



United Nations



African Union

Concept note

Adhoc experts group meeting

**Enhancing monitoring and evaluation in the
Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa**

Nairobi, Kenya

5 and 6 December, 2018

A. Background

The United Nations regional and subregional coordination mechanisms

1. Through UN resolution 1998/46, the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC) mandated the regional commissions to hold regular inter-agency meetings in each region with a view to improving coordination among the organizations of the UN system in that region. Consequently, since 1999, the Commissions have been convening regional meetings on policy and programmatic issues of regional nature guided by regional priorities. This has led to the establishment of a formal process for system-wide coherence to further strengthen regional cooperation and coordination, and to adopt more collaborative approaches to support development initiatives through the diverse technical capacities and know-how of the UN system.

2. The Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa) and the Subregional Coordination Mechanisms (SRCMs) covering the five subregions of Africa, have become the frameworks for the UN family to work together in supporting the priorities of the African Union (AU) and its organs, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other regional and subregional organizations. RCM-Africa aim to promote and enhance UN system-wide policy coherence, coordination and cooperation at the regional level to ‘deliver as one’ in response to identified regional priorities and initiatives of the AU.

3. Similarly, the SRCMs serve as vehicles for UN agencies and organizations operating at the subregional level to work with RECs and other intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) with a view to reducing fragmentation in their operations and increasing coherence, coordination and cooperation in their support of their programmes and priorities. There are currently four SRCMs covering North Africa, West Africa, Central Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa¹.

4. In supporting the above-stated objectives, both Mechanisms aim at fulfilling the following functions:

- Coordinating UN system interaction with AU organs and organizations, including the regional economic communities;
- Providing a high-level policy forum for exchanging views on major strategic developments and challenges faced by Africa and its subregions, as well as on the interaction of the region with global level entities;
- Devising coherent regional policy responses to selected global priorities and initiatives, and providing regional perspectives to the global level on such issues, for example, Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (the Goals);
- Promoting policy coherence and joint programming in support of regional and subregional integration efforts and initiatives, for example, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and AU Agenda 2063;
- Promoting inter-agency and inter-organization coordination and collaboration in terms of response to policy recommendations and analytical findings emanating from

¹ Eastern and Southern Africa is served by one SRCM covering three REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES namely, EAC, COMESA and SADC considering the tripartite arrangement between the three where coordination is already institutionally operational. ECA Sub-regional Office for Eastern Africa (SRO-EA) and ECA Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa (SRO-SA) facilitate the work of this SRCM.

regional and subregional strategic priorities and plans, including through joint programming;

- Providing forums for exchange of best practices and lessons learned and for interagency and inter-organization analysis and elaboration of interagency and inter-organization normative and analytical frameworks.

Past and ongoing support

5. The annual meetings of RCM-Africa and SRCMs provide an opportunity to take stock of achievements during the year, share experiences and good practices, identify and address challenges, and agree on ways to further improve UN support to the AU and its organs/organizations. The mechanisms have supported the AU and its organizations, including the RECs and other IGOs in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) NEPAD, and the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union (10YCBF-AU) They have helped to deepen consultations and refocus ways of strengthening the UN-AU partnership and the scaling up of UN support for the AU and its organizations, including the RECs.

6. In the last couple of years, support has focused on Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. Agenda 2063 adopted by the AU Assembly in January 2015 as a new framework for Africa's development, aims to bring a "radical transformation at all levels and in all spheres". And the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 adopted in July 2015 by the AU Summit is guiding the transformation efforts in the short to the medium terms. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that replaced the MDGs, attempt to respond to the global dimensions of Africa's development challenges. And the Framework for a renewed UN-AU Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda (PAIDA), 2017-2027, the successor of (10YCBF-AU) serves as the framework for support.

