

**INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON COORDINATION AND HARMONIZATION  
OF HIV AND AIDS, TB AND MALARIA STRATEGIES  
November 6-8, 2006, UNCC, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Executive Summary**

The Inter-Agency Meeting on Coordination and Harmonization of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (ATM) Strategies was organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) in collaboration with UNECA, WHO and UNAIDS. The main objective of the meeting was to develop mechanisms for improving cooperation between the AUC and RECs, as well as strengthening, harmonizing, and coordinating UN system support for AU and RECs. It was held at the United Nations Conference Center (UNCC) in Addis Ababa from 6 - 8 November 2006.

Participants of the meeting were representatives from the AUC, NEPAD Secretariat, the Health and/or HIV/AIDS focal points of RECs, UNECA, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, UNAIDS, UNFPA, the African Development Bank (AFDB), and civil society organization (CSO) working on HIV/AIDS at continental level. These included the African Council of AIDS Service Organization (AfriCASO), National Peoples Action (NPA+), Society for Women in Africa (SWAA) and West Africa National AIDS Service Organization (WANASO).

Opening statements were made by Mr. Fidele Sarassoro, UN Resident Coordinator and Adv. Bience Gawanas, Commissioner for Social Affairs at the AUC. Both guests mentioned the importance of the meeting and called for the AUC, the RECs and the UN agencies to put in place a strong, realistic, harmonized and coordinated working mechanism that will make a real difference in the fight against HIV and AIDS, TB and Malaria. Commissioner Gawanas particularly mentioned the important role played by CSOs in HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria control, and called for better coordination and harmonization mechanisms between themselves and other partners.

Based on the Programme of the Meeting, an overview of the global and continental commitments to the fight against HIV and AIDS, TB and Malaria was presented by Dr. Kalimugogo, Head of AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) at the AU Commission. According to Dr. Kalimugogo it was through the 2000 and 2001 Abuja Declarations and Plans of Action to Malaria, HIV/AIDS, and TB, the 2001 UNGASS Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, the 2nd Session of the AU Conference of Ministers of Health in October 2005, the Brazzaville Commitment in March 2006, and the 2006 AU Special Summit on HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria in Abuja, Nigeria that impressive global and continental commitments were made.

Dr. Kalimugogo nevertheless expressed that those impressive global and continental commitments could not be translated into concrete actions due a wide range of challenges which included inadequate communication with member states, limited communication with RECs, lack of harmonization of Regional Offices of different UN Agencies in terms of coverage of countries and location, time consuming and less cost-effective dealings with different development partners, and limited CSOs engagement in the translation of continental and regional commitments.

The above challenges were reiterated by representatives from RECs, NEPAD Secretariat, African Development Bank and the UN Agencies participating in the meeting during their respective agency presentations. They were also extensively discussed and

articulated later in working groups, organized to recommend concrete actions on realistic and effective harmonization and coordination between AUC and RECs on one side and the UN agencies on the other.

Two fundamental changes which are required for bringing about effective coordination and harmonization and a series of recommendations were identified by three working groups and adopted by the Meeting. The fundamental changes needed to be brought included i) increasing the quantity and quality of UN system support to capacities of the AUC and RECs and ii) changing the behavior and culture of the UN system so that it harmonizes its support.

Highlights of the major recommendations of the Meeting were the following.

### **Recommendations to AUC**

- Develop an integrated AU, AWA and NEPAD plan for the purpose of harmonization and coordination.
- Provide support and guidance by the AUC to the RECs for the RECs to play their critical role in the fight against HIV and AIDS, TB and Malaria.
- Establish a focal point for coordination with RECs,
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that will be agreed between the AU and UN that among others include the division of labour between the concerned parties should be developed by the AUC.

### **Recommendations to RECs**

- Harmonize RECs Strategic Plans with AU Strategic Plan
- Convene annual coordination meetings as well as side meetings when possible, with RECs for joint planning and review missions,

### **Recommendations to the UN Agencies**

- Strong commitment from UN Agencies to prepare a joint UN plan of support to the AUC and RECs,
- Provide support to the AUC and RECs for a series of capacity assessment,
- Establish joint UN teams of support for HIV, TB and Malaria at AU level,
- Critically review the adequacy of support to the AUC and RECs
- More commitment to make sure that they carry through on actions they have agreed at this Meeting.
- Establish a Joint UN Team in Addis Ababa on AIDS (UNAIDS) TB (WHO) and Malaria (UNICEF/WHO) which would be convened by ECA to improve coordination with the AU,

After adopting the above recommendations, the three day meeting was concluded by closing remarks and vote of thanks from Dr. Meskerem Grunitzky Bekele, UNAIDS Director-RST for Western and Central Africa Region, and Dr. Grace Kalimugogo, on behalf of Commissioner Gawanas and a Representative from RECs (ECCAS). All expressed their satisfaction on the work done within the short period of time.