



**Tenth Session of  
UN Regional Coordination in Africa  
November, 2009**

**Report of the  
Science and Technology Cluster**

## **BACKGROUND**

The UN Regional Consultation Mechanism (RCM) was established to improve coordination and coherence at the regional level within the context of the UN Secretary-General's reform agenda. Since 1999 regional consultative meetings were held to improve the coherence of the activities of the various UN agencies in response to regional development efforts. The aim was also to revitalize the role of the specialized agencies, maximize efforts and avoid duplication. The RCM for enhancing UN system-wide coherence, coordination and cooperation at the regional and sub-regional levels to 'deliver as one' in support of the African Union and its NEPAD programme, resulted in the establishment of nine thematic Clusters. The UN ten-Year CB Programme does not specifically mention Science as an area of activities. However, the Science and Technology (S&T) Cluster was established at the Fifth Regional Consultation in May 2003 designating UNESCO as the Convener and the UN Commission for Africa (UNECA) as the Vice-Convener.

In September 2000, 189 UN Member States adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), setting clear, time-bound targets for making real progress on the most pressing development issues. The MDG's range from poverty eradication to global partnerships. Achieving these targets will directly affect the lives and future prospects of billions of people around the globe. The cross-cutting nature of science implies there is hardly a social problem where science cannot make a contribution; hence, meeting the MDG's will require a focus on key sources of economic growth, especially those associated with the use of new scientific and technological knowledge.

Recognizing that science is a vital source of educational, intellectual and cultural enrichment in knowledge societies and economies, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (Ethiopia, January 2007), called upon "UNESCO and other bilateral and multilateral organizations to support the Member States, Regional Economic Communities and the African Union to implement the Summit decision on Science and Technology" and the recommendations of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Science and Technology and Scientific Research for Development.

The UN S&T Cluster Member plans focus on Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA). Three inter linked pillars make up the CPA for science and technology: capacity building, knowledge production and technological innovation.

This progress report is being submitted to the tenth UN RCM on behalf of the members of the Science and Technology Cluster, following the recommendations of the 9<sup>th</sup> RCM.

## **1.0 The cluster system of the RCM**

### **1.1 Accountability/Structural/Systemic**

#### *1.1.1 Meetings held, dates, objectives, outcomes and follow-up actions*

UNESCO and UNECA in cooperation with UNEP, organized the Fourth Meeting of the UN Science and Technology Cluster in Geneva on 4 September 2009. The objectives of this Cluster meeting were to strengthen the UN system-wide support for the African Union and its NEPAD programme at the regional and sub-regional levels, to ensure that the Cluster's work is very well aligned with the priorities in Science and Technology of the AUC, the AU/NEPAD and the regional major decisions on S&T; and in adhering to the recommendations of the previous RCM develop joint implementation on "inter-agency- activities" and the possible mobilization of resources.

Among the RCM recommendations that concern the S&T cluster, besides the regular progress reports on the Cluster achievements, Cluster Members were requested to identify common projects for joint implementation based on mandates in an "inter-agency initiative". This latter would add value to the Cluster and promote efforts to coordinate/harmonize implementation in science and technology initiatives in Africa. Thus the aim of this Cluster meeting was to address these recommendations and report back to the next RCM in November 2009. The following UN Agencies participated and presented their activities: UNU- MERIT, WIPO, UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNEP, UNECA, and UNESCO. IAEA sent their regrets.

Four activities were retained as potential areas of cooperation for joint "inter-agency" activities.

This 4<sup>th</sup> Cluster meeting is an important milestone for the Cluster since for the very first time, the Chair of AMCOST addressed Cluster Members and the recommendations of the RCM were discussed at length with concrete outcomes. In addition, in the quest for coherence and harmonization in the "inter-agency" perspective, potential activities/projects were identified that would enable the Agencies implement jointly and work in a collegial fashion within their individual mandates.

#### *1.1.2 Develop a consolidated Business Plan*

Cluster Members have their own workplans based on the mandates of their respective institutions, however, at the last Cluster meeting four potential areas for collaboration and joint implementation were identified. Agencies are also in the process of redefining their workplans and undergoing restructuring, this could affect the timeframe for implementation.

