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ECA's Support to AU and its NEPAD Programme

Issues Note

Introduction

1. African leaders launched the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2001. Subsequently, in 2002 the UN General Assembly (GA) adopted it as the framework within which the international community, including the United Nations System, should channel its support to African countries. Furthermore, the General Assembly gave ECA the mandate to take leadership and responsibility for coordinating UN System-wide support to the implementation of NEPAD at the regional and subregional levels.
2. Certainly, much progress has been made both in terms of the implementation of NEPAD programmes and in terms of UN system wide support. On its part, ECA has registered significant success in coordinating interagency support to NEPAD and in managing the Regional Consultation Mechanism (RCM) and its cluster system, which serve as the mechanism for system wide support to NEPAD. Notwithstanding the successes, much remains to be done. The fact that after seven years, NEPAD is still not well known and ownership at the country levels is, in some cases, non-existent and the fact that performance of the UN clusters in providing joint support and in operating within the clusters remain mixed indicates that more work is needed. On its own part, ECA still faces significant challenges when it comes to fulfilling its mandate and effectively coordinating system wide support to NEPAD for maximum effectiveness and impact.
3. How can ECA fully and effectively fulfil its mandate of strengthening the RCM and in enhancing the relationship between the UN and African regional and subregional organizations? How can ECA effectively play its leadership role in coordinating UN system-wide support to AU and its NEPAD programme at the regional and subregional levels? How could ECA maximize commission-wide effort in support of AU and its NEPAD programme? These are some of the questions to be addressed at the symposium. More specifically, the symposium is organized for the following reasons:
 - To share views and have a frank and open discussion on how the Commission can best fulfil its mandate to support African countries within the framework of the AU and its NEPAD programme as well as how to strengthen the coordination of UN system-wide support to the AU and NEPAD at the regional and subregional levels.
 - To provide guidance for a stronger, more coherent and better coordinated commission-wide effort within ECA in support of AU and its NEPAD programme.
4. This Issues Note identifies the key issues that need to be addressed during the symposium. It is organized around five Sections. The first section presents ECA's mandate and shows how this mandate has expanded over time. The second section focuses on issues related to the Coordination of the support to the AU and its NEPAD programme at different levels. Section three focuses on the provision of

direct support by ECA to the AU and NEPAD priorities. Section four deals with the institutional support to AU, NEPAD and RECS while section five addresses the key issue of advocacy and outreach.

Section 1. The Mandate to support the AU and its NEPAD programme

5. The United Nations GA gave ECA the mandate to improve cooperation and coordination between UN agencies and African organizations for the effective implementation of NEPAD at the regional and subregional levels. This mandate has expanded over the years in light of emerging needs.

1.1. The Original Mandate

6. The original mandate derives from decisions taken at the level of the UN System as follows:
 - United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 57/2 of 16 September 2002 and 57/7 of 04 November 2002 made NEPAD the framework within which the international community, including the UN system, should concentrate its efforts for Africa's development and entrusted ECA with the responsibility to coordinate UN system-wide support to NEPAD at regional and subregional levels through a special coordinating unit.
 - The Chief Executives' Board of the UN System for Coordination (CEB) requested UN organizations and agencies to examine the way they support African countries and their regional/subregional organizations in addressing the priorities of NEPAD.

1.2. The Expanded Mandate

7. In light of new realities and need for more effective support to Africa's development, the original mandate has expanded over time.
 - The 7th and 8th regional consultation meetings of November 2006 and November 2007 respectively, confirmed ECA's leadership role in the UN system-wide coordination and defined ECA's role from convener of the regional consultation meetings to a strategic coordinator on UN support to AU and its NEPAD programme. ECA is accordingly requested to coordinate the relationship with AU at the regional and subregional levels and to coordinate the implementation of the UN Ten Year Capacity Building Programme under the cluster system of the Regional Consultation Mechanism (RCM).
 - The UN Ten Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU under the Framework Agreement signed on 16 November 2006 by the Chairperson of

the AU and the SG of the UN is aimed at enhancing cooperation between the UN and AU in their areas of competence and in conformity with their respective mandates. The main objectives of the Ten Year Capacity Building Programme are to enhance the capacity of the AU Commission and the subregional organizations to act as effective UN partners. It is a comprehensive Programme that reflects a broad range of UN support to the AU in areas such as institution building; human resources development and financial management; peace and security, human rights, political, legal and electoral matters; social, economic, cultural and human development; and food security and environmental protection. The programme establishes a basis for expanding and strengthening consultations and cooperation between the UN system and the AU.