7. The AUC and ECA have worked extensively on the alignment between the goals of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals. Most of the Goals are in congruence with those of Agenda 2063. Despite some level of alignment between the two Agendas, four goals of Agenda 2063 are unique to Africa ie, Goal 8 (a united Africa, federal or confederate), Goal 9 (establishment of functional continental financial and monetary institutions), Goal 14 (a stable and peaceful Africa) and Goal 15 (a fully functional and operational African peace and security architecture).

8. African countries have committed to the implementation of the SDGs as well as Agenda 2063. They have also adopted national development plans and strategies. That is why a coherent and common framework that integrates both Agenda 2063 and the SDGs into national planning frameworks is needed to achieve the goals and targets and minimize the challenges associated with implementing both Agendas. The AU common Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework for both Agendas has been adopted. The framework now integrates a reporting template to permit the preparation of one integrated report. It is planned that the framework will be rolled out to member States through the RECs

Monitoring and evaluation in the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa

9. At the level of the Mechanisms, the recurring challenges that hinder the full realization of their goals include (i) weak joint planning and programming between the AU and UN; (ii) weak information sharing and collaboration across the entire mechanisms; (iii) absence of dedicated resources to implement activities; and (iv) lack of an effective monitoring and evaluation framework. To address the issue of lack of an effective monitoring and evaluation framework, a report on enhancing monitoring and evaluation in the RCM-Africa was prepared

in August 2015. The report which also addresses M&E issues in the SRCMs, included an M&E framework for both mechanisms. However, the proposed framework is yet to be operationalized.

10. With regard to the issue of weak joint planning and programming between the AU and UN, RCM-Africa organized a Joint Programming Retreat - the first of its kind - from 24 to 27 April 2018, in Nairobi, Kenya. One main objective of the retreat was to formulate and develop a joint work plan for the period 2018-2019 with shared responsibilities, resource windows and a time frame for effectively responding to continental priorities by agreeing on joint planning and programming modalities, capitalizing on synergies and comparative advantages. This was achieved at the end of the retreat. The availability of a joint work plan necessitates the development of an operational results-based monitoring and evaluation framework that integrates a suitable reporting template to effectively measure implementation progress in the agreed priority areas.

The study on enhancing monitoring and evaluation in the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa

11. In light of the foregoing, the RCM Secretariat commissioned a study on enhancing monitoring and evaluation in the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa. The main objective is to undertake a comprehensive review of the issues pertaining to the development of an operational results-based monitoring and evaluation framework for the RCM and SRCMs that is user friendly and compatible with existing electronic platforms. The intent is to establish a framework that will permit the clusters to track progress and results achieved in implementing agreed priority activities in support of the African Union and its organs including the RECs.

12. The study builds on among other reports and tools, the “Report on Enhancing monitoring and evaluation in the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa” and accompanying framework of 2015 and the AU Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 joint M&E and reporting framework. It used joint work plans (2018-2019) of selected clusters as test cases for the M&E and reporting framework. It is also informed by the current RCM frameworks such as the Framework for a Renewed Partnership on Africa’s Integration and Development Agenda (PAIDA), the Joint UN-AU Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, and the Framework for the integrated Implementation of Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the ongoing AU and UN reforms. With regard to the latter, the planned merger of the Mechanisms and the regional UNDGs into one coordination mechanism at the regional and subregional levels and the seamless relationship envisaged with the UNCTs-UNDAF process are instructive.

B. Objective of the meeting

13. The main objective of the meeting is to provide a platform for participants to deliberate on the draft study report with a view to identifying gaps, provide comments and inputs and propose recommendations, including revisions to inform its finalization. The meeting will also provide a platform for experts and policy makers from African regional and subregional organizations, UN system agencies and organizations, to share experiences, including good practices and lessons, as well as proffer specific, practical and action-oriented recommendations aimed at enhancing monitoring and evaluation in the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, in the context of the ongoing AU and UN reforms.