### **1.2 Coordination/Collaboration**

#### *1.2.1 Inter-cluster communication and collaboration (joint meetings, joint activities, information shared etc)*

In the absence of a formally agreed S&T Cluster secretariat, as the Convener, UNESCO assumes the secretariat function of the Cluster and works in close cooperation with the Vice Convener, UNECA and the AUC. The UNESCO Division of Science Policy and Sustainable Division, based in Paris, continues to serve as the secretariat of the Cluster and focal point. In addition, a dedicated Cluster web site maintained by UNESCO was launched. It is recommended that Members of the Cluster communicate activities / projects they have undertaken every two months to update the web site letter and e-mails continue to be the main avenues utilized for communication. All data and information regarding the activities are accessible on the web site of the UN Cluster with related links to the web-site of other UN Agencies members of the Cluster. The established web-site for the S&T cluster is also an advocacy platform for information on AU-NEPAD and the support provided by the Cluster to its programs (<http://www.unesco.org/science/psd/cluster.shtml>).

### *1.2.2 Participation of the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat, the RECs and the AfDB in cluster activities*

The 4<sup>th</sup> Cluster meeting was honored by the Chair of the African Ministerial Council for Science and Technology (AMCOST), currently assured by the Kenya Ministry for Higher Education, Science and Technology represented by Professor C. Kiamba, the Permanent Secretary. Professor Kiamba presented the “*Role and Achievements of AMCOST III Chair, Kenya November, 2007 – June, 2009*”, the structure of AMCOST as the highest decision making body other than the AU Summit on science and technology in Africa and the challenges and opportunities. An update of the implementation status of the CPA was presented by the AU/NEPAD Secretariat. The RCM Secretariat was also invited to the Cluster meeting. Cluster Members were informed that REC’s were regularly invited to participate in their regional and national activities.

The AUC/HRST and REC’s are actively involved in activities of UNESCO and UNECA.

### *1.2.3 Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework*

The African Cluster for Science and Technology was set up by the AUC/HRST as a means to coordinate activities in science and technology and avoid duplication. The UN Cluster will work in close cooperation with the African Cluster for Science and Technology and the AUC in developing this framework. However, there is a need for the UN Cluster to be actively involved in the ACST and to work more closely with the AUC/HRST and AU/NEPAD in the development of the monitoring framework including indicators, criteria and benchmarks.

Measures are necessary to improve communication between the RCM secretariat, the Advocacy and Communication Cluster and the S&T Cluster.

## **2.0 Achievements, results and impacts**

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals holds the promise of saving millions of lives, empowering women,

addressing the scourges of illiteracy, hunger and malnutrition and ensuring that children have access to high quality education and good health services to lead to productive lives. The second half of the MDG must focus on proven STI interventions that can be scaled up for sustainability.

Examining the interface of science and technology and innovation with the MDG's underpins the renewed attention that although sound policies and investments are central for achieving the MDG's and accelerating economic growth, they are not enough. Science creates technologies, which in turn can generate wealth. Knowledge societies and knowledge economies are science-based: science leads to technological advances and economic benefits that offer unique opportunities to meet basic human needs, reduce poverty, protect the environment and improve the quality of life.

In an era of increasing reliance on knowledge as a source of competitiveness for enterprises and nations, innovation and creativity are recognized today as the driving forces of economic growth. More than ever before, the ability to create, protect, access and use scientific knowledge effectively determines a country's capacity to compete in globalised markets. The development of a competitive, dynamic and vibrant economy requires an institutional framework that will favor the development of new knowledge and foster industry's capacity to incorporate and adapt technologies and create new products and services that meet market needs.

The intellectual property (IP) system and sound policies are central components of such an institutional framework and plays a critical role in fostering creativity, innovation and technology transfer. UN Agencies are ensuring that science is targeted at the economy; managing capacity-building programmes for science institutions; facilitating collaborative partnerships in science and advocating the role of science and innovation in decision-making and in development processes is part of that exercise.

