

Meeting with the USG UN Women and RCM SHD Cluster

DATE: February 1, 2011

Venue: African Union, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Chairs: Dr. Olawale Mayeigun (AUC) and Ms. Judica Amari-Lawson (ILO)

Attendance: (See list in annex)

I. Introduction:

The Social and Human development cluster met with the newly appointed USG for UN women, Ms. Michelle Bachelet.

Director of Social Affairs complimented what the work of the cluster.

A. Presentation by Director of Economic Development and NEPAD Division (EDND), UNECA, Mr. Emmanuel Nnadozie

The EDND Director defined the Regional coordination mechanism (RCM) as a mechanism that enhances UN coherence at the regional and sub-regional level in order to support the AUC. The RCM minimizes transaction costs and efforts and its basis is embedded in GA resolutions which date back as far as 1998. Specifically Resolution 46 which called for UN agencies to coordinate efforts at regional and national levels.

Over the years, efforts have been intensified to enhance the coordination mechanism. For example a joint UNECA/AUC RCM secretariat was set up.

The RCM has nine clusters ranging from infrastructure and governance, SHD, advocacy and communication, environment, population and urbanization, science and technology, agriculture, food security and rural development to peace and security.

The RCM has ensured that delivering as one is essential and this has been demonstrated in the increased ownership and alignment that has taken place between clusters and among clusters.

In addition, the RCM recently established the linkage for sub-regional mechanisms.

The Director highlighted what the Gender and Development sub-cluster under the SHD cluster co-chaired by the UN Women and AUC had done in 2010 which included:

- Advocacy campaigns, events and production of materials

- The commemoration of the International Women’s Day on March 16th , 2010, when the sub-cluster organized a symposium under the theme- “ Equal rights, Equal opportunities, Progress for All”
- Commemoration of the 10th Anniversary of the Commemoration of the SCR 1325 on October 31, 2010.
- Launch of the Africa UNiTE Campaign to End Violence Against Women and Girls

The EDND Director concluded that since the SG had declared women empowerment as a priority, the gender and development sub-cluster would be a mechanism to mainstream gender and empower women.

B. Presentation by the Director, Africa Center for Gender and Social Development (ACGS) UNECA, Ms. Thokozile Ruzvidzo

The ACGS, Director thanked the USG, UN Women for prioritizing African women and stressed that “Delivering as One” was a constant reminder to execute and support the African Union Commission’s programmes.

She highlighted the four priority areas in Women and Development as:

- **Women participation and representation in decision making**

AUC set a 50% mark in the solemn declaration for women participation in political decision making. Currently, 15 countries have between 30% to 50% of women representation in political decision making.

A lot of efforts have been made to increase the participation of women in political decision making, including commitment from the highest level- Heads of States, however more opportunities to increase the numbers remain. The challenges associated with increasing the numbers are not necessarily institutional but attitudinal and behavioral.

- **Ending violence against women (VAW)**

Almost all countries have programmes to end VAW. A lot of advocacy has been done and specifically, Ministers from the great lakes region for example have set up a research center to study VAW.

- **Women peace and security**

While 1325 resolution has been instituted, more needs to be done. Women have featured in peace talks and regions that have been affected have placed interventions.

- **Women economic empowerment**

This is also an opportunity for women to participate in the Africa’s economic development.

At the UN level, cognizant is taken of commitments made and tools developed. For example the AGDI has helped member states review various thematic areas.

The challenges related to women in economic development include resource mobilization.

In conclusion the Director, ACGSD, assured the USG that through the RCM and cluster system, the work of UN women will be supported.

C. Presentation by the Director of Women Directorate, AUC, Ms. Litha M-Ogana

The Director of the AUC Women Directorate mentioned that the African Union had provided the leadership in advocating for women empowerment because of the mechanisms put in place from 2002 to present.

She highlighted some of the commitments adopted by member states including the Solemn Declaration adopted in 2004, The AU gender policy which has eight thematic areas as well as targets that member states need to focus on.

She however mentioned that despite the numerous nominative frameworks, gaps still exist.

In order to address this, The African Women decade in (2010- 2020) was launched to aid in the implementation of existing frameworks, recognizing that the first decade was launched in 1975 and ended in 1985.

Why 2010 for the current Africa Women decade?

2010 marked 10 years of the 1325 resolution and 30 years anniversary of CEDAW.

The decade therefore will build on the global priorities for women including three other themes such as women in governance.

The theme of the Africa women's decade- "Grassroots Approach To Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment" is a reminder that the decade is driven by a grassroots approach.

Fighting poverty requires empowering women, agriculture and food security and Maternal Mortality and HIV/AIDS, Science and technology, climate change, education, governance and legal protection, finance and gender budgeting, women in decision making , mentoring young women and men to support gender equality.

The African Union Commission intends to receive 1% of assessed contributions member states towards the implementation of women's programmes during the decade.

Governance structures have been put in place at the national levels, and at the regional level and a continental committee has been put in place too.

D. Remarks by Commissioner for Social Affairs, AUC, Adv. Bience Gawanas

The Commissioner shared that AUC's work of Social Development is guided by the social policy framework which promotes both human development and empowerment.

