a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. Mainstreaming is not an end in itself, but a strategy, an approach and a means of achieving gender equality.

13. Mainstreaming involves ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities – annual plans, policy development, advocacy and dialogue with partners, including the African Union; resource allocation, including technical assistance; and monitoring of programmes and projects.¹

14. Mainstreaming does not mean that targeted activities to support women are no longer necessary. Targeted initiatives focusing specifically on women or the promotion of gender equality are important for reducing disparities, serving as catalysts for the promotion of gender equality. Such initiatives may act as a constituency for changing the mainstream, since most women exist within social contexts where they are already at a disadvantage based on gender discrimination. Hence, women-specific initiatives can create an empowering space for women and function as an important incubator for ideas and strategies than can be transferred to mainstream interventions.²

15. In 2000, 189 United Nations Member States adopted the Millennium Declaration, which set out key goals and targets necessary for the elimination of poverty. As set out in the Declaration, goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals lists gender equality and the empowerment of women as a key objective to ending poverty. Women and the poor make up the majority of the world's population, and their perspectives and experiences make them a major source of transformation of the ways in which we understand development. While goal 3 focuses on promoting gender equality and empowering women, there is now broad recognition that gender equality is both a goal in itself, as well as a means towards the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals.³

¹ Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI).

² OSAGI, *Important Concepts Underlying Gender Mainstreaming*, www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/factsheet2.pdf.

³ UN-Women, Facts and Figures, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/the-united-nations-conference-on-sustainable-development-rio-20/facts-and-figures>.

16. The rationale for gender mainstreaming is also rooted in the commitments made by African States through ratification of various international and regional instruments that specify obligations for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women.

17. Article 3 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women states that States parties must take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them their basic human rights and freedoms. The Convention has been ratified by almost all the African Union member States.

18. The African Union commitment to gender equality is entrenched in its Constitutive Act, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, its Gender Policy and Action Plan, and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa. The Constitutive Act states that the African Union "shall function in accordance with the promotion of gender equality", while the African Union Gender Policy reinforces this commitment by calling for gender to be mainstreamed in the work of all organs and bodies of the African Union in order to "adopt a rights-based approach to development through evidence-based decision-making and the use of sex-disaggregated data and performance indicators for the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa."

19. Article 4 of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa specifies that member States will "initiate, launch and engage ... public campaigns against gender-based violence ... [and] reinforce legal mechanisms that will protect women at the national level and end impunity of crimes committed against women".

20. The Gender Directorate of the African Union is the mechanism created to advance gender equality through the use of gender-mainstreaming policies. Gender issues must be more effectively mainstreamed into the activities of all clusters. Article 12, paragraph 3, of the AUC Statutes specifically provides that, because "gender issues are cross-cutting through all the portfolios of the Commission, a special unit shall be established in the Office of the Chairperson to coordinate all activities and programmes of the Commission related to gender issues." The Statutes locate the internal gender machinery of the African Union under the Chairperson of the Commission, who has the ultimate responsibility for gender mainstreaming within the African Union.

21. The African Union has declared 2010–2020 as the Decade for Women in Africa, with the aim of mobilizing all stakeholders to initiate and strengthen actions towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

22. In its support for the African Union, the United Nations system must integrate gender equality and women's empowerment across sectors through the cluster system of RCM-Africa.

23. The United Nations system is obliged to abide by and support the implementation of United Nations human rights treaties and outcomes of the various United Nations conferences. The promotion of gender equality and women's human rights has been central to many, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against

Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889 on the role of women in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding and the prevention of violence against women and girls in conflict situations.

24. Of particular importance among the outcome documents from United Nations conferences for mainstreaming gender equality are the following: the Beijing Platform for Action (1995); the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action (1993); the Cairo Programme of Action (1994); and the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (1995).

2.2 Definitions⁴

25. “Gender” refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female in a particular society, and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context-bound, time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, and also decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader social and cultural context of any development intervention.

26. “Gender equality” refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same, but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration – recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not an exclusively women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.

27. “Gender equity” means the just and fair distribution of benefits, rewards and opportunities between women, men, girls and boys. Gender equity denotes an element of interpretation of social justice, usually based on tradition, custom, religion or culture, which is most often to the detriment to women.