## **2.1 Promoting Innovation**

The Conference of African Ministers of Industry (CAMI) adopted the "Strategy for the Implementation of the Plan of Action for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa" in October 2008 (18<sup>th</sup> ordinary session). The strategy is based on seven programme clusters and cluster 5: "Industrial Innovation Systems, R&D and technology development" is probably most significant for the UN Science and Technology Cluster in Support of the AU/CPA. UNIDO is implementing the immediate actions to be carried out for programme cluster 5: the establishment of university chairs on innovation in African universities, regional technology transfer and diffusion Centres, Technology Incubators and implementing the Africa Technology and Innovation Initiative. The UNIDO project "University Chairs on Innovation" (UNCHAIN) in the MEDA countries aims to close the gap between outputs of universities in terms of skills and R&D on one hand, and the requirements of industry and its further development on the other, and is part of UNIDO's effort to establish a "Global UNIDO Network of University Chairs on Innovation". UNIDO kicked-off a project to enhance technological innovation capacity in higher education of Tanzania, which is a member of the "One UN Joint Programme – Education" as one of participating UN Organizations.

UNECA was charged by the Conference of Finance Ministers to develop strategies for home-grown solutions to Africa's scientific challenges as a development priority. This has led to the African Science Philanthropy Initiative (ASPI) that is soliciting the support of prominent African business leaders. The overall objective of ASPI would be to link African research institutes and local companies for a mutually beneficial relationship. A Science Commons & Africa Innovation Platform will be hosted by ECA as a major new initiative that will catalyze innovation through new social networks focused on innovation in science and technology across Africa. This platform will facilitate all dimensions of policy-formulation and implementation of cyber-strategies across ECA's activities and serve as a "convergence platform" that can bring diverse stakeholders (scientists, technologists, policy-makers and business communities) together and address innovation bottlenecks throughout the continent. The UNCTAD *Technology and Innovation Report 2009* is a valuable tool for policy makers and other stakeholders with options for farmers to reduce their risk, improve yield and overall agricultural productivity and raise farm income.

Science and technology is the main driver of industrial, economic and social development, and university-industry cooperation is vital in this process. UNESCO's University-Industry-Science Partnership (UNISPAR) programme was launched in 1993 to improve the quality of universities in developing countries and encourage them to become more involved in the process of industrialization of their country. The African Science to Business Challenge (ASBC), a pioneering initiative launched in December 2008 by the ECA and the Research Triangle Institute of the USA (RTI International), is also aimed at strengthening links between scientific research and business development. UNIDO, identified as the Lead Agency for the Development of Science & Technology Parks, during the second meeting of the UN Cluster of S&T identified programmes for immediate AU/NEPAD-UN cooperation, developed a proposal titled: "Science & Technology commercialization in Support of SMEs through the development of Technology Parks and Incubators in Africa". This project is among the "AUC-EC Book of Projects" and would be the first to assess operational parks in Northern and Southern Africa to understand strengths and weaknesses of existing initiatives and subsequently prepare an action plan and policy guidelines for further development of new technology parks and incubators in Sub-Saharan Africa.

ECA is developing an African Innovation Framework to chart the way towards developing a concrete and implementable framework to guide Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) development on the continent. The objectives is to focus on the opportunities and challenges towards the development of African innovation strategy to complement national, sub-regional and sectoral ICT, Science and Technology policies and strategies. The *African Innovation Endowment Fund* will be launched by UNECA as a follow up to the Science with Africa Conference, with resources from within African governments and the private sector, generate funding for innovators and better venture capitalism.

The Intellectual property system provides a powerful incentive for the development of inventions and creative works as well as for their dissemination and productive use. It

encourages investments in new technological developments and in product differentiation and provides a framework for the development of technology markets. A critical challenge for WIPO is to ensure that IP policies and systems are formulated and structured in a manner so as to promote innovation, creativity and development in all Member States in Africa. Developing IP policies requires a clear understanding of the balance that needs to be achieved to ensure that the needs and concerns of various stakeholders are met, including those of owners, researchers, creators and users of IP. WIPO is providing an integrated package of project-based technical assistance for strengthening the following: capacity to formulate national IP policies, strategies and plans within the framework of national development objectives; the legal and institutional framework for the protection and enforcement of IP rights; and the capacity of users of the IPR system, including inventors, creators, entrepreneurs, SMEs, investors, universities and publicly-funded research and development institutions, to generate, manage and commercialize IP assets. WIPO's national and regional workshops across Africa the last 18 months have focused on capacity building in the following areas: digitization and indexing of patent documents in ARIPO and its Member States for data exchange; IP management and evaluation; training in patent drafting and advanced successful technology licensing.

