

Report of the Infrastructure Cluster on the Recommendations of the RCM-9

Revised on 31 October 2009

I. Key recommendations of RCM-9

The six key recommendations of the ninth session of the RCM (RCM-9) are:

R.1 Increase UN coordination in addressing the food crisis challenge in Africa

1.1 Develop logical steps for establishing a joint UN programme of action at the regional and subregional levels by using existing processes (e.g. CAADP)

- Include malnutrition and its negative impact on health, particularly with children
- Use commodity value chain approach for better collaboration
- Use Comprehensive Framework of Action (CFA) to determine its programme at the regional level, identify the potentials and define how the UN can jointly contribute in tapping those potentials
- Mainstream peace and security in the analysis and responses to food crisis and climate change
- Use Human Rights Based Approach to establish a mechanism that ensures that individual rights are observed and that humanitarian organizations have access to conflict zones

(Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development Cluster + RECs)

1.2 Formulate an advocacy/ communication strategy about the food crisis and how to resolve it

(Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development Cluster + Advocacy & Communication Cluster)

R.2 UN Support to Climate-related Actions at the Regional Level

2.1 Develop work plan for climate-related activities of the RCM.

- Use ongoing work by ECA (ClimDev project), UNEP and others to prepare business plan.
- Each cluster should come up with an assessment of how it can best contribute to climate related actions at the regional level.

(Environment, Population and Urbanization cluster + RECs)

2.2 Mainstream climate change in each thematic cluster program

(All thematic clusters)

2.3 Report to the Chief Executives Board (CEB) on climate change related actions

(RCM Secretariat)

R.3 Strengthen coordination and collaboration between UN agencies and African organizations and among UN agencies at the regional and sub regional levels to ensure that the objective of delivering as one is met

3.1 Move from “consultation” to “coordination”. The RCM would therefore become the “Regional Coordination Mechanism”

(RCM Secretariat)

3.2 Develop a consolidated business plan for the RCM

- Use lessons learnt from the UNDAF experience of contributing and committing resources for country level activities to establish a financing mechanism for joint activities to facilitate the development of the consolidated business plan for the RCM
(RCM Secretariat)

3.3 Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework.

- A taskforce including experts in results-based approach should be constituted to fully develop a monitoring and evaluation system for the RCM
(RCM Secretariat & All thematic clusters)

R. 4 Strengthen efficiency and effectiveness of cluster system

4.1 Establish a system of communication between clusters

(RCM Secretariat)

4.2 Establish a governance structure within which clusters should:

- Have a Coordinator and a Co-Coordinator to improve performance
- Have modalities of reporting, follow-up of decisions and commitments as well as joint assessments of their achievements
- Prepare progress reports on their achievements based on agreed templates and measurable benchmarks of achievements, indicating major challenges, lessons learned and proposed solutions to improve future activities

(All thematic clusters & (RCM Secretariat)

4.3 Review the terms of reference of the clusters, outlining in detail the role and responsibility of the cluster convener, co-convener and its members

(RCM Secretariat, Members of Thematic Clusters)

R. 5 Institutionalize subregional coordination of UN support to the AU and its NEPAD Programme

5.1 Actively involve the RECs in the establishment of the subregional coordinating mechanism

(SROs + RECs)

5.2 Subregional coordination mechanism should build on the existing mechanism of the Regional Directors Team (RDT) and be integrated into the RCM

(SROs + RECs + Regional Directors Team)

R.6 Mobilize Resources and Enhance Capacity

6.1 Prepare a draft resolution to be presented to the General Assembly for approval. The resolution should request for a mandate to fund the RCM Secretariat and the nine clusters to enhance their role in coordinating activities and implementing joint programming

(ECA & OSAA + AU, African Ambassadors based in Addis Ababa & the African Group in New York)

6.2 UNFPA is prepared to provide support in the form of secondment of staff or financial assistance

(UNFPA and RCM Secretariat)

6.3 Share the experience of OCHA in various areas particularly in financial mechanisms. Look into other ways of providing further support to the RCM Secretariat

(OCHA and RCM Secretariat)

II. Preliminary considerations

From the above, it appears that Infrastructure Cluster is requested to intervene in the implementation of recommendations 2, 3 & 4. This includes:

- Mainstreaming climate change in each thematic cluster programmes as a means of contributing to *“UN Support to Climate-related Actions at the Regional Level”*;
- Developing a monitoring and evaluation framework whereby a taskforce including experts in results-based approach would be constituted to fully develop a monitoring and evaluation system for the RCM as a contribution to *“strengthening coordination and collaboration between UN agencies and African organizations and among UN agencies at the regional and sub regional levels to ensure that the objective of delivering as one is met”*; and
- Establishing a governance structure within which clusters should operate and reviewing the terms of reference of the clusters, outlining in detail the role and responsibility of the cluster convener, co-convener and its members, as means to *“strengthening efficiency and effectiveness of cluster system”*.