- Furthermore, resolution 61/296 of 17 September 2007 calls upon the UN system to support the African Union and its member States in their efforts to implement the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. It also calls for the implementation of the declaration on enhancing the United Nations – African Union cooperation Framework for the Ten Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. It requests the UN system to cooperate with the AU and its member States in the implementation of appropriate policies to promote Africa's development in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Constitutive Act of the AU and NEPAD.
- The MOU with the NEPAD Secretariat signed between the ECA Executive Secretary and the NEPAD CEO on 01 September 2006 in which both organizations agree that more could be done in supporting the NEPAD Secretariat in carrying out its mandate through enhanced collaboration around a number of key areas such as joint strategic policy and research, resource mobilization, capacity building, especially at the level of the NEPAD Secretariat, the RECs and member States and the integration of NEPAD into national development plans.

Section 2. Coordination of Support to AU and its NEPAD Programme

8. For ECA, coordination-related issues and challenges occur at two levels: coordination of interagency support at the regional level and coordination of support and implementation of NEPAD at the subregional level.

2.1. Coordination of the UN System-wide Support to AU and NEPAD at the regional level

Background

9. As part of its repositioning in 2006, ECA gave prior consideration to Africa's development priorities, especially the promotion of regional integration in support of the AU vision and priorities, and Africa's special needs and global challenges (that include support to NEPAD implementation). In this context, ECA created the NEPAD Support Section in the NEPAD and Regional Integration Division (NRID) to coordinate the UN support to NEPAD-related activities.
10. In order to effectively execute ECA's role of coordinating UN system-wide support to the AU and its NEPAD programme, the Commission established internal coordinating mechanisms comprising ECA focal points for the various thematic clusters of the RCM. The cluster focal points are required to serve as substantive representatives of ECA to the respective thematic clusters and to also serve as members of the RCM Secretariat. In this regard, cluster focal points are expected to provide substantive inputs into the work of the clusters, report on general activities of the clusters, follow up on requests and act as a liaison between the RCM Secretariat and the clusters. Focal points are also required to support the clusters in the preparation and servicing of meetings (Addis Ababa and outside) and to report on the outcomes of the meetings.

Implementation Status

11. In collaboration with other UN agencies, ECA continues to organize regional consultation meetings with the aim of improving cooperation and coordination between UN organizations/agencies and African organizations. The Eighth Regional Consultation Meeting, which was held in November 2007, provided the opportunity to build on the achievements of the Seventh Regional Consultation Meeting and to deepen partnership with the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat. Undoubtedly, leadership of the RCM has improved and more clusters are being better coordinated. Also, in collaboration with UN agencies operating in Africa, ECA continued to support African organizations in areas such as regional integration, international trade, environmental and sustainable development, agricultural development and food security, governance and the NEPAD Short Term Action Plan (STAP) on Infrastructure, which includes activities in transport, water resources, mineral resources and ICT development.
12. With the exception of the Human Resources Development, Employment and HIV/AIDS cluster, ECA focal points have been designated for all the clusters. In most cases, focal points attend meetings, but they are not actively involved in the preparation and servicing of these meetings. The execution of the liaison role is rather weak and only a few focal points provide information on the activities of the clusters.

13 Issues for Discussion

- *What lessons have been learned from the various activities carried out so far in relation to the regional coordination?*

- *What lessons have been learned in terms of the operationalization of the internal coordination mechanisms?*
- *Taking into account the roles of the different actors, what should be done to make the internal coordination mechanisms within ECA more effective?*
- *Considering that ECA is the convener of the Infrastructure Cluster, what lessons have we learned from this experience and how can we make ECA cluster leadership exemplary and a model for the other 8 clusters?*
- *How do we ensure that the focal point system works for the cluster system and how do we ensure better representation of ECA and participation in all the clusters of the RCM?*
- *From the lessons learned and taking into account the increasing number of tasks to be performed, the increasing number of actors, their comparative advantages and roles, what should be done to ensure improved cooperation and coordination among UN agencies and organizations on the one hand and between UN agencies and African organizations (AU, RECs, NEPAD Secretariat) on the other?*
- *Taking into account the need to develop effective working relationships among the different actors and the need to deepen communication and information among them what strategy could be suggested for effectiveness?*
- *What are the implications for the different divisions and other ECA entities, as well as for the various focal points involved? Do we have adequate capacity to carry out the tasks related to the implementation of AU/NEPAD programme?*
- *How can we make it happen?*