28. “Empowerment of women” denotes the gaining by women of power and control over their own lives. It involves awareness-raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality. The process of empowerment is as important as the goal. Empowerment comes from within; women empower themselves and can be supported. Inputs to promote the empowerment of women should facilitate women’s articulation of their needs and priorities, and a more active role in

⁴ Taken and adapted from the UNDP Manual, African Union Gender Policy; www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm; www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/gender/gender_analysis_terms.html.

promoting these interests and needs. The different clusters and subclusters should support the participation of women and their organizations in different African Union policy and programme processes. The empowerment of women cannot be achieved in a vacuum; men must be brought along in the process of change. Empowerment should not be seen as a zero-sum game where gains for women automatically imply losses for men. Increasing women's power in empowerment strategies does not refer to power over, or controlling forms of power, but rather to alternative forms of power which focus on harnessing individual and collective strengths to work towards common goals without coercion or domination.

29. “Gender mainstreaming”: mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women, and also of men, an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. As stated by the Economic and Social Council in 1997, when defining the concept of gender mainstreaming, its “ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality”.

30. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women provides the basis for realizing equality between men and women through ensuring women's access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life. States parties to the Convention have agreed to take appropriate measures, including the adoption of legislation and temporary special measures, so that women can enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms.

31. “Gender analysis” refers to the qualitative and quantitative assessments to determine the differential impacts of development activities on women and men and the effect that gender roles and responsibilities have on development efforts. It also traces the historical, political, economic, social and cultural explanations for these differentials (McGregor and Basso, 2001).

32. “Gender awareness” refers to the recognition of the differences in the interests, needs and roles of women and men in society and how they result in differences in power, status and privilege. It also means the ability to identify problems arising from gender inequity and discrimination.

33. “Gender balance” means the participation of an equal number of women and men within an activity or organization. Examples are representation in committees or in decision-making structures. The participation must be substantive – i.e., an equal number of qualified women, able to articulate issues in the context in which their participation is sought or promoted. It is a strategy for enhancing women's voices and perspectives in different policy forums.

34. “Gender-blind”: an initiative or policy is gender-blind if potentially differential policy impacts on men and women are ignored or if, while appearing neutral because it is couched in abstract, generic categories, it is implicitly male-biased.

35. “Gender-neutral” refers to the assumption that policies, programmes and project interventions do not have a gender dimension and therefore affect men and women in the same way. In practice, policies intended to be gender-neutral are often gender-blind.

Table 1
Gender mainstreaming assessment tool

Cluster/subcluster: _____

This document is designed for creating a baseline assessment of the gender mainstreaming capacity of a cluster or subcluster. Space is provided for review on a semi-annual basis. Please refer to the response key provided below, combining responses from both columns when appropriate (e.g., Y, FW or Y, NF).

Response key

Y=Yes

N = No

ID = In development

UA=Unable to answer

F = Functioning

FW = Functioning well

NF = Not functioning

		CURRENT	DATES	DATES	DATES	DATES	DATES	DATES
1	Policy document on gender mainstreaming at cluster level exists							
2	Consultations with gender subcluster/AU Gender Directorate have taken place during planning process or cluster has internal gender expertise							
3	Annual cluster workplan integrates gender equality and women's empowerment outputs, indicators and activities							
4	Cluster has identified capacity needs relevant to achieving the gender equality objectives and has an appropriate strategy for responding to any gaps							
5	A mechanism for regular consultation with women's and gender-sensitive organizations in place							

3. Mainstreaming employment and decent work into the RCM-Africa clusters and subclusters

3.1 Introduction

36. At its tenth session, in November 2009, RCM-Africa recommended that the Mechanism should mainstream into its cluster system, among other issues, employment and decent work, taking into account the global jobs pact and paying particular attention to youth employment.

37. In this respect, the Employment and Labour subcluster has recommendations on how best to implement such mainstreaming. The following deals with the definition of decent work and attempts to demonstrate how such mainstreaming could be implemented within the cluster system.

3.2 Decent work

38. Decent work is defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and endorsed by the international community as productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

39. Decent work involves opportunities for work:

- (a) That is productive and delivers a fair income;
- (b) That provides security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families;
- (c) That offers prospects for personal development and encourages social integration;
- (d) That gives people the freedom to express their concerns, to organize and to participate in decisions that affect their lives;
- (e) That guarantees equal opportunities and equal treatment for all.

