

UN Agencies in Africa to strengthen efforts to deliver as one for the African Union and its NEPAD Programme (ECA prepares to host 11th Session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism)

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Addis Ababa, 10 November 2010 (ECA) - About 150 representatives of UN agencies and regional organizations working in Africa will meet in Addis Ababa on 14-15 November to chart a course for synergizing operations to strengthen the quality of services the world body provides the African Union and its NEPAD Programme. It would be the 11th such meeting in the framework of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM-Africa).

The two-day meeting of the RCM-Africa, which begins November 14, brings together high level officials and representatives of UN system agencies and organizations, the African Union Commission (AUC), the NEPAD Coordinating and Planning Agency (NPCA), Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other international development partners and regional and sub-regional organizations.

It will be co-chaired by Dr. Asha-Rosa Migiro, the Deputy Secretary-General of the UN and the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union, Mr. Erastus Mwencha.

The meeting will provide a platform to consider Africa's sustainable development agenda, including Africa's transformation into green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Representatives aim to carefully examine emerging issues impacting Africa's development hopes, and agree to key recommendations to strengthen coordination and coherence on how UN agencies in Africa should operate as one entity when supporting the African Union, its NEPAD programme, and the RECs, at the regional, sub-regional, and national levels.

They will also review the independent report on the implementation of the UN Ten Year Capacity Building Programme for the African Union and the progress made in improving cooperation, collaboration and coordination among the UN system organizations and between the UN and AU.

Every year, RCM-Africa organizes a high-level meeting of UN Agencies working in Africa to review their programmatic and other supports to the African Union and its NEPAD Programms.

Coordinated by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), which houses the Secretariat of the RCM-Africa, the group currently has nine clusters which focus on the priority areas of the AU--Infrastructure Development; Governance; Social and Human Development; Environment, Population and Urbanization; Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development; Science and Technology; Advocacy and Communications, Peace and Security and Industry, Trade and Market Access and a number of sub-clusters created to provide sharper focus and greater effectiveness.

So far, RCM-Africa has registered considerable progress in a number of areas, including working directly with the African Union Commission (AUC), Regional Economic Communities, Transport Corridors; implementing the sub-Saharan Africa transport policy programme (SSATP) and liberalizing access to the air transport market in Africa; developing the first micro hydropower capacity-building and investment project in Africa; launching an African Climate Policy Center and conducting research on e-waste; developing a climate change activities geospatial database; and providing technical and other advisory services to the NEPAD Steering Committee; facilitating meetings for senior African policy-makers, among others.

According to Mr. Emmanuel Nnadozie, the Director of ECA's Economic Development and NEPAD Division, the operational focus of the RCM-Africa is now sharper than it has ever been, through better alignment with the AU vision and priorities of NEPAD.

But there is still a "need to conduct a credible and participatory review of the UN-AU Cooperation Framework and its Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU in order to accelerate implementation," Mr. Nnadozie said.

The RCM Africa was established as part of a UN reform to improve coherence, promote synergy and coordination among UN agencies and organizations and strengthen their collective response in addressing Africa's priority needs at regional level and sub-regional levels.

Issued by:

ECA Information and Communication Service
P.O. Box 3001
Addis Ababa

Ethiopia

Tel: 251 11 5445098

Fax: +251-11-551 03 65

E-mail: ecainfo@uneca.org

Web: www.uneca.org