## **2.2 Science, technology and innovation (STI) policy**

### *2.2.1 STI policy reviews*

The UNESCO Plan of Action in support of the African Union Consolidated Plan of Action for science and technology proposes measures to be taken in response to the needs of Member States in capacity building in science, technology and innovation policy reviews and science education. The Plan of Action is being implemented in close collaboration with the AUC/HRST, the AU/NEPAD, REC's and the AMCOST. UNESCO has launched the African Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Initiative (ASTIPI) to build capacities in policy review and reformulation and provide policy advice to African countries lacking a national policy. Supporting Member States in the review and or reformulation of national STI policies is considered a crucial step in their efforts to attain sustainable development. This is done by means of providing guidelines and methodologies, technical advice and guidance on formulation, implementation, monitoring, and a review of policies and plans concerning national S&T activities. Recognizing that African countries need to respond with policies, programmes, institutions and partnerships which maximize their economic opportunities, UNESCO has prioritized science, technology and innovation policy for the next biennium.

During the last year, UNESCO continued its assistance to the African Member States in the formulation/revision and/or evaluation of their national science, technology and innovation policies. Prior to the launch of the African, Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy Initiative, UNESCO assisted Lesotho, Mozambique and Namibia in reformulating their S&T policies, by bringing to light policy options that harness effectively the STI knowledge produced. During the 2008-2009 biennium, the following 20 Member States (Benin, Republic of Botswana, Burundi, Central African

Republic, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, the Gambia, Republic of Madagascar, Republic of Malawi, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, Republic of Niger, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Republic of Zambia and Zimbabwe) have made formal requests through their governments to UNESCO to assist them carry out national science policy reviews or formulation. The various countries are in different phases of the policy review process underlined above. In the **initial phase**, mobilization of the necessary expertise and identification of national and international experts is being carried out jointly by UNESCO and the country representation to UNESCO and the relevant Ministries. The terms of reference for the review are drafted based on the Member State's needs. The countries in this phase are Comoros, Congo, Niger, Senegal, Togo and Uganda. The activities and roadmaps for the review process will be drafted in close partnership with the national experts and the governments concerned.

**Status reports** are being elaborated by both UNESCO consultants and the national teams in Botswana and Zambia based on the country-specific requests concentrating on the mining industry and university-industry partnerships respectively. In April 2009, the National Academy of Sciences of Zimbabwe was contracted by UNESCO to prepare the STI status report for that country.

Initiated in 2008, the STI systems of the following eight countries were analysed by the UNESCO international and local experts, comprehensive status reports elaborated and submitted to the respective governments: Benin, Burundi, Central African Republic, Gabon, Gambia, Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritania, Swaziland (September 2008) and Sudan (December 2008). National stakeholder's consultation meetings have been convened by UNESCO and the relevant ministries in coordination with the Field Offices in Burundi (January 2009), Benin (September 2008), Madagascar (November 2008), Malawi (March 2009), Mauritania and Sudan (January 2009). Despite the status reports for the Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo having been prepared in 2006, the work was suspended due to logistical difficulties. However, agreements are underway to resume activities and validate the reports. National consultations on status reports will be planned jointly with these Member States.

In parallel to preparing the national STI status reports, UNESCO works closely with the ministries concerned and initiated the drafting of the national science policy; such is the case for Benin, Burundi, Botswana, Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritania and Sudan. The draft STI policies for the latter seven countries will be presented to governments and parliaments during the course of 2009. The STI policy in Mauritania is being jointly developed by UNESCO and UNCTAD and the proposals for the revised policy has been presented to the government. A Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) review for Angola was completed by UNCTAD.

Through a twinning project between the "*Consortium pour la Recherche Economique et Sociale (CRES)*" of Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal and UNU-MERIT, the program on the Design and Evaluation of Innovation Policy was initiated.

In the field of environmental policy, UNEP is providing support to the African Ministerial Council on the Environment (AMCEN) with a focus on capacity building activities via the Nairobi Office. UNEP is also developing the African Environmental Outlook for policy makers. The recently published document of the UN CEB on climate change and the roles of the Agencies was brought to the attention of the Cluster Members. Among the initiatives that were taking off the “science of climate change”, “green science” and the environmental effects on health were cited.

UNESCO has initiated regional capacity building initiatives in STI policy reviews which includes the use of evidence based policy making through STI statistics and indicators. Capacity building in STI policy review and or reformulation was conducted through sub-regional workshops for the SADC region in September 2008 and for the 11 East/North African countries in Mombasa in 2009.