40. Work is central to people's well-being. Productive employment is one of the key means of distribution of economic development, since a major portion of family income and the livelihood of individuals essentially stems from earnings generated with their labour. Work is a source of personal dignity, family stability, peace in the community and democracies that deliver for people. Policies that address the multiple dimensions of poverty – economic, human, social, cultural, political, protective, gender-based and environmental – are mutually reinforcing and must go hand in hand. Progress in one dimension will accelerate progress in others. For example, economic growth that is effective in reducing poverty will generate revenues for education and health services. Further increased access for young people to education and employment can unlock the productivity of a large percentage of the population and thus boost growth.

41. Decent work for sustainable development means that, in social terms, jobs must be open to all equally, and the related rewards have to be equitable. Inequality and discrimination provoke frustration and anger and form a recipe for social dislocation and political instability. Extending opportunities for decent work to more people is a crucial element in making increased trade and globalization more inclusive and fair. In economic terms, jobs have to be productive and able to compete in a competitive market. The challenges posed by environmental change affect not only social and economic development, but also the world of work. Environmental degradation is linked to unsustainable production and consumption patterns that undermine the livelihoods of the working poor. Sustainable production and consumption, however – together with environmental protection and regeneration – are also potential sources of employment and income. Thus, sustainable development must start with work.

42. Inadequate education and skills development keep economies trapped in a vicious circle of low education, low productivity and low income. Family income and the availability of decent work for adults are determining factors in parents' decision to send their child to school. Creating decent work for parents is a key factor in the work of ILO towards the achievement of universal education. Elimination of child labour is crucial, since the educational achievement of children who combine work and school usually suffers, plus they often drop out of school for full-time work. To achieve improved educational outcomes it is essential to invest in skilled and motivated teachers. The extent to which teachers' voices are heard often determines the success or failure of education reforms. The decline in teachers' working conditions and salaries is a key reason for the shortage of teachers in Africa.

43. Africa is in urgent need of a major improvement in the physical infrastructure for development. Advancing towards universal access to basic needs like food, shelter, water, health, education and sanitation leads to a steady improvement in worker productivity. Furthermore, it generates employment opportunities in the construction, energy and related industries. The development of infrastructure lends itself to more employment-intensive techniques, which in turn create opportunities for local job creation that serve as a form of social floor for low-income families. Ensuring strong linkages between infrastructure projects and local economies requires an equal investment in better social infrastructure facilities, such as support for rural micro, small and medium enterprises and cooperatives. The provision of basic services such as water, electricity and sanitation to the growing African urban centres provides an opportunity for employment generation, particularly if small and medium enterprises receive the training and financial services support to participate.

44. Agriculture plays a pivotal role in the growth and structural transformation of economies. Growth originating in agriculture is particularly effective in reducing poverty because so many poor people reside in rural areas. Agricultural productivity determines food prices and has a major influence on rural incomes and wage costs. Many African countries retain comparative advantages in primary activities (agricultural and natural resources) and experience the strong multiplier effects of growth in agricultural output. Historically, agricultural growth was the precursor to growth elsewhere in the economy and, although conditions today do not mirror those previously experienced by developed countries, the nature of agriculture as the foundation for early growth is well established. The insight that employment is the missing link between growth and poverty reduction and the recognition that sustainable poverty reduction simultaneously requires social policy transfers, investments in social and physical infrastructure and good labour market performance constitute key policy orientations for any country to succeed in reducing poverty in rural areas.

45. Good governance and stronger government institutions provide the framework for generating more and better jobs. Generating decent work calls for better management of development policies. Good governance requires strengthening the capacity of the State; strengthening civil society; boosting democracy, voice and representation, including through giving effect to freedom of association and social dialogue; better delivery of services, through decentralization, community-driven and territorial approaches; and, at the international level, trade reforms.

3.3 Decent work mandate in Africa

46. African leaders endorsed the Decent Work Agenda in a plan of action adopted at the extraordinary summit of the African Union on employment and poverty alleviation, held in Ouagadougou in September 2004. It aims to place employment at the centre of national, regional and continental development frameworks and policies. At the country level this is achieved through the development and implementation of Decent Work Country Programmes, which are increasingly becoming part of national development frameworks and poverty reduction strategies.

