Meeting of the Task Force on the Operationalisation of the Sub-Regional Coordination Mechanism for the UN System-Wide Support to the AU and its NEPAD Programme and RECs in Eastern and Southern Africa

Kigali, Rwanda
25-26 October 2010

REPORT

Introduction

1. The Meeting of the Task Force on the Operationalisation of the Sub-Regional Coordination Mechanism (SRCM) for the United Nations (UN) System-wide Support to the African Union (AU), its New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Programme and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Eastern and Southern Africa took place in Kigali, Rwanda, at the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) SRO-EA from 25-26 October 2010.

2. The meeting presented an opportunity for the Task Force members to discuss concrete modalities for the operationalisation of the SRCM for Eastern and Southern Africa with a view to promoting efficiency and synergy in the way the UN leverages its development assistance in the sub-region. The members of the Task Force also discussed the links between UN programmes at country, sub-regional and regional levels, including SRCM relationships to the RCM, RDT and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) to promote a coherent and seamless approach to UN programming at the three levels. The multiyear, multi partner programming approach was considered as the entry point for the operationalisation of the SRCM.

Attendance

3. The following Agencies of the United Nations were represented: UNESCO, WHO and UNECA. The list of Task Force is attached to this report (Annex 1).

Opening of the Meeting

4. In his opening remarks, Mr. Antonio M.A. Pedro, Director of SRO-EA welcomed the Task Force and indicated that the meeting had been convened as a follow-up to the recommendations of the High-level Meeting (HLM) on Regional Integration and on the Establishment of the SRCM held in Kigali, Rwanda on 19-20 March 2010. He stressed that in line with the HLM outcome statement, the Task Force meeting would focus on the modalities of operationalizing the SRCM. He noted that the outcome of the Task Force meeting would feed into the RCM meeting scheduled for 14-15 November 2010 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Adoption of the Agenda and Programme of Work

5. The proposed programme of work (see annex 2) was adopted.

Background Presentation on the SRCM

6. A representative of the UNECA Secretariat provided background information on the RCM process, noting the existence of frameworks at the national and regional levels to coordinate the work of various UN agencies. He observed that at the sub-regional level, the UN did not have structures for coordinating UN system wide support to NEPAD. This weakness was recognized in the SG's report to the 61st session of the General Assembly[1] in which he requested the GA to strengthen the sub-regional offices (SROs) of ECA to enable them promote Africa's regional integration agenda at the sub-regional level and, together with other UN entities, develop a framework for coordinating programmes and activities of the United Nations agencies at that level.

7. He noted that the SROs are expected to provide technical support to the regional integration agenda of their respective RECs through multiyear programmes (MYPs). In this respect, he provided a brief account of the status of implementation of the 5 (five) MYPs that SRO-EA is implementing with several Regional Economic Communication (RECs) and Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) in Eastern Africa. He also briefed the meeting on the MYP between SRO-SA and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). The presentation provided a useful insight on the priority needs of the RECs and IGOs.

Architecture of the Sub-Regional Coordination Mechanism

8. A representative of the UNECA Secretariat made the presentation on this agenda item. He drew the attention of the meeting to changes in development cooperation which now emphasize ownership, harmonization and alignment to national priorities. In light of this, development assistance from the UN could not continue to be fragmented, especially since the UN was not a major donor compared to bilateral and multilateral sources. There was therefore need for a coordinated approach to UN development assistance at the sub-regional level, as recommended by the General Assembly at their 61st session.

---

[1]   A/61/471, "Enhancing the role of the sub-regional offices of the Economic Commission for Africa", 27 September, 2006.

9. He observed that the RCM, a framework for coordinating UN support to the AU and its NEPAD programme at the regional level and the UNDAF which operates at the country level are both cluster-based. He noted that based on these arrangements, the SRCM probably needs to be cluster based, and multiyear and multi partner in nature, as well as results-based. He emphasized that a programme of support to the RECs and the SRCM needs to be owned and driven by the priorities of member States through their RECs. Other issues to be addressed include monitoring, evaluation and reporting lines; communications, knowledge management, and information sharing, as well as resources for financing coordination activities.

10. In concluding, the presenter outlined a possible SRCM coordination matrix which leaned heavily on Results Based Management (RBM), and included outcomes, indicators, activities and their budgets. The model matrix also incorporated the multiyear and multi partner approach.

11. Another representative of UNECA shared information on the project "Mainstreaming Regional Integration in Rwanda", which is within the One UN framework. The presentation illustrated how different agencies can contribute to regional integration through complementary interventions around this thematic area and hence offer a good example for the SRCM.

12. In the discussion, the meeting agreed that the SRCM should be based on thematic areas that are consistent with the priorities of the RECs. In addition, these thematic areas should offer scope for broader participation and leadership by the agencies based on their mandates and comparative advantages. UN interventions should be catalytic and add value to the work of the RECs, focusing on policy analysis, knowledge creation and dissemination, capacity building, support to consensus building, policy alignment and harmonization. The Task Force emphasized the need to have a lean mechanism that does not overburden UN agencies working at sub-regional level.