The Infrastructure Cluster of the RCM is comprised of four separate sub-clusters: the Transport sub-cluster, the Energy sub-cluster, the Water sub-cluster and the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sub-cluster. The governance structure and the modalities of operation of these sub-clusters differ significantly. The Water, Energy and ICT sub-clusters have established inter-agency coordination mechanisms that allow UN-Agencies working in Africa to deliver as one. These are UN-Water/Africa, UN-Energy/Africa, the United Nations Group on the Information Society (UNGIS) and the United Nations Geospatial Information Working Group (UNGIWG); ECA is the Vice-Chair of the last two structures. UN-Water and UN-Energy could be considered as regional arms of the coordination mechanisms that operate at the global level. All the sectors of the Infrastructure Cluster work closely with the AU Commission, the NEPAD secretariat and related sectoral ministerial conferences. This has an impact on the extent to which recommendations of the RCM meetings are being implemented.

Yet, the close linkages that exist among the four sectors could lead to inter sub-cluster cooperation and coordination. There have been attempts to promote such cooperation and synergy among sub-clusters, particularly between Water and Energy sub-clusters. Indeed, water and energy sub-clusters have similar governance structures and water resources are used in electricity generation and biofuels production, while energy is required for water treatment, distribution and use. Since energy is required to operate some ICT systems such as mobile phones and Internet, and ICT is used in monitoring and operations of energy systems, there is room for cooperation among ICT and Energy sub-clusters. The transport sector also needs ICT, in particular the Global Positioning System (GPS), for tracking the shipment of goods, particularly in transport of containers. The transport sector is a large user, particularly in the form of petroleum-based fuels, but most energy sources, especially fossil fuels (oil, natural gas and

coal), need to be transported over long distances to where they have to be used. Inland waterways offer an under-exploited but promising transport mode, as this allows for reaching remote areas.

III. Progress in implementing the recommendations of the RCM-9

III.1 Mainstreaming climate change in each thematic cluster programmes

All sub-clusters of infrastructure cluster of the RCM have a stake in climate change. While water can be considered as the medium through which impact of climate appears, such as floods, drought and changes in rainfall patterns; the transport and energy sectors are considered as the main contributors to greenhouse gas emissions and climate. This is due to their extensive use of fossil fuels and related release of exhaust fumes from transport vehicles and CO₂ emissions from fossil-fuel fired power plants. The two sectors could contribute to climate change mitigation through reduction of environmental harmful gas emissions by promoting clean fuel vehicles and increasing biofuels use as transport fuel as well as promoting clean fossil fuel technologies and renewable energy technologies for electricity generation. ICT can contribute to data collection and processing so as to generate climate-related early warning information and timely communication; also using ICTs through video-conferencing and teleconferences can participate in reduction of carbon emission.

However, nothing has been done to mainstreaming climate change into infrastructure cluster programme of work. Yet, some of the declarations by Ministerial Conferences and AU Summits call African countries and relevant institutions for taking appropriate measures to address climate change issues. The Declaration on Climate Change and Development adopted by the Addis Ababa AU Summit of January 2007 calls for developing and/or strengthening R&D in climate change in Africa, particularly in renewable energy, forestry and agriculture, to increase the continent's resilience and adaptation to climate change. The Declaration adopted by the Ministerial Conference on 'Water for Agriculture and Energy in Africa: The Challenges of Climate Change' held in Sirte, Libya from 15-17 December 2008 calls for, inter alia, fostering R&D in renewable energy and agriculture in Africa to increase resilience and adaptation to climate change. The Declaration on Development of Transport and Energy Infrastructure in Africa adopted by the Addis Ababa AU Summit of February 2009 for, inter alia, giving high priority to environmental protection and to transport and energy safety and security to promote sustainable development of infrastructure and related services. At the United Nations level, the Secretary-General has placed climate change at the top of the interagency agenda and has generated a sense of urgency and strong commitment for the UN system to deliver on climate change, particularly at the High level Event he convened on 24 September 2007 on "The Future in our Hands: Addressing the Leadership Challenge of Climate Change".

Notwithstanding the lack of concrete action to mainstream climate change in the work programme of infrastructure cluster as a whole, UN-Energy/Africa has considered in its work programme for 2008-2009 adopted at its meeting in Dakar, Senegal on 15 April 2008 two activities: (i) capacity-building for press officer on climate change (proposed by UNESCO-Ethiopia) and Finance for Clean Energy and Climate Adaptation in Africa (presented by the African Development Bank). Following the launch of the Africa Climate Policy Centre (ACPC),

the ICT sub-cluster has started research on a program on e-waste (computer equipment, mobile handsets and other apparatus being dumped on the African continent) and is preparing a campaign on reduction in use of power consumption and computer outputs, which are damaging to the environment. The sub-cluster has also embarked on the development of a dedicated Climate Change Activities geospatial database to generate relevant data and information products to support evidence-based policy analysis by the discipline specialists. The sub-cluster is currently undertaking a consultative study to develop taxonomy of data sets relevant to studying and formulating policies relating to climate change; and to identify existing data and information resources at national and regional levels.