47. At the 2005 World Summit the United Nations General Assembly also made a commitment to support fair globalization and to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people, a central objective of relevant national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategies, as part of efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The commitment was further

reaffirmed in July 2006 in the Ministerial Declaration of the Economic and Social Council, which recognized the decent work agenda as an important instrument for achieving the objective of full and productive employment and decent work for all.

48. In February 2008, the United Nations Commission for Social Development adopted resolution 47/2 on promoting full employment and decent work for all, which reaffirmed that there is an urgent need to create an environment at the national and international levels that is conducive to the attainment of full and productive employment and decent work for all as a foundation for sustainable development and that an environment that supports investment, growth and entrepreneurship is essential to the creation of new job opportunities, and also reaffirms that opportunities for men and women to obtain productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity are essential to ensuring the eradication of hunger and poverty, the improvement of economic and social well-being for all, the achievement of sustained economic growth and sustainable development of all nations and a fully inclusive and equitable globalization.

49. Full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people, as the most effective route out of poverty has also been confirmed with the adoption of a new target (1.B) under goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals, to achieve employment and decent work for all.

3.4 Mainstreaming employment and decent work

50. Mainstreaming decent work implies the systematic and informed incorporation of decent work into policies, programmes and activities. Attaining this goal requires awareness and knowledge of the concept, an assessment of existing policies, programmes and activities of the agencies, to determine how these are interlinked with employment and decent work outcomes, and an identification of how decent work outcomes can subsequently be enhanced in all activities.

51. ILO has been given the mandate to assist other United Nations agencies in mainstreaming decent work. To this end, the organization has developed such resources as the Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work, which was developed at the request of the United Nations Chief Executives Board (CEB) and has been endorsed by all the member organizations of CEB. The Toolkit provides a diagnostic and awareness-raising checklist of questions for self-assessment and a web-based knowledge-sharing platform. In order to mainstream decent work into the work of the nine RCM-Africa cluster groups, the Employment and Labour subcluster proposes a series of workshops, initially with the officials working across each cluster to raise their awareness and knowledge on the concept. The preparatory period for the RCM-Africa meeting could be used for this purpose, to raise awareness of the function of the CEB Toolkit for mainstreaming employment and decent work into programmes and policies. This would be followed by a two-day workshop with each individual cluster and subcluster.

52. The initial one-day workshop with the cluster and subcluster chairs would focus on improving their understanding of the decent work agenda and how it is linked to each cluster's mandate. Through the workshop, participants would develop a common understanding of what decent work means and how it could be integrated into the programmes and activities of each cluster.

53. The following two-day workshops with members of each cluster would provide an in-depth opportunity to go through an assessment of their specific policies, programmes and activities, using the self-assessment checklist of the CEB Toolkit. Through practical activities, these workshops would permit each cluster to take stock of how its programmes and activities affected decent work in the country and how mainstreaming decent work could, in turn, help enhance its own outcomes. The workshops would also enable cluster members to identify specifically where and how improvements could be made to enhance the decent work outcomes. For example, in the case of the Agricultural Food Security and Rural Development cluster, the extension of micro-insurance and social security for rural workers would increase their resilience to shocks and enhance their quality of life, thus contributing to agricultural development in the larger sense.

54. At the end of the workshops, each cluster would have identified priority areas for integrating decent work into their activities collectively and as individual agencies. In addition, whenever possible, the participants should identify and evaluate existing materials, publications and tools available for improving employment and decent work outcomes in their fields of competence.

55. The Employment and Labour subcluster would continue to work with the participants and to provide support beyond the workshops. Making use of the Toolkit's knowledge-sharing platform, participants would be provided a space to continue discussion and to exchange ideas and best practices in order to achieve the aim of mainstreaming employment and decent work.

4. Mainstreaming health in the RCM-Africa clusters and subclusters

4.1 Introduction

56. All clusters should be aware of their current and potential future impact on health, as the aim of mainstreaming health into the RCM-Africa clusters and subclusters is to reduce the unintentional, and sometimes negative, effects of development work on health. Mainstreaming would mean that each cluster would have to analyse the impact that its area of work has on health issues, such as HIV and AIDS. A simple way to guide mainstreaming would be to ask of any situation: "How does health come into play here?"