### *2.2.2 Evidence based policy making*

The CPA recommended the monitoring of Africa’s S&T development through the use of STI statistics and indicators. UNESCO, through its Institute for Statistics (UIS), is the organisation in the UN system responsible for collecting and disseminating statistics in education and science. Training programmes for policy analysts in STI indicators were implemented by UIS and UNESCO, in close collaboration with the AUC/HRST, AUC/NEPAD and AMCOST for the SADC region and certain East and North African Countries in 2008 in Gaborone and 2009 in Mombasa respectively. STI statisticians from 14 SADC and 11 East/North African countries benefitted from the training in the area of mapping science statistics and indicators. These workshops aimed at increasing the number of countries in Africa regularly compiling S&T statistics, producing quality S&T indicators and at promoting the use this data in evidence-based policy-making.

### *2.2.3 Forum for parliamentary scientific forums*

Recognizing the important role that parliamentarians play in decisions on the funding of national science programmes, UNESCO convened regional science policy fora with scientists, parliamentarians and representatives of civil society for the East and North African countries. African parliamentarians responsible for proposing or debating bills on science-related issues exchanged experiences and know-how in STI policy-making and science legislation. The Mombasa Declaration stressed the key role S&T play in the sustainable socio-economic development of the sub-regions, as well as the need to accord priority to S&T in national policies encompassing the economy, environment and health, as well as other spheres. The Mombasa Declaration also outlined the establishment of a network of parliamentarians, the “Eastern Africa Parliament for Science and Technology for Development Network”, as a means to advocate for the role of STI in socio-economic development and called upon UNESCO and the African Union with relevant Regional Economic Communities to provide assistance.

## **2.3 Other activities in support of the AU/CPA**

Several activities were indicated as “follow up” to the ECA Science with Africa (SwA) conference of March 2008. Among these: developing ideas into implementable projects that will help boost R&D and operationalise STI at member state level in the next 7 years (2008-2015); and a Health Research Guidelines in Africa “Afroguide”, in collaboration with the AUC and the Good Clinical Practice Alliance – Europe.

Science and technology education at UNESCO was promoted through a series of activities via the development of research networks, the African Network of Scientific and Technological Institutions and the Global Microscience experiments project. Global Microscience Experiments Project promotes education in the basic sciences, through the use of microscience kits to enable primary and secondary school pupils to conduct practical experiments in chemistry, biology and physics. To date, introductory workshops for science teachers have been organized in 40 countries in Africa. Four operational centers of the African Virtual Campus that promote distance and e learning in science and technology were established and over 100 science teachers were trained in the pedagogy of on-line module production.

Other activities in support of the AU/CPA, with a strong emphasis on capacity building in science and technology are also underlined. The UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission provided capacity building to MS to draft request for the extension of the African continental shelf. Through the energy program at UNESCO, capacity-building in the use and application of renewable energy at the regional and national levels was enhanced through training platforms and through further implementation of the African Chapter of the Global Renewable Energy Education and Training Programme. A pilot Solar Village was established in Cameroon to promote adaptation of alternative and renewable energy sources; The Man and the Biosphere programme is contributing to the CPA with regard to outreach and education in geology and geophysics in Africa. Building scientific capacity in Africa is one of the highest priorities of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP’s) programmes based in Trieste, Italy. The ICTP condensed matter group has initiated a series of workshops and schools in the areas of Nanoscience and Materials Science with the aim of identifying or creating critical masses of scientists in the above disciplines, across sub-Saharan Africa. The UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (IHP) organizes in collaboration with African Ministers of Water Resources Council (AMCEN), capacity building in managing shared Aquifer Resources in Africa and water resources management.

The website dedicated solely to the UN S&T Cluster is updated and maintained by UNESCO.

#### **2.4 Harmonization between Agencies in the STIP reviews**

UNESCO would want to work closely with UNECA, UNIDO and WIPO in the STI policy reviews, whereby contributions from the respective specialized Agencies would be an asset and harmonized within the policy for joint implementation. UNESCO would seek to organize a meeting in Paris for the Agencies concerned.

