



Nations Unies  
Commission économique pour l'Afrique  
Bureau pour l'Afrique du Nord

Consultative meeting to support the activities of the Regional  
Coordination Mechanism (RCM-AFRICA)

Rabat, Morocco, 24 - 25 June 2014

**Consultation on strengthening  
and coordinating support tools for the AMU**

**Concept Note**

## I. Context

The United Nations General Assembly, through its resolutions 57/2, 57/7 and 61/296- enshrined the New Partnership for the Development of Africa (NEPAD) as the action and support framework for the development of the continent, and asked organizations and institutions of the United Nations System (UN System) to support the implementation process of programs related to this initiative<sup>1</sup>, mainly through the elaboration of common projects at the regional level. The regional coordination mechanism was established for that purpose, and articulated in nine sub- thematic groups, in line with the development priorities of the African States, as outlined in the NEPAD agenda: (i) Development of water, energy, transport and ICT infrastructures, (ii) governance, (iii) environment, population and urbanization, (iv) science and technology, (v) peace and security, (vi) agriculture, food security and rural development (vii) human resources development, employment and HIV/AIDS, (viii) industry, trade and access to market, (ix) awareness raising and communication.

In the same vein, the GA /62/277 resolution enshrined the initiative “UN Delivering as one”, as recommended by the November 2006 report by the high level panel on United Nations system-wide coherence. The general objective is to strengthen the synergy between activities of the system agencies and bodies, in order to optimize actions and, at the same time, reduce fragmentation and costs related to the various partnerships implemented to support development efforts of States.

The main goal of the RCM-Africa is **to strengthen coherence and synergy between the activities of the agencies and bodies of the UN System that support Africa**. ECA is in charge of the coordination and secretariat of this mechanism.

Many consultative meetings were held within this mandate, with the participation of the UN System agencies that support African institutions in charge of regional cooperation. In particular, the 2006 meeting (i) highlighted the need to widen this consultation frame to include the AFDB group and the regional economic communities (RECs); (ii) reaffirmed the importance of clusters to enable the coherence of support programs; (iii) stressed the need for a better alignment with the priorities of African countries; and (iv) underlined the lack of coordination of actions of all actors in the sub-regions of the continent. Moreover, all the annual meetings of the RCM-Africa held between 2007 and 2013 have recommended the strengthening of common or joint initiatives at the sub-regional level, relating to the mission of the RECs in the development strategy of African States and the continent as a whole.

In its outcome report, the fifteenth session of the RCM-Africa –held in March 2014 in Abuja (Nigeria), underlined that “RCM not only became the best tool to elaborate common analytical studies to support the regional programmes (frameworks), but also have enabled a high level political forum for dialogue on the main strategic issues and challenges at the regional and sub-regional levels, and provided the opportunity to strengthen relations between regional and global levels. They have encouraged interaction between the UN and non-UN regional and sub-regional organizations, the consistency of the common policies and programmes to support efforts and initiatives for the regional and sub-regional integration”.

Similarly, the working group established by the fourteenth session of the RCM to elaborate a UN support framework to the AU and its NEPAD post-2016 program –including the 2063 Agenda- highlighted that “reviews/assessments of the RCM-Africa show that the United Nations and the African Union still see this RCM-Africa as a viable mechanism for the joint action of the UN System to support the African Union and its NEPAD programme. RCM-Africa has also proven the African ownership and the international partnership in the progress of the development programme of the continent” and “... is still a very relevant mechanism”.

## II. Motivation

In north Africa, the main intergovernmental bodies in charge of cooperation for development is the Arab Maghreb Union. Articles 2 and 3 of the constitutive treaty of AMU stipulates, among other objectives, enabling “... a common policy in various fields”, “... the free movement of persons, services, goods and equities”, “... achieving the industrial, agricultural, trade and social development of the Member States and harnessing the necessary resources in this regard, mainly through the implementation of common projects and elaboration of global and sectoral programmes ...”.

In implementing their respective mandates, the UN System agencies operating in North Africa, AFDB, IDB and other partners have established many partnership frameworks (UNDAF/Country Teams, MYP/ECA-AMU, RDTs, regional integration support strategies) for the implementation of development programmes and projects for the direct support to the States, AMU and/or other cooperation bodies in the sub-region. There were actions and efforts initiated in this regard in many fields, such as capacity building, supporting the implementation and follow-up of progress towards the achievement of MDGs, analysis of the macroeconomic and social policies, food security, sustainable development, encouraging the use of ICTs for development, employment and migrations, youth policies, trade development and regional integration.