Multiyear Programmes: An Entry Point for the Work of the SRCM

13. A representative of UNECA presented a report on "Multiyear Programmes: A Compact with the RECs". In that regard, he indicated that although progress has been made in formulating and implementing MYPs with several RECs, key challenges remained including resource constraints to finance the MYPs, broad range of issues covered, and overlapping mandates and multiple memberships of the RECs.

14. The Task force recognized the potential for realizing economies of scale and increase focus and impact offered by a single MYP between the UN and the RECs. To operationalise such a model, the meeting underscored the need for wide consultations, and agreement on the content of the MYP, among the UN Agencies on the one hand and with the RECs on the other.

Operationalisation of the SRCM

15. The Task Force explored ways to operationalise the SRCM and agreed as follows:

• *Number and composition of themes:*

A matrix was discussed and agreed upon (Annex 3).
Based on the current work programmes and priorities of the RECs as reflected in the MYPs, five thematic areas were articulated. These are: Regional Integration and Infrastructure; Climate Change and Natural Resources Management; Governance; Gender and Social Development; and Agriculture and Food Security. These focus areas are consistent with the current thematic areas of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA). Knowledge Management and Information sharing was identified as a cross cutting issue.

• *Organizational issues*:

Roles and responsibilities: ECA has the mandate to coordinate the work of SRCM.

Monitoring and evaluation: To be based on the thematic area matrix.

Reporting lines: The lead agencies of each thematic area would report to the SRCM coordinating desk hosted by SRO-EA which will in turn compile the overall report for the RCM secretariat.

• *Working modalities:*

The regular meetings of the SRCM should be held during the annual RCM meeting, with its outcomes directly feeding into the RCM. Accordingly, it was suggested that the RCM should be restructured to accommodate the SRCM meetings. Ad-hoc SRCM meetings will be held virtually

as necessary. Other SRCM meetings could be held on the side line of major events, including statutory meetings of the RECs, in particular the SADC/COMESA/EAC tripartite meetings.

- *Need for a cooperation agreement:*

The Task Force noted that formulating and signing a MoU which includes all UN agencies working at the sub-regional level could be a cumbersome process. It further noted the multiplicity of MoUs between UN agencies and RECs. In this respect, the Task Force recommended that the existing MoU between the UN and the AU on the 10-year capacity building program should serve as the sole instrument for articulating the MYP for working with the RECs.

Way Forward and Next Steps

16. The following actions were agreed upon to accelerate the operationalization process of the SRCM:

- Circulate the report of the inaugural Task Force meeting to the RCM Secretariat and to all UN agencies that have a sub-regional (Eastern and / or Southern Africa) mandate (Annex 4) and to those that attended the HLM held in March 2010 in Kigali, Rwanda;
- Circulate the existing ECA MYPs with EAC, COMESA and SADC and invite the other members of the Task Force to share their frameworks for cooperation with RECs and IGOs with a view to identifying areas of commonality, good practices and consistency with the agreed thematic areas;
- Convene the second Task Force meeting during the forthcoming RCM meeting to populate the matrix and finalize the game plan to engage the RECs (EAC-SADC-COMESA);
- Seek RCM's endorsement of the report of the inaugural meeting of the Task Force as well as of the plans to consult with the RECs; and
- Plan to initiate in 2011 coordinated support to the RECs within the framework of the SRCM and joint programming in 2012.

Any Other Business

17. There were no issues raised under this agenda item.

Adoption of the Report

18. The report was adopted after brief discussions.

Closing of the Meeting

19. In his closing remarks, Mr. Antonio M.A. Pedro, Director of SRO-EA thanked all participants for their contribution to the meeting. He appreciated the professional and efficient manner in which the meeting was conducted, the depth of the discussions and the high-level of consensus on the way forward. He emphasized the importance of building on the momentum created by both the HLM and the Task Force inaugural meeting with the view to filling in the missing link in the UN "delivering as one" architecture at sub-regional level.

Annex1: List of Participants

AGENCY	N^o	NAMES & ADDRESS
WHO	1.	Mr. Oladapo Walker Inter-Country Team Coordinator WHO Zimbabwe Tel: +47241-38048 E-mail: walkero@zw.afro.who.int
UNESCO	2.	Mr. Bernardin Rutazibwa Antenna Officer UNESCO P.O. Box 1324 Kigali Tel: +250 078 880 1474 E-mail: b.rutazibwa@unesco.org
UNECA	3.	Mr. Antonio Pedro Director, SRO-EA Kigali, Rwanda Tel: +250 0252 586548 /9 /7 Fax: +250 0252 586546 E-mail: apedro@uneca.org
	4.	Mr. Wilfried C. Lombe Chief, Infrastructure and Natural Resources Development Regional Integration, Infrastructure and Trade Division United Nations Economic Commission for Africa P.O. Box 3005 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Tel: +251 11 544 3281 Fax: +251 11 515 3005 E mail: wlombe@uneca.org
	5.	Mr. Robert Lisinge EDND - UNECA Addis Ababa, Ethiopia United Nations Economic Commission for Africa P.O. Box 3005 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Tel: +251 11 544 3281 Fax: +251 11 515 3005 E-mail: tlisinge@uneca.org
	6.	Mr. Abdoulahi Mahamat Senior Economic Affairs Officer SRO-EA Kigali, Rwanda Tel: +250 0252 586548 /9 /7 Fax: +250 0252 586546