57. This can be further specified by posing these five questions:

1. What are the implications and possible negative impacts of the sector's policies, strategies and activities on health?
2. How can the sector assess the potential health impact of its activities?
3. What are the potential positive effects of the sector's policies and activities on health?
4. What interventions, at the policy, strategy and activity level do the sector need to implement in order to prevent or minimize the negative impacts and enhance or facilitate the positive effects on health?
5. How can these health-related actions be monitored and evaluated, and by using what indicators and means of verification?

4.2 Framework for mainstreaming health

58. The framework for mainstreaming health across and within sectors and subsectors is intended to establish linkages showing how the work of each sector contributes to health outcomes. Specifically, the framework facilitates efforts to establish the role played by each sector or subsector in influencing, positively or negatively, health risk factors and determinants of health that lead to ill-health, disability and premature death. To establish the performance of each sector or subsector, a three-step approach is proposed which entails, first, an assessment of the situation; second, analysis and documentation in order to create a profile; and, third, required action to develop and implement favourable policies, strategies and guidelines legislations beneficial to health.

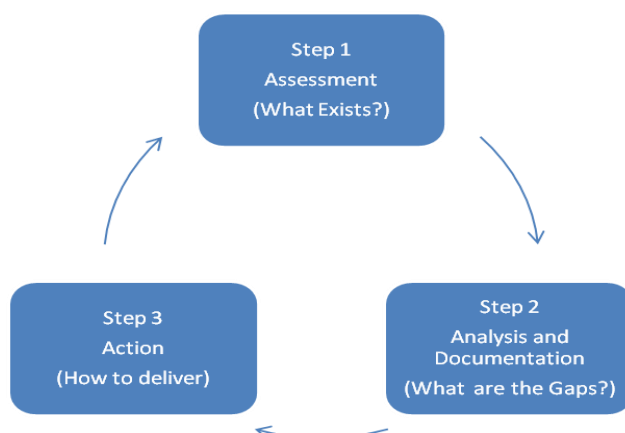
Figure 1
Framework for mainstreaming health

	Tasks and issues	Tools
Step 1:	<i>Assessment (audit)</i> How does your sector ^a contribute to health?	Policies, strategies, guidelines, activities, monitoring and evaluation tools
Step 2:	<i>Analysis and documentation</i> What are the positive effects (impact)? What are the negative effects (impact)? What is the gap (documentation)?	Knowledge, attitudes, beliefs; Policy and legislative impact; Content and skills gap; human and financial resource gap; evidence gap
Step 3:	<i>Required action</i> Close the identifiable gaps Generate evidence Build partnerships and alliances Invest in health	Ensure health in all policies is integrated across sectors; build capacity for practice; Set indicators and benchmarks to monitor progress and evaluate impact; Involve other partners, organizations, civil society and communities; Establish sustainable financial mechanisms

a. For example, the Education sector provides health information through structured and non-structured activities in schools which benefit pupils in making decisions that promote health. This knowledge is also applied later in life when these young people become adults. The Trade sector contributes to health through agreements, legislations and policies.

Figure 2

Model for mainstreaming health across sectors and subsectors



59. Accordingly, when mainstreaming health within a cluster, these are the steps to take and the questions to ask to ensure that health issues are being considered and addressed appropriately. Address which role each member (AUC, NEPAD, regional economic communities), African Development Bank and United Nations agencies) will be playing in mainstreaming, as it will vary from cluster to cluster and within the different activities of the cluster.

4.3 Prioritize

60. Health is a broad issue, and it may therefore be necessary to prioritize which key components of health are most relevant to the cluster's work and to focus on these after completing steps 1 and 2 above. To help prioritize, it will also be useful to look at African Union decisions and recommendations related to health, such as the African Health Strategy 2007–2015, CAMH/MIN/5(III), together with recent African Union decisions addressing the challenges facing the health sector in Africa. The level of maternal mortality in Africa is the highest in the world and this affects women's advancement and the well-being of the family and the community. In the case of HIV and AIDS, it is widely recognized that sectors outside of health need to be involved in responding to the disease. AIDS, for example, is more than just a health issue; agriculture and food security programmes could incorporate the possible consequences for people living with HIV who work in those sectors. Agricultural practices within AIDS-affected communities should for instance be more productive and less labour-intensive.