14. The recommendations will take into account the need to ensure the optimal application of the framework and its continuous adjustment and refinement in the light of new and emerging issues, such as a planned merger of the Mechanisms and the regional UNDGs into one coordination mechanism at the regional and subregional levels and the seamless relationship envisaged with the UNCTs-UNDAF process in particular. The final report and outcomes of the meeting will feed into the 20th Session of the RCM-Africa that will be held in Marrakech, Morocco on 23 and 24 March, 2019.

C. Format of the meeting

18. The draft report on *enhancing monitoring and evaluation in the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa* is the main resource of the Meeting. In terms of format, in addition to the opening and closing sessions, the meeting will comprise the following:

(i) Plenary- presentation and general discussion on the draft report

19. The draft study report will be presented at the first plenary session. The presentation will be followed by general discussions aimed at seeking clarification, additional information and providing general comments on key aspects of the report.

(ii) Group discussions

20. Breakout group discussions to permit in-depth review and discussion on the report. Each group will critically examine assigned chapters of the draft report using structured guidelines. Furthermore, each group will review and provide comments, and inputs to the introduction, conclusions, recommendations and next steps.

(iii) Plenary- presentations and discussion on reports of the break-out groups

21. Each break-out group will make presentations on the findings of their deliberations, and as necessary, provide additional comments and inputs to the assigned chapters of the report. The session will provide an opportunity for interaction and cross-fertilization among the various groups.

D. Expected outcomes and outputs

22. The meeting is expected to lead to a number of outcomes:

- A final report informed by well-articulated comments, inputs and recommendations of the meeting;
- Availability of an operational M&E and reporting framework for the RCM and SRCMs that is user friendly and compatible with existing electronic platforms, and takes into account the AU Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda joint M&E and reporting framework among other relevant tools;
- Appropriate measures and modalities for the optimal application of the M&E framework and its continuous adjustment and refinement in the light of new and emerging issues, such as a planned merger of the Mechanisms and the regional UNDGs into one coordination mechanism at the regional and subregional levels and the seamless relationship envisaged with the UNCTs-UNDAF process in particular;
- Clear understanding and appreciation of the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders at all levels in enhancing M&E in the RCM and SRCMs, taking into account their objectives, functions and expected results and impacts, as well as the priorities of the AU, RECs and other relevant organs;
- Enhanced joint planning, monitoring and evaluation in the RCM and SRCMs.

23. A number of outputs will be delivered at the end of the meeting:

- The meeting report, including a set of specific, practical and action-oriented recommendations to inform the finalization of the study report;
- Press releases and news stories;
- Web publications.

E. Documents

24. Participants will be sent the draft study report, the meeting concept note and programme before the meeting.

F. Participants

25. In addition to officials from ECA Headquarters, its Subregional Offices (SROs) and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), participants will include officials from the following organizations:

- The African Union Commission (AUC)
- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
- Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)
- Eastern African Community (EAC)
- Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)
- Southern African Development Community (SADC)
- Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD),
- Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD)
- Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA)
- Specialised Institutions of RECs
- The NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency
- The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)
- African Development Bank (AfDB)
- UN agencies and organizations

G. Dates and venue

26. The meeting will be held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 5 and 6 December, 2018.

H. Working languages

27. The meeting will be conducted in English.

I. Administrative arrangements

28. These will be provided in a separate information note.

J. Contacts

29. Communication on the meeting should be addressed to:

(i) Technical

Mr. Moctar Diouf,
Programme Management Officer,
Regional Integration and Trade Division
Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tel: +251- 115-443201
E-mail: diouf15@un.org

(ii) Administrative

Ms. Zewditu Befekadu
Staff Assistant, Regional Integration and NEPAD Section
Regional Integration and Trade Division
Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: +251- 115-445785
E-mail: befekaduz@un.org

(iii) Copy: technical and administrative communication

Ms. Isatou Gaye
Chief of NEPAD, Regional Integration and Trade Division
Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: +251- 115-443089
E-mail: gaye.uneca@un.org