She reminded everyone that reason for the existence of the African union which is the people of Africa and so that the average African can have improved access to basic access services, and added that sustainable development cannot be achieved unless people are healthy and educated.

It for such reasons that AUC prioritized maternal mortality to allow the Commission address issues related to health systems and women empowerment.

She also recalled that in 2009, 17, countries celebrated 50 years of independence, yet 50 years later, women are dying from preventable causes like Maternal mortality.

She urged everyone to critically look at harmful cultural practices which need to be addressed.

When CARMMA was launched in 24 countries, the aim was to raise fundamental questions around human rights and whether Africa can own and address challenges faced by women and children.

She stressed the need of holding our governments accountable to take actions and accelerate the implementation of the already existing frameworks.

She concluded by saying that when women take up leadership positions, the expectations are greater and assured the USG UN women of the Africa Union Commission support.

She also thanked the USG for making Africa her first stop after assuming office.

E. Remarks from the USG UN Women, Ms. Michelle Bachelet

The USG UN Women, thanked everyone for the warm welcome. She reminded UN and AUC staff the importance and capacity of communicating to the people at the grassroots.

She also mentioned that it was very painful to learn that the lives of the average women at the grassroots has not been significantly changed, despite the numerous frameworks.

She therefore trusts that the merging of the four women entities would hopefully bring about more impact.

The mandate and functions of UN Women will consolidate the mandates and functions of OSAGI, DAW, UNIFEM and INSTRAW. In addition to the functions of these four entities, the GA decided that UN Women should have the important role of "leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The organization (UN Women) is there undergoing a field capacity assessment which will be completed in February, 2010 to determine how best the organization can have an impact on women at the grassroots level.

In her remarks, the USG UN women also stressed the importance of:

- Establishing real partnerships, rhetorical and not theoretical to scale up projects that have been piloted;
- Developing concrete goals to ascertain reasons for the lag in progress made;
- Thinking about preventable strategies so that issues are addressed from a preventative and not emergency perspective;
- Looking at the population dynamics, so that underlying issues and appropriate strategies for addressing poverty and maternal health are tackled;
- Women involvement in ensuring gender equality and economic development as essential actors, including strengthening women's capacity in agriculture and negotiation skills;

She called for suggestions and recommendations on how the new entity could realize its mandate in the region.

She advised the UN and AUC staff that addressing issues from a rights based approach was not adequate to governments, rather, the organizations especially the ECA need to assist in making a stronger case based on economic, social and political research to inform governments' decisions on investing in gender.

2. Discussions

What would be the way forward. What can we do differently?

RCM being the mechanism for improving coherence and coordination among UN organizations, requires its activities to be institutionalized. Currently, all of RCM related activities are adhoc.

An appeal, therefore was made to the Committee of the Executive Board (CEB) through the USG UN Women to ensure that additional resources for RCM activities are mobilized and RCM processes institutionalized in the respective organizations.

Other areas that need strengthening:

- Reporting procedures to partners and beneficiaries should be streamlined
- The capacity of UN organizations to measure the impact of RCM activities on the AUC should be strengthened.
- UN women could assist other UN organizations to do gender analyses of various issues while other organizations do the situational analyses
- Inclusion of refugee girls and women at various levels in the continent is necessary.

In conclusion, staff from both the AUC and UN assured the USDG UN women of their commitment and support to the work of UN women.

The USG UN Women in turn thanked everyone presented and requested UN staff to submit a brief paper about recommendations of improving the RCM which could be submitted for discussion to the CEB.

A vote of Thanks was given by the Chief of UN Women, Africa Region, Ms. Chiwara, and the meeting was adjourned at 1.45pm.

ANNEX-

List of Participants RCM MEETING WITH MS BACHELET

1. Etta Tadesse

UNFPA

tadesse@unfpa.org

2. Ruvimbo Chimedza

ruvimbo@mweb.co.zw

3. Mariapia Rizzo

FAO

maria.rizzo@fao.org

4. Weldeshaber Kidane

FAO

weldeghaber.kidane@fao.org

5. Meaza Ashenafi

UNECA

mashenafi@uneca.org

6. Souad Abdenneb

UNECA

sabdennebi@uneca.org

7. Florence Butegwa

UN WOMEN

florence.butegwa@unwomen.org

8. Marie-Goreth Harakey

AU (SDA)

harakoye@yahoo.fr

9. Maren Jimenez

UNECA (ACAS)