5. Mainstreaming climate change into the activities of the RCM-Africa clusters and subclusters

5.1 Background

61. RCM-Africa was established to improve coherence and coordination among organizations of the United Nations system and other organizations, at regional and subregional levels. RCM-Africa has its strategic objective "Delivering as one" in support of African Union and NEPAD programmes.

62. Climate change was recognized as a key priority at the ninth and tenth meetings of RCM-Africa, and members embraced the call by the United Nations Secretary-General for the

United Nations system to play a vanguard role in addressing climate challenge issues. A number of initiatives and actions have already been developed or put forward by African leaders and stakeholders to address the challenges of climate change in Africa. RCM-Africa members took note of these planned and existing efforts, and resolved to mainstream climate-change issues in the work and activities of all RCM-Africa clusters.

63. On 30 June 2010, the RCM-Africa secretariat convened a one-day consultation meeting of cluster and subcluster coordinators and co-coordinators (AUC and United Nations) on the functioning of the cluster system of the Regional Coordination Mechanism. Participants at this meeting requested the RCM-Africa secretariat to provide guidance on how climate change could be mainstreamed in the work programme of clusters and subclusters.

64. In order to provide strategic guidance, the RCM-Africa secretariat approached the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), as the coordinator of the Environment, Population and Urbanization cluster, to prepare a short guidance note on how to mainstream climate change in the activities of the RCM-Africa clusters and subclusters.

5.2 Purpose

65. The aim of the resulting note is to provide RCM-Africa members with a tool on mainstreaming climate change into cluster and subcluster workplans and activities. The guidance note also clarifies the role to be played by all members (AUC, NEPAD, regional economic commissions, African Development Bank and United Nations agencies and organizations) in the integration of the climate change agenda into the activities of the clusters and subclusters.

66. This guidance note must be read in conjunction with the guidance note developed by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) entitled “Integrating climate change considerations in the country analysis and the UNDAF: a guidance note for United Nations Country Teams”.⁵ The UNDG guidance note provides information on how best to incorporate climate change actions and priorities in the country analysis or common country assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). It also includes a “Quick guide” to mainstreaming climate change in the country analysis.

67. UNDG developed its guidance note in May 2010 and since then has conducted training for regional “Delivering as one” coordinators.

5.3 Mainstreaming climate change: definition

68. UNDG defines mainstreaming climate change as “the process by which actions to address the causes and consequences of climate change are implemented as part of a broader suite of measures within existing development processes and decision cycles” (UNDG, 2010).

69. In general terms, mainstreaming is a systematic process which enables actors to strengthen the ways in which they address a particular thematic issue that is cross-cutting (such as gender, HIV/AIDS and climate change).

⁵ The UNDG Guidance Note is available online at: http://204.200.211.31/contents/file/psg/1952-UNDG-GuidanceNote_ClimateChange.pdf.

70. In the specific case of climate change, mainstreaming can be seen as a systematic process to ensure that climate change becomes an integral component of development and sector-based programming and activities.

71. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-UNEP Poverty and Environment Initiative offers the following definition for adaptation mainstreaming:

Mainstreaming climate change adaptation is the iterative process of integrating considerations of climate change adaptation into policymaking, budgeting, implementation and monitoring processes at national, sector and subnational levels. It is a multi-year, multi-stakeholder effort grounded in the contribution of climate change adaptation to human well-being, pro-poor economic growth, and achievement of the MDGs. It entails working with a range of government and non-governmental actors, and other actors in the development field.⁶

5.4 Rationale for and objectives of climate mainstreaming

72. The Secretary-General has frequently highlighted climate change as “the defining challenge of our times.” The cross-cutting nature of climate change necessitates a collaborative effort by United Nations country teams, including the non-resident agencies, to provide collective responses in support of national priorities.

73. Climate change is a development issue because it will have significant impacts on countries’ capacity for economic growth, poverty alleviation and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Development policies and planning will have to be adjusted as new threats emerge to water and food security, environmental sustainability, production and public health, among others.

74. Given the cross-cutting nature of climate change, mainstreaming will ensure that:

- (a) Climate change becomes part of the core business of each cluster and subcluster;
- (b) Delivery by RCM-Africa and its partners is enhanced;
- (c) Inter-cluster coordination on climate-related activities is strengthened;
- (d) Climate change is tackled in a coherent manner at national and regional levels.