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1 Resolutions 57/2 and 57/7 of September and November 2002

In this particular case of the partnership between ECA and AMU, we notice that the 2008-2009 multi-year cooperation programme has highlighted four key fields (i) economy and investments; (ii) sustainable development and food security; (iii) human resources and social development; (iv) infrastructure. The 2010-2012 have included in this framework sectoral or cross-cutting issues such as the role of the private sector and civil society in development, climate change, migration of workers and capacity building. For the 2014-2016 period, the AMU-ECA multi-year programme tackles three strategic axes: institutional support and capacity building of the AMU Secretariat, acceleration of the regional integration in its dimensions: economic development, trade facilitation and promotion of the private sector, mainstreaming “gender”, “youth” and “migration” in the regional agenda.

The objective of a greater efficiency of the action of the UN System and other partners, including AFDB and IDB, at the sub-regional level, is to be sought through (i) a better alignment of actions with the priorities of the Maghreb integration project, (ii) ensuring consistency of the sub-regional programs and initiatives, and (iii) an optimum coordination between actors. This requires mainly a shared vision, either on issues and challenges of the integration process in North Africa, or on the identification of the order of priority and action fields.

Since 2011, North Africa is undergoing significant political and institutional transformations. These changes that occurred in most of the countries of the sub-region had been triggered by strong demands of peoples, especially youth, for a better political, economic and social governance, more democracy, freedoms, decent jobs, reduction of inequalities in the distribution of growth wealth. This reconsideration of the outstanding development and government models sets a new regional situation that, beyond the immediate issue of a smooth management of the ongoing political transitions, will lead to the elaboration of a series of institutional, economic and social reforms that will require, in the short and medium terms, a sustained support from development partners.

Furthermore, these political changes are accompanied by a renewed interest in regional cooperation as a framework and strategy for the synergy of the means to draw up common solutions to the common challenges. The reactivation/acceleration of the integration process of AMU is seen in the short and medium terms, and should lead to the resumption of the implementation of many regional programs. UN agencies, AFDB and other partners who support North African countries in their efforts for development and economic integration should then conduct a review/update of their ongoing partnerships, to (i) better align them with the medium term priorities of the AMU and its Member States, through a more accurate targeting of action fields, and (ii) improve the efficiency of their efforts through a greater coordination of their activities, in the framework of the “Delivering as One” initiative and the mandate of the RCM-Africa.

For this purpose, ECA Office for North Africa has included in its programme of activities for 2014 the organization of a consultative meeting bringing together the UN System agencies, AFDB, IDB and other partners who support the States of the sub-region and their cooperation institutions.

### **III. Objectives of the meeting**

The main objective of the meeting is to strengthen consultation and collaboration between UN System agencies in the framework of the “Delivering as One” initiative, and the other institutions such as AFDB and IDB who support the AMU and its Member States in the framework of the RCM-Africa. As stated in the aforementioned GA resolutions, the goal is mainly to promote a greater synergy and efficiency of actions, through the implementation -as much as possible- of the common or joint programmes, to support the existing intergovernmental organizations in North Africa, mainly AMU.

The specific objectives are:

- Sharing ideas on the changes occurring since 2011 and their impact on development policies and strategies of the States;
- Reviewing the current action fields of the UN agencies and other partners and analyzing their relevance to the expectations of the States and the AMU;
- Identifying priority fields of cooperation for the period 2014-2015, given the socio-political changes in North Africa;
- Identifying the methods and means to strengthen coordination and ensure synergy of the activities of partners at the sub-regional level.

## IV. Expected Results

The expected results are of two categories:

- Enhancing the relevance and efficiency of support actions from the different partners, through a better alignment with the priorities of AMU and an accurate targeting of the common action fields;
- Strengthening cooperation between UN agencies working at the sub-regional level, through creating among them, AFDB and other partners a framework for consultation, coordination and promotion of common or joint initiatives for the support of regional programmes.

## V. Participation

The following institutions, in particular, are invited to take part to this meeting :

- UN system agencies having a sub-regional representation in North Africa;
- UN system agencies who support AMU and/or its Member States;
- International Organizations and institutions who tackle the issues of regional integration in Africa;
- Country-team resident coordinators;
- AMU general secretariat;
- African development bank;
- Islamic development bank;
- Regional cooperation institutions and organizations operating in North Africa;
- The secretariat of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (ECA).

## VI. Form of the meeting

The meeting will be held in **two days**. Activities will take place in plenary sessions that will address (i) the analysis of the sub-region's challenges and priorities (ii) the identification/update of priority action fields for the period 2014-2016, and (iii) a draft coordination tool.

## VII. Working documents

The working documents of the meeting include: this concept note, the synthesis report of the consultation meeting held in January 2013 with AMU on the development challenges and priorities of the Maghreb integration, and the 2014-2015 MYP of ECA-AMU and a methodology note. They will be supplemented by notes and/or communications to be made by the different agencies and partner institutions.

## VIII. Date and venue

The meeting will take place in Rabat (Kingdom of Morocco) on the 24-25 June 2014.

## IX. Contact

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