maren.jimenez@uneca.org

10. Gloria Izaks

AUC

gloriai@africa-union.org

11. Dr. Benjamin Djoudalbaye

AUC

benjamind@africa-union.org

12. Dr. Mabuto Kango

AUC

kangom@africa-union.org

13. Mira Ihalainen

UN WOMEN

mira.ihalainen@unwomen.org

14. Tesfaye Desalegn

UN WOMEN

tesfaye95@yahoo.com

15. Nena Thundu

AUC

thundun@africa-union.org

16. Oumar Diop

AUC

diopo@africa-union.org

17. Cisse Mariama

AUC

cissem@africa-union.org

18. Khaldi Mohamed Tayeb

ILO

mtkhaldi@yahoo.com

19. Abraham Gebregiokgis

WHO

abrahamg@et.afro.who.int

20. Asenath Mpatwa

ITU

asenath.mpatwa@itu.int

21. Anthony Mwangi

UNICEF LO

amwangi@unicef.org

22. S. W. Omamo
WFP
stevenwere.omamo@wfp.org

23. Menghestab Haile
WFP
menghestab.haile@wfp.org

24. Julie Gonidec
UN WOMEN
Julie-gonidec@live.fr

25. Christa Jubinville
UN WOMEN
cjubinville@gmail.com

26. Elizabeth Lwanga
UN WOMEN
elizabeth.lwanga@unwomen.org

27. Genevieve Sindabizera
UNESCO
genevievebizera@yahoo.fr

28. Alexandros Makarigakis
UNESCO
a.makarigakis@unesco.org

29. Paul Mpayimana
UNESCO
pmpayimaha@uneca.org

30. Rosemary Musemimali
UNAIDS
museminalir@unaids.org

31. Daniel Almeida
UN WOMEN
daniel.almeida@unwomen.org

32. Janet Byaruhanga
AUC
byaruhangaj@africa-union.org

33. Kevina Power Njoroge
UNDP
kevina.power@undp.org

34. Chantel Marais
AUC (SA)
chantelk@africa-union.org

35. Jane-Marie Ongolo
AUC (SA)
ongolojm@africa-union.org

36. Serge Bunda
UNEP
serge.bounda@unep.org

37. Dr. Fatoumata Nafo-Tradore
WHO
nafof@who.int

38. Benoit Kalasa
UNFPA
kalesa@unfpa.org

39. David Tommy
UNIDO
d.tommy@unido.org

40. Robert Lisinge
UNECA
tlisinge@uneca.org

41. Olushola Olayide
AUC
olusholao@africa-union.org /
bereanolushola@yahoo.com

42. Angela Movetins
AUC
movetinsa@africa-union.org

43. Lefhoko Kesamaug
AUC
kesamangl@africa-union.org

44. Tigest Alemu

UNFPA LO

tigestalemu@unfpa.org

45. Kidest Lulu

WHO

kidestl@et.afro.who.int

46. Akila Belembaogo

UNICEF LO

abelembaogo@unicef.org

47. Milhcent Mutuli

UNHCR LO

mutuli@unhcr.org

48. Leila Ben Ali

AUC

leilabenali@africa-union.org

49. Yetunde Teriba

AUC

teribaya@africa-union.org

50. Kwabia Boateng

ECA/RCM

kboateng@uneca.org

51. Titus Bonie Moctabi

AUC

moctabit@africa-union.org

52. Houda Mejri

UNECA

hmejri@uneca.org

53. Yinka Adeyemi

UNECA

yadeyemi@uneca.org

54. Sandra Zawedde,

UNECA

szawedde@uneca.org

55. Aristide Somda

UNECA

asomda@uneca.org

56. Victoria Butegwa

UNECA

vbutegwa@uneca.org

57. Grace Puliye

UNECA

gpuliyel@uneca.org

58. Makda Getachew

UNECA

mgetachew@uneca.org

59. Temilade Aromolaran

UNECA

taromolaran@uneca.org

60. Maren Jimenez

UNECA

mjimenez@uneca.org

ANNEX B-



AU-UN PARTNERSHIP: REGIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISM WITH Ms MICHELLE BACHELET, USG AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UN WOMEN

1 February 2011 at AUC Conference Room 1 (TBC)

Agenda

11:10 – 11:20 Participants arrive and are seated

Chairpersons: RCM SHD Co-Convenors: AUC Department of Social Affairs, Dr Olawale Maiyegun and Ms Judica Amri-Lawson, Senior Regional Advisor on Partnerships, ILO

11:30 - 11:40 Chairs' welcome remarks

11:40 – 11:47 AU-UN Partnership in Africa: an introduction to the Regional Cooperation Mechanism (RCM) – *Emmanuel Nnadozie, Director, Economic Development and NEPAD Division, UNECA (RCM Secretariat)*

11:47 – 11:55 Gender Equality in Africa: Progress, challenges and priorities – *Thokozile Ruzvidzo, Director African Centre for Gender and Social Development, UNECA*

11:55 – 12:05 Accelerating progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment: taking advantage of the African Women's Decade (2010-2020) – *Litha Musyimi-Ogana, Director, Women, Gender and Development Directorate, AU Commission*

12:05 – 12:15 The experiences of the African Union in promoting Social Development with a focus on Maternal Mortality – *H.E. Bience Gawanas, Commissioner Department of Social Affairs, AU Commission*

12:15 -12:30 *Ms Bachelet, USG, Executive Director of UN Women*

12:30- 13:20 Plenary Discussion (comments and questions)

13:20

Vote of Thanks – Letty Chiwara, *Chief of Africa Division, UN Women, NY*

Group photograph