5.5 Guiding principles

75. There are a number of principles that must be adhered to in order to ensure the effective mainstreaming of climate change. These principles include:

- (a) *Leadership* – Effective mainstreaming requires leadership and champions at the highest levels. RCM-Africa will play an active leadership role in ensuring and monitoring mainstreaming activities;
- (b) *Coordination and collaboration* – Effective mainstreaming will require coordination across the thematic RCM-Africa clusters and subclusters, together with

⁶ UNDP-UNEP (2011), p. 3.

collaboration and engagement with AUC, NEPAD, the regional economic commissions, the African Development Bank and other partners;

(c) *Ownership* – The achievement of mainstreaming is contingent upon bringing together national government partners and building the long-term commitment and ownership of national stakeholders.

5.6 Mainstreaming approach

76. Mainstreaming climate change into the existing process and activities of clusters and subclusters requires the identification of appropriate entry points. Once the appropriate entry point has been established, specific actions must be taken to ensure that climate change concerns have been integrated into workplans, activities, projects and programmes. The general principle here is that effective mainstreaming needs to be based on existing functions and procedures, rather than creating new ones.

77. Table 2 below sets out the steps required to mainstream climate change into the workplans and activities of RCM-Africa clusters and subclusters and table 3 provides a detailed description of the practical actions involved.

Table 2

Approach to mainstreaming

Approach to mainstreaming
<p>Step 1: Update cluster terms of reference to include the mainstreaming and integration of climate change The first step is to include climate change in the terms of reference of all clusters and subclusters.</p> <p>Step2: Identify cluster and subcluster entry points This component involves finding appropriate entry points (e.g., cluster workplans; cluster activities; partner and regional economic commission plans; etc) for climate mainstreaming.</p> <p>Step 3: Implementation Each cluster should develop a short and manageable action plan to support the cluster's efforts to mainstream climate change in its activities. A communications and awareness and outreach strategy should be developed, highlighting the importance of mainstreaming climate change.</p> <p>Step 4: Monitoring and evaluation The RCM-Africa monitoring and evaluation framework is to be used.</p>

Table 3
Practical actions

Step 1: Update cluster terms of reference to include mainstreaming climate change	
The first step is to include climate change in the terms of reference of all clusters and subclusters	Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current cluster and subcluster terms of reference • Include mainstreaming climate change in the terms of reference • Identify resources required for mainstreaming
Step 2: Identify entry points	
Suggested entry points	Actions
RCM-Africa work programme business plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RCM-Africa work programme presents a good entry point, as it is usually reviewed on an annual basis. Use the review exercise to ensure that climate change is included as an important component of the RCM-Africa workplan • Ensure that climate change activities are aligned to regional priorities
Cluster workplans and business plans⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify where the need and opportunities exist in the existing cluster workplan to include and support climate change related activities. The tool for this is provided in annex I • This action may involve modifying or adding in activities in order to strengthen climate-related activities in the workplan • Cluster convener and co-convener to lead on this
Existing cluster and subcluster activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each cluster to make an assessment of how the cluster can contribute to climate-related actions at national and regional levels. The tool for conducting such an assessment is provided in annex I.
Cluster partnerships (regional partners have a number of climate policies and strategies in place, and these provide useful entry points for aligning RCM-Africa climate activities with regional and REC initiatives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with relevant national and relevant stakeholders to identify climate change activities relevant to partners • Identify who is doing what • Exchange of experiences among regional organizations on climate change issues through effective mechanisms is essential to enhance capacity in serving member countries

⁷ Clusters are required to develop three-year workplans.

Step 3: Implementation	
Implementation	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft an action plan with clear responsibilities (template provided in Annex II) • Identify roles and responsibilities of all cluster partners • Develop a communications and awareness and outreach strategy highlighting the importance of mainstreaming climate change. • Put in place mechanisms and processes for knowledge management and experience sharing

Step 4: Monitoring and evaluation	
Monitoring and evaluation	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the RCM-Africa monitoring and evaluation framework

5.7 Kick-starting the mainstreaming process

78. Each cluster coordinator should lead the implementation of mainstreaming in her or his respective cluster. This should involve developing short manageable action plans (the template for this is provided in annex II). It is recommended that the “Delivering as one” subregional coordinators hold a one-day workshop for cluster members on climate change mainstreaming.⁸ This will provide hands-on training on mainstreaming, and will also give greater insight into the UNDG approach to climate mainstreaming at all levels.