### **3.0 Challenges and constraints**

#### ***AUC/HRST and the African Cluster for Science and Technology (ACST)***

The role of the ACST in relation to the UN Cluster was evoked. There is a need for the ACST to come up with clear roadmaps which would include its interactions with the UN Cluster. The UN Cluster as a whole and through its Cluster Members is interacting with the AUC/HRST, however, this should be strengthened towards developing fruitful collaborations.

#### ***Challenges faced by AMCOST***

AMCOST has a responsibility in raising awareness among MS on the integration and harmonization between the various actors involved in science and technology. Further reflection is necessary as to how coordination with AMCOST and the ADB can avoid duplications. AMCOST could also play an essential role in designing initiatives that would involve women, popularize science, and build capacity in order to move away from the “digitally poor continent”. The Cluster Members could also provide technical assistance on special subjects to AMCOST.

#### ***Key Recommendations of the RCM***

These were discussed at length. Cluster Members have their individual systems of reporting in the Results Based Management System which takes into account the benchmarks, achievements, challenges and lessons learnt. However, the identification of joint initiatives in an “inter agency approach” in a bid to deliver better and more coherent programming is the main challenge facing Cluster Members given their respective mandates and the cycles of programming.

#### ***R&D Indicators***

Evidence based policy making depends upon reliable statistics and indicators which serve as benchmarks for governments. Different Agencies are contributing to build capacity in this area raising the question of harmonization with that of the AU/NEPAD. This would be an area that would require coordination between the Cluster and AU/NEPAD/HRST.

#### ***IPCC and Climate change***

Participants discussed the various ramifications of/and associated with climate change: migrations, education, exploiting traditional knowledge and knowledge of the environment, cross border initiatives, the probability of use of the desertification kit in raising awareness.

### **4.0 Lessons learned and the way forward**

In an initial cooperation, potential joint “inter-agency” activities were identified. These are grouped below and would require further consultation among the agencies as to responsibilities, partnerships and the modality of implementation:

1. Follow up to the UNECA initiative on “Science with Africa” foreseen for 2010 with the emphasis on innovation in Africa and the launching of the “African Innovation Endowment Fund”. UNECA will lead this initiative.

2. Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) reviews: UNESCO has received requests from at least 20 African countries for assistance with their STIP reviews. Agencies would work together in contributing to the ‘holistic’ STI review encompassing innovation, intellectual property and socio economic development. This activity is being led by UNESCO. WIPO, UNIDO and UNECA will assist in the STI policy reviews and implementation, providing technical expertise. However, other Agencies maybe called upon depending on their mandates.
3. “Evaluation of implementation of the CPA- 5 years on”- a conference. This would enable us to take stock of the achievements and challenges Member States are facing in the “domestication” of the CPA. The Kenya Ministry for Higher Education, Science and Technology would develop this initiative with the Cluster Members, the AU/HRST and AU/NEPAD. UNECA and UNESCO will provide support to the Kenyan Ministry.
4. The Chair of AMCOST proposed a joint activity ie a conference with all relevant stakeholders on the “STI and its contribution to the MDG’s”. UNECA, UNESCO, WIPO and UNIDO will cooperate with the Chair of AMCOST and the AU Commission and examine this in relation to STI at national level.

## 5.0 Conclusions

Recommendations of the 9<sup>th</sup> RCM were discussed, with a focus especially on “*a coordination framework in order to identify joint activities and develop inter agency initiatives*”. Specialized Agencies are all working within their mandates towards the implementation of the AU/CPA. However, a major challenge for the harmonization of activities among the agencies is the different program cycles.

The projects identified as “inter-agency” activities should be followed up by all the Agencies and the RCM Secretariat could facilitate this, in particular support to UNECA for the launching of the African Innovation Endowment Fund, to the STI policy reviews by UNESCO and an evaluation of the CPA implementation.

In the bid to avoid duplications and resources wastage and promote coordination, the role of the African Cluster for Science and Technology would necessitate closer, more active collaboration with the UN Cluster.

In May 2008, UNESCO, the only UN body was nominated to the Steering Committee of AMCOST. We therefore invited the Chair of AMCOST to share with Cluster Members experiences learnt as the Chair as well as the challenges and opportunities facing UN bodies in supporting the AU/NEPAD in the implementation of the CPA and science activities in Africa. This was the first time that the Chair of AMCOST addressed the Cluster. In the spirit of harmonization, the integration of policies for Science and Technology development with Commercialization and Innovation would prompt for a combined session of the CAMI and AMCOST.