2.2 Coordination of UN System-wide Support to AU and NEPAD at the subregional level

Background

14. The Secretary General's report to the 61st session of the General Assembly envisions ECA's Subregional Offices (SROs) as playing a lead role at the subregional level in coordinating the programmes and activities of UN agencies, thus bringing this perspective to the UNDG framework. Furthermore, the 7th Regional Consultation Meeting recognized the non-existence of a coordinating mechanism at the subregional level similar to the RCM, and agreed that SROs should play a key role in bringing other UN agencies together in support of NEPAD at the subregional level and that an appropriate mechanism for subregional coordination should be formulated. The meeting recommended that ECA, in collaboration with other UN agencies, the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat, coordinates discussions on the needs of RECs, to facilitate a better alignment and better targeting of UN

support at the subregional level. In this connection, an ad hoc expert group meeting was organized in October 2007 to review a report on assessment of the cluster system of the regional consultations, and to discuss issues pertaining to subregional coordination.

15. The recommendations of the ad hoc expert group meeting were endorsed by the 8th Regional Consultation Meeting. The meeting noted that there was inadequate knowledge of the work of UN agencies at the sub regional level, particularly regarding their presence at that level, areas of focus, operation modalities and coordination mechanisms. The meeting also noted that subregional coordination might be difficult if regional integration issues are not clearly factored into the cluster system. In this respect, the meeting endorsed the recommendation that a stocktaking exercise be conducted to ascertain the agencies that have subregional presence and programmes, their different areas of focus, as well as the existing coordination mechanisms, in order to identify gaps and shortcomings. The meeting also endorsed that regional integration be addressed in the cluster system to enhance coordination at subregional level, and that the capacities of RECs be strengthened.

Implementation status

16. In order to implement the various recommendations on subregional coordination, SRO's have been working at bringing UN agencies together to support the AU and NEPAD at the subregional level. These include developing issues papers and undertaking discussions with UN agencies, continental and regional organizations in their respective subregions. For example, the North Africa Office has undertaken initial discussions on the possibility of better coordinating UN activities in the subregion and how this could tie into the existing country mechanism. The Southern Africa Office has undertaken discussions to galvanize UN agencies to support NEPAD implementation in the subregion and is compiling an inventory of the activities of UN agencies. In an effort to bring together UN agencies to support NEPAD in the subregion, the Central Africa Office is involved in a committee comprising ECCAS, CEMAC, AfDB and the AU Commission, aimed at deepening the deliberations on the rationalization and harmonization of a cooperation mechanism, and in the long-term, establish one REC in the subregion. The Eastern Africa Office plans to organize in June 2008, an ad hoc expert group meeting on the implementation of AU and NEPAD programmes in the subregion. The meeting will involve RECs, the AU Commission, the NEPAD secretariat and UN agencies.

17 Issues for discussion

- *What lessons have been learned from the various activities on subregional coordination so far undertaken by the SROs?*

- *From the lessons learned and taking into account the comparative advantages and roles of the different actors, what should be done to expedite the establishment of subregional coordination mechanism (s)?*
- *Taking into account the need to develop effective working relationships among the different subregional mechanisms and between them and the RCM, what form (s) should they take and what should be their operational modalities?*
- *What are the implications for the SROs, the RECs and agencies and organizations involved?*
- *How can we make it happen?*

Section 3. Direct Support to the implementation of AU and NEPAD Priorities

Background

18. In line with its repositioning priorities, ECA continued delivering on the two main pillars of regional integration and Africa's special needs and global challenges. ECA's support to the implementation of AU programmes including NEPAD has been done by divisions and SROs in three main ways: solo actions taken by various divisions in support of NEPAD, joint support with the African Union Commission and/or the NEPAD Secretariat and joint activities with other organizations other than the AU Commission or the NEPAD Secretariat. Joint action with the AU Commission and NEPAD Secretariat has come mainly in the form of joint activities, joint formulation of Africa-wide policy or programme frameworks and joint implementation of the policy framework.
19. Solo actions taken by various divisions in support of NEPAD are mostly in form of advocacy for NEPAD or its programmes; studies; meetings, seminars, roundtables; publications (i.e. ERA, ARIA); capacity building; functional support to intergovernmental agencies; and technical support. Collaborative actions include the substantive technical support in preparing and servicing ministerial conferences and AU/NEPAD Summits as well as the co-organization of technical meetings and workshops in ECA's areas of expertise.
20. Examples of joint action that ECA has undertaken with the AU Commission or NEPAD Secretariat in developing policy/programme frameworks include the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP); the AU-ECA-AfDB joint initiative on Land Policy in Africa; the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE), Africa's roadmap on ICT up to 2015; the Yamoussoukro Decision for Air Transport Liberalization; the Africa Water Vision 2025; the Sub-Saharan African Transport Programme (SSATP); the African Peer Review Mechanism and the Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness.

