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Date:

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

## **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Over the past few years, an impressive number of *commitments on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB) and Malaria* have been made at global, continental and regional levels. At *global level*, the UNGASS meeting on HIV/AIDS to review the 2001 UNGASS Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS took place in New York from 31 May – 2 June 2006.

At *continental level*, the 2nd session of the African Union (AU) Conference Ministers of Health in October 2005 adopted the Gaborone Declaration on a “Roadmap Towards Universal Access to Prevention, Care and Treatment”, followed by the Brazzaville Commitment in March 2006 on “Scaling up Towards Universal Access to HIV and AIDS Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support in Africa by 2010”. African Leaders, at the Special Summit on HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria (ATM) in Abuja, Nigeria, 2 – 4 May 2006 reviewed progress in the implementation of the 2000 and 2001 Abuja Declarations and Plans of Action to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria.

Accordingly, over the past few years *Regional Economic Communities (RECs)* have integrated health and social issues in their development programmes and some of them are implementing HIV/AIDS strategies. Most of the continental Calls and Commitments include roles for the RECs in intensifying cross border cooperation, coordinate inter-country efforts, resource mobilization and reporting.

Various *follow up and reporting mechanisms of the commitments* made at different levels have been put in place. At the 2001 Abuja Summit for instance, eight African Heads of State created AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) to lead advocacy efforts to mobilize resources and *monitor the performance* of the African response. An Abuja Framework Plan of Action as well as Guidelines for using the Mechanism for Monitoring and Reporting were developed. The latter however were felt to be quite rather cumbersome<sup>1</sup>. The monitoring of the 2006 “*Abuja Call for accelerated Action Towards Universal Access to HIV and AIDS, TB and Malaria by 2010*” will be done through biennial consultative reviews based on the **Implementation Plan for the Outcomes of the 2006 Abuja Special Summit on ATM**. In the Brazzaville commitment, the Pan–African Parliament Committee on Health, Labor and Social Affairs is to provide advocacy, oversight and accountability for the implementation of the commitment towards universal access. This group is proposed to work, inter alia within the framework of the AU, making use of AWA and the NEPAD peer review mechanism. In the same commitment, the UN system and development partners including civil society are requested to develop a framework under which they are held accountable.

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<sup>1</sup> Abuja call towards universal access, 2006, p. 3

*Most RECs* from their side developed their own **regional strategies and action plans** on HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria without necessarily outlining how those operationalise the continental and national frameworks and plans of action. These strategies however do not always explicitly refer to the assignments given to RECs in the continental commitments and their respective operational and M&E mechanisms. Neither is coordination and harmonization with other frameworks such as the AWA strategic framework, NEPAD Health strategy ensured and is it sometimes unclear what needs to be aligned to what and how. The level and quality of human and financial resources made available to RECS or needed by RECs are also not widely known.

On several occasions including at the Continental Consultation on Scaling up Towards Universal Access to HIV/AIDS Prevention, Care and Treatment convened by the AU, WHO and UNAIDS in particular, obstacles have been identified and financial and technical challenges and capacity constraints analyzed. The proposed solutions for **follow up at regional level in specific areas** such as financing, human resources and health systems development, commodities and human rights and gender concerns now need to be operationalised by the AU and RECs. This is to be done in a partnership approach in which priorities, roles and responsibilities, funding and technical support and accountabilities are clearly defined. Furthermore, to highlight the importance of regional and inter-country cooperation for Africa's development, the July 2006 Banjul AU Assembly focused its deliberations on Regional Cooperation and Integration. The *UN* is ready to contribute financial and technical support to both AU and RECs for these organs to deliver on the continental commitments. This UN support will be delivered in line with the Global Task Team on Improving AIDS Coordination among Multilateral Institutions and International Donors and within the framework of the Capacity Building Programme to the AU as recommended in the Resolution A/60/L.1 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome).

## **RATIONALE, OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOME**

Against that background, an Inter- Agency Meeting on Coordination and Harmonization of HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria Strategies/policies is being organized.