		E-mail: amahamat@uneca.org
	7.	Mr. Soteri Gatera Senior Economic Affairs Officer SRO-EA Kigali, Rwanda Tel: +250 0252 586548 /9 /7 Fax: +250 0252 586546 E-mail: gsoteri@uneca.org
	8.	Mr. Birane Cisse Economic Affairs Officer SRO-EA Kigali, Rwanda Tel: +250 0252 586548 /9 /7 Fax: +250 0252 586546 E-mail: bcisse@uneca.org
	9.	Mrs Emelang Leteane Economic Affairs Officer SRO-EA Kigali, Rwanda Tel: +250 0252 586548 /9 /7 Fax: +250 0252 586546 E-mail: eleteane@uneca.org
	10.	Mr. Baricako Joseph Economic Affaires Officer SRO-EA Kigali, Rwanda Tel: +250 0252 586548 /9 /7 Fax: +250 0252 586546 E-mail: bjoseph@uneca.org
	11.	Mr. Mactar Seck Economic Affairs Officer SRO-EA Kigali, Rwanda Tel: +250 0252 586548 /9 /7 Fax: +250 0252 586546 E-mail: mseck@uneca.org
	12.	Mr. Kourouma Mamadi Economic Affairs Officer SRO-EA Kigali, Rwanda Tel: +250 0252 586548 /9 /7 Fax: +250 0252 586546 E-mail: mkourouma@uneca.org

Annex 2: Agenda and Work Programme

Monday, 25 October 2010

Morning

9.00 – 09.30   : Registration of Task Force

09.30 – 10.00 : Opening the meeting

- Welcome Remarks, by Antonio M. A. Pedro, Director Sub-regional Eastern Africa
- Adoption of the Agenda and Work Programme
- Background Presentation on the Sub-regional Coordination Mechanism Abdoulahi Mahamat, SEAO, SRO-EA

10.00 – 10.30 : Coffee Break

10.30 – 11.00: Architecture of the Sub-regional Coordination Mechanism (SRCM)
Wilfred Lombe, Chief of Section, RIITD/UNECA

11.00 – 12.00: Multiyear Programmes: An Entry Point for the Work of the SRCM
Mamadi Kourouma, EAO, SRO-EA

Afternoon

14.30 – 16.30: Operationalisation of the SRCM

- Agreement on the number and composition of themes as well as related activities for the period 2010-2011 in support of AU/NEPAD as well as RECs and IGOs programmes and projects at the sub-regional level
- Organizational issues such as roles and responsibilities of the agencies and other partners; monitoring and evaluation; reporting line; knowledge management and information sharing
- Working modalities with the RECs and IGOs based on their programme priorities
- Joint programming and implementation of activities in support of the RECs and IGOs in Eastern and Southern Africa as a way of improving alignment of UN programmes to the priorities of RECs and the member States

  Antonio M.A. Pedro, Director SRO-EA and Abdoulahi Mahamat, SEAO, SRO-EA

16.30 – 16.45: Coffee Break

16.45 – 17.30: Way Forward and Next Steps

Antonio M.A. Pedro, Director SRO-EA;

Tuesday, 26 October 2010

Morning

09.00 – 11.00: Secretariat: Preparation of the report

11:00-11:30:   Coffee Break

11:30 – 12:15: Adoption of the report of the meeting

12:15 – 12:30: Any other business

12:30 – 12:45: Closing of the meeting

Annex3. Areas of Focus for the Operationalization of the SRCM for UN Support to RECs in Eastern and Southern Africa

Thematic Areas	Focus Areas	Expected Accompli-shments	Indicators of Achievement	Deliverables / Outputs	Lead Institutions/ Agencies	Participating Agencies and Institutions
1. Regional Integration and Infrastructure	1. Macroeconomic convergence and policy harmonization			**To be defined after consultation with RECs**		
	2. Infrastructure Development					
	3. Trade Policy and Negotiations					
2. Climate Change and Natural Resources Management						
3. Governance						
4. Gender and Social Development Issues						
5. Agriculture and Food Security						
6. Knowledge Management and Information sharing						

Annex 4. List of UN agencies with regional mandate

1- FAO

2- ILO

3- ITU

4- UNDP

5- UNECA

6- UNEP

7- UNESCO

8- UNFPA

9- UNICEF

10- UNIDO

11- UNIFEM

12- UNOCHA

13- WHO