Implementation status

21. Individually or jointly with the AU Commission or the NEPAD Secretariat, ECA continues carrying out activities in support of NEPAD implementation through advocacy for NEPAD or its programmes, technical studies, flagship publications (ERA, ARIA, etc), capacity building, functional support to intergovernmental agencies, technical support, briefing papers, electronic material, workshops, seminar, roundtables and advisory services. Through its flagship publications, the Commission provides a holistic appraisal of where the continent stands in areas such as economic development and regional integration. Particularly the flagship publication on *Economic Report on Africa* and *Survey on Economic and Social Development in Africa*, prepared in collaboration with the AU Commission, supports NEPAD's agenda on growth and poverty reduction. The Sustainable Development Report on Africa also serves as a tool to monitor progress and to advocate for measures to accelerate implementation of priority programmes of NEPAD, which is recognized by WSSD as providing a framework for the sustainable development of Africa. ECA is also involved in joint formulation of Africa-wide formulation of policies, action plans, continental strategies or decisions and programme frameworks.
22. ECA's annual conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development organized in collaboration with the AU Commission is an important forum that discusses and makes recommendations on key development issues in line with the priorities of the AU and NEPAD.

23 *Issues for discussion*

- *What lessons have been learned from the fact that the various structures of ECA have been carrying out activities in support of NEPAD implementation in line with their respective programme of work as approved by the GA?*
- *From the lessons learned and taking into account the increasing mandate on ECA to support the AU and its NEPAD programme, how can we optimise coordination among ECA divisions/SROs?*
- *Taking into account the need to create synergies in the work of the Commission, how is it possible to plan and program our activities for enhanced coherence and harmonization? How can we mainstream NEPAD priorities into divisional regular work programme? How can we properly align ECA divisional programmes and resources with AU and NEPAD priorities?*
- *Organizing and implementing jointly planned activities/programmes/projects could be a solution. How can we more appropriately take into account NEPAD priorities in planning ECA programme planning (i.e. Programme Budget 2008-2009)?*

- *Considering that many divisions conduct activities in support of the implementation of AU and NEPAD priorities, what type of internal communication and information mechanism should be adopted to foster effective working relationships*
- *What are the implications for ECA (including SROs)? How can we effectively carry out the expanded tasks?*
- *How can we make it happen?*

Section 4. Institutional Support the African Union Commission, NEPAD Secretariat and the RECs

Background

24. Support to African organizations is carried out in the context of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme of the AU, Memorandum of Understanding signed between ECA and the NEPAD Secretariat and the agreements with individual RECs.

Implementation Status

25. ECA continues providing institutional support and technical assistance to the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in areas as diverse as the implementation of NEPAD, regional integration and intra African trade, international trade, infrastructure and natural resources, ICT, environment and sustainable development, agricultural development and food security. With regard to its *support to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)*, ECA has made tremendous contributions and participated actively in the APRM process of several African countries. It has developed a *Database of independent African and Diaspora Experts* in all areas of governance for the Country Review Missions. ECA also participates actively in AU Summits, the Summits of the RECs and the NEPAD Steering Committee meetings. The Commission provides technical advice and inputs, particularly in the discussions on the integration of NEPAD into AU structures and processes.

26. In order to effectively meet its obligations under the MOU signed with the NEPAD Secretariat, the Commission established internal coordinating mechanisms comprising focal points for the MOU signed with the NEPAD Secretariat. The designation of MOU focal points was done on the basis of the different thematic areas identified for cooperation between ECA and the NEPAD Secretariat. The MOU focal points are required to regularly consult with designated counterparts of the NEPAD Secretariat on matters related to the implementation of the MOU in their respective areas. In collaboration with NEPAD Secretariat counterparts, focal points are required to prepare work plans with selected, concrete measurable activities, including chronogram of implementation. The designated technical focal point in the Commission is charged with the substantive follow up and satisfactory

implementation of the agreed activities. He/she is required to work with the MOU Technical Focal Points to ensure the effective execution of duties.