The objectives of the meeting are to:

- Facilitate discussion between the AU and the RECS for a common understanding of Commitments, progress in implementation, priority actions, coordination and roles and responsibilities as well as modalities for collaboration.
- Discuss and define capacity challenges and financial and technical support needs and agree on harmonised and coordinated UN and other partner's support to the AU and REC
- Develop a draft implementation plan on identified priorities.

Therefore, the AU and the RECs will meet with selected partners working in the areas of HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria in order to have a common understanding of the global, continental and regional Commitments and to update each other on how these Commitments have been or should be followed up. For all three diseases, the emphasis will be put on the sharing information on the various operational modalities and monitoring arrangements which have been put in place by various actors.

Consequently, the AU and RECs will provide details on capacity and resource gaps, challenges and constraints and how these can be addressed through a more effective way of working together.

Discussions will help to clarify AU and REC relations, leading to a rational division of labour between AU and RECs, based on each organization's comparative advantage. Priorities and modalities for collaboration between AU and RECs, including actions to be taken, responsibilities and timeframe, information sharing and communication modalities, coordination and next steps are to be defined.

With regard to HIV/AIDS in particular, the UN is to align its support in coordinated manner based on the UNAIDS Technical support division of Labour to the AU/RECs priorities and modalities. The working arrangements for provision of such UN technical and financial support are also to be defined to ensure it is of good quality, timely and delivered in an efficient way.

The outcome of the above discussions will be translated into more harmonized, better resourced and stronger implementation plans with more coordinated and effective links in countries of each REC as well as vertically with AU in the fight against HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria.

## **ORGANISATION OF THE MEETING**

The three-day meeting will take place from 6 to 8 November 2006 at the United Nations Conference Center (UNCC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting is co-organized by the AU and the UN. Representatives of the African Union Commission, ECA, WHO and UNAIDS constitute the organizing Secretariat. Invited participants and experts will include AU/NEPAD, AU Commission, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, and the AIDS focal points of RECs, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and three representatives of continental umbrella organizations dealing exclusively with issues pertaining to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria.

## **DOCUMENTATION**

Deliberations will be based on the most recent commitments reflected in the documentation list below at global, continental and sub-regional levels. The organizing committee will endeavour to recruit consultants to synthesize some key background document. This would include compilation, review and analysis of the key African continental commitments/frameworks as well as the plans and progress achieved thereof for each of the RECs, as needed. Every effort will be exerted to achieve this synthesis prior to the Retreat, in order to enable the participants to deliberate with better focus and enhance the chances of achieving consensus and progress in overcoming implementation obstacles:

- Outcomes of the Special Summit of the African Union on HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria, Abuja, (May 2006)
- The Brazzaville Commitment on Scaling up Towards Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support (Continental Consultative Meeting, Brazzaville (March 2006)
- the AU Gaborone Declaration on a “Roadmap Towards Universal Access to Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support” (AU conference of Ministers of Health, October 2006)
- The WHO Declaration of 2006 as the Year for HIV Prevention
- **REC** implementation plans (including brief progress update for each component);
- **TB:** Continental as well as sub-regional strategic frameworks for action and summary of key challenges facing implementation
- **Malaria:** Continental as well as sub-regional strategic frameworks for action and summary of key challenges facing implementation

### **Background documents will include among other things:**

- AU Strategic plan on HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan 2005-2007 and AWA Strategic Framework
- The Continental Framework for Harmonization of Approaches Among Member States and Integration of Policies on Human Right and People Infected and Affected by HIV/AIDS in Africa;
- UNAIDS “Three Ones” Key Principles (UNAIDS)
- NEPAD and APRM programmes relative to HIV/AIDS
- REC frameworks and plan of action
- GITT on Improving Coordination Among Mult. Inst. and Intl Donors, June 2005 (UNAIDS)
- UNAIDS Technical Support Division of Labour (UNAIDS)

- The Third African Development Forum: Defining Priorities for Regional Integration (ECA)
- Assessing Regional Integration in Africa II – Rationalizing Regional Economic Communities (ECA / AU)
- Other relevant documents

**WORKING LANGUAGES:**

Simultaneous interpretation in English and French

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