79. Set out below are action plans outlining the key responsibilities of all actors and providing some guidance on the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in the region:

(a) RCM-Africa – Promote a shared vision and commitment to climate mainstreaming. Focus on supporting country teams in mainstreaming climate change into programming activities. Lead the coordination of activities and initiatives, collaboration and networking with other regional players in the climate change arena. Provide advice and strategic support to RCM-Africa members and partners in their efforts to implement the climate mainstreaming guidance and actions;

(b) AUC – Identify the climate change priorities as listed in various African Union plans and programmes. AUC to share its strategic plan and engage United Nations agencies on a common mainstreaming approach;

⁸ Regional “Delivering as one” coordinators attended a training programme on climate change mainstreaming in Turin, in June 2010. The training was coordinated by UNDG and UNEP

(c) NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency – Provide RCM-Africa with a list of NEPAD climate policies and strategies. NEPAD has identified climate mainstreaming as an important activity;

(d) Regional economic commissions – Coordinate the participation of other stakeholders in the region, such as civil society and the private sector;

(e) African Development Bank – The African Development Bank has a well developed climate change strategy that provides financial support and technical services in the areas of both mitigation and adaptation. The Bank can leverage strategic partners in the region to effectively mainstream climate change at regional and national levels;

(f) United Nations agencies and organizations – Actively contribute to climate-related actions at the regional level, through supporting the implementation of African Union and NEPAD climate initiatives in the region. In particular, work closely with AUC, ECA and the African Development Bank on the ClimDev-Africa programme, and the African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC).

Annex I
Cluster entry points and suggested tools

Entry point	Tool
Cluster workplan	Tool: Questions to guide the climate screening of a cluster work plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Does the cluster workplan identify and address climate change risks to programmes and projects? — Does the cluster workplan identify and address opportunities to reduce the carbon intensity of development initiatives? — Does the cluster workplan identify and address potential opportunities to enhance climate resilience? — Does the cluster workplan identify and address potential adaptation measures?

Entry point	Tool
Existing cluster /subcluster activities	Tool: Questions for review of existing cluster activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Are there opportunities in existing cluster activities to include a focus on climate change? — What are the critical climate-related gaps in the existing cluster information, analysis and understanding? — Do existing national and regional planning instruments take climate change impacts into account? — What measures could be taken to climate-proof existing cluster activities? — Which partners are important to the cluster's activities?

Entry point	Tool
Cluster partnerships	Tool: Identify and list relevant climate policies and strategies of cluster partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Identify relevant climate policies and activities undertaken by regional stakeholders — Work with relevant stakeholders to identify opportunities for strengthening regional climate initiatives — Identify gaps — What resources are already available for climate change in the region? — Identify opportunities for collaboration

Annex II

Template: Short action plan on mainstreaming climate change

Key climate change focus area	Key action points			
	Cluster members	Timeframe	Regional partners	Timeframe
Mainstreaming adaptation into development planning processes (relevant to the cluster)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Mainstream adaptation through the cluster activities, and ensure alignment with other regional initiatives — Support dialogue with regional partners 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — AfDB — AUC 	
Support integration of climate change in disaster-risk reduction <i>(this might only be relevant to some clusters)</i>				
Climate change mitigation in Africa				
Resources to support Africa in addressing current and future climate risks				

Further reading and resources

Further guidance may also be found in the following reference documents:

UNDG (2010): “Quick guide to mainstreaming climate change in the country analysis (such as the CCA) and the UNDAF”, in: *Integrating Climate Considerations in the Country Analysis and the UNDAF*. New York, United Nations Development Group. Available at:

www.unicef-emergencies.com/downloads/eresource/docs/DRR/Integrating-climate-change-considerations-in-the-country-analysis-and-the-UNDAF-A-guidance-note-for-UNCT-UNDG-2010.pdf

UNDP-UNEP (2011): *Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation into Development Planning: A Guide for Practitioners*. UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative. Available at: <http://www.unep.org/pdf/mainstreaming-cc-adaptation-web.pdf>

World Bank (2013). *Mainstreaming Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture and Natural Resources Management Projects*. Guidance Note 1: *Engaging Key National Institutions in the Adaptation Agenda*. Available at: <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTTOOLKIT3/Resources/3646250-1250715327143/GN1.pdf>