27. The Eighth RCM reiterated its commitment to the effective implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. The framework of the capacity building programme highlights the key areas for cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations, namely institution-building, human resources development, youth unemployment, financial management, peace and security issues, political, legal, social, economic, cultural and human development and food security and environmental protection, and these represent an important step to further enhance the level of cooperation between the AU and the UN. Furthermore, GA resolution 61/296 "Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union" of 17 November 2007 calls on UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes to intensify their efforts to support cooperation with the African Union within the framework. For ECA, therefore, the implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU raises three important but interrelated issues: coordinating its implementation by UN agencies and organizations and implementing the programme within the cluster system and solo implementation in ECA's areas of comparative advantage.

28 Issues for discussion

- *What are the lessons learned in the provision of institutional support to African organizations, particularly the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and the RECs?*
- *From the lessons learned and taking into account the roles and mandates of the different organizations, what should be done to make the institutional support more effective?*
- *What should be done to ensure a more effective implementation of the ECA-NEPAD Secretariat MOU?*
- *What type of strategy should ECA adopt to ensure that it effectively contributes to the implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU?*
- *What are the implications for ECA's divisions and SROs?*
- *How can we make it happen?*

Section 5. Advocacy and outreach

Background

29. A cluster for advocacy and communications exists within the RCM. The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) is the convener of the cluster and ECA is the designated vice convener. A comprehensive communications and advocacy strategy

has been developed with the support and participation of the NEPAD Secretariat, OSAA, UNDP and ECA. The current efforts by the ECA are aimed at implementing the components of that strategy at the regional, sub-regional and national levels in Africa.

30. The success of the communication and advocacy strategy depends on a sustained support from within and outside the continent for NEPAD; sustained general awareness and interest in NEPAD from the highest level of society in Africa to the grass root; the mobilization of the general population on the continent in support of NEPAD; the showcase of achievements, progress and success in the implementation of NEPAD; sustained momentum of financial flows into NEPAD priority areas from within and outside the continent; and stop or mitigate the cynicism that has come to characterise NEPAD in some parts of the continent.
31. This communication and advocacy campaign for NEPAD is built on two main pillars: making the case for NEPAD; and reporting on its progress.
32. ECA is pivotally placed for the advocacy campaign. First, its primary mandate includes advocacy on African issues, particularly in the area of social and economic development. Secondly, its coordinating role gives it a unique relationship with other members of the UN system to be able to sensitise them towards a concerted role and efforts in support of NEPAD. Thirdly, it is the key UN institution in Africa and is therefore well positioned for a fruitful relationship with continental institutions like the AU and the African Development Bank. Fourthly, ECA has tremendous credibility with the civil society organisations. Consequently, it can sensitise them towards the goals of the advocacy campaign.

Implementation Status

33. All activities being carried out by ECA in support of AU and its NEPAD Programme have an element of advocacy. In addition, ECA participates in the UN Communications and Advocacy Cluster meetings and projects convened by OSAA. ECA launched in September 2007 a Weekly Newsletter on NEPAD – the NEPAD Brief - that is circulated widely so as to create awareness on NEPAD implementation and related matters. It organized a Communications and Advocacy Workshop in Accra, Ghana, from 12 to 14 April 2007 in partnership with the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat. Furthermore, a workshop is being organized by ECA for members of the African media so as to engage them in a dialogue on NEPAD. A website is being developed to provide up-to-date information on project content at the national and regional levels. As regards the NEPAD Secretariat, advocacy activities include the production of a weekly TV show together with the SABC and the regular publication of the *NEPAD Dialogue* newsletter. OSAA's advocacy activities include the publication of the *Africa Renewal newsletter*.

34 *Issues for discussion*

- *What are the lessons learned in relation to advocacy and communications activities carried out in support of AU and its NEPAD programme?*
- *From the lessons learned and considering that NEPAD does not seem to be well known, even at the level of ECA, what advocacy and public information strategy should we adopt to support NEPAD.*
- *How can advocacy activities be carried out through ECA's knowledge management strategy?*
- *What are the implications for ECA's divisions and SROs?*
- *How can we make it happen?*