III.2 Developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for RCM on “*strengthening coordination and collaboration between UN agencies and African organizations and among UN agencies at the regional and sub regional levels to ensure that the objective of delivering as one is met*”.

A taskforce including experts in results-based approach was expected to be constituted to fully develop a monitoring and evaluation system for the RCM. This has not been realized so far.

However, strengthening coordination and collaboration between UN agencies and African organizations has been achieved at sub-cluster level. This is the case of the water and energy sub-clusters whereby UN-agencies working in Africa and relevant African institutions such as the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the NEPAD Secretariat fully participate in planning meetings and elaboration of work programmes of UN-Water/Africa and UN-Energy/Africa.

The transport sub-cluster works directly with the AU Commission, the Conference of Ministers responsible for Transport, operators in various transport modes, the RECs, transport corridors, as well as well ad hoc programmes such as SSATP in collaboration with the World Bank, Road Safety in collaboration with the World Health Organization and Almaty Programme of Action (APoA) in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS).

In addition to the work of UNGIS, the ICT sub-cluster works directly with various partners within agreed projects and programmes for the AUC, NEPAD and RECs. This is illustrated by the following:

➤ Consultations with NEPAD

The sub-cluster and the NEPAD e-Africa Commission organized consultation meetings in March 2009 in Addis Ababa to exchange information on various Information Society programmes of the two institutions and on the UN sub-cluster on ICT in support to NEPAD. The meeting was part of a one week consultation on the harmonization of activities between NEPAD and the African Union on the way to integrate NEPAD to the African Union Commission. At the end of the meeting it was agreed to include additional NEPAD e-Africa Commission staff in the discussion list of the sub-cluster managed by ECA in order to better harmonize the NEPAD programmes and those being implemented by the ICT Sub-cluster.

➤ Consultations, meetings, advisory services for the African Union and RECs

Several meetings were organized with the AU Departments in charge of Infrastructure and Human Resource and Science and Technology related to the following issues: (i) harmonization of activities related to the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), including geo information resources; (ii) implementation of the flagship projects of the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE); (iii) substantive servicing of the Bureau meeting of the ICT ministers in July 2009 and the ECOWAS ICT ministers in October 2009; (iv) planning of the forthcoming AU Ordinary 2010 Summit on the theme of ICT for Development with several meetings held with the AUC; (v) training on ICT statistics; (vi) elaboration of a Convention on e-legislation composed of 5 key sectors (fight against cybercrime, personal data protection, electronic transactions, cyber security and electronic signature) for the African Union to be presented to the ICT ministers in November 2009 and Head of States in January 2010. Support was also provided to several RECs including ECOWAS and SADC, respectively in development of 3 supplementary acts on e-legislation (fight against cybercrime, personal data protection, electronic transactions) and a program on the Information Society (e-SADC). At the global level, the sub-cluster organized the Open Consultations on Financial Mechanisms in October 2009 as follow up to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

➤ Project on Support for Harmonization of ICT Policies in Sub-Sahara Africa (HIPSSA)

The HIPSSA Project was launched on 11-12 December 2008, with the formation of a Steering Committee composed of AU, ATU, ITU, ECA and the RECs to support African countries through AU and RECs in the adoption of harmonized ICT policies and regulations and their implementation in each beneficiary country. The project adopted a programme of activities articulated around the following eight main topics: (i) Licensing; (ii) Universal Service and Access; (iii) Frequency Management; (iv) Numbering Management; (v) Interconnection; (vi) Cyber-security; (vii) Collection of ICT Statistics; and (viii) Analog to Digital Broadcasting Migration.

➤ African Geodetic Reference Frame (AFREF) Project

The sub-cluster pursues in partnership with the African Union Commission its effort to develop the African Reference Frame (AFREF) Project. In April 2009, a workshop was organized with the AUC to revamp the implementation plan of the project, placing particular emphasis on the proposed management structures, formalizing coordinating arrangements between the various partners and stakeholders, as the project is now identified as the one of the early deliverable of the AUC/EC LightHouse Projects.

III.3 *Strengthening efficiency and effectiveness of cluster system through establishing a governance structure within which clusters should operate*

The infrastructure cluster is made of four sub-clusters with different governance structures and operational modalities. It is therefore not an easy task to devise a governance structure that could fit the four sub-clusters. It was indicated that the water and energy sub-clusters had adopted

similar governance structures. The transport and ICT sub-clusters have no specific governance structure, but they are performing well.

For the ICT sub-cluster, the African Union was tasked by the 2008 African Conference of ICT Ministers to convene a “stakeholder's meeting to establish a cluster of implementing agencies and to mainstream and harmonize the existing programmes and projects in the ICT sector in Africa with a view to eliminating duplicating and optimizing the use of resources.” However to date the meeting has not taken place.