Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

Strengthening the RCM-Africa and the UNDG in support of the Priorities of the African Union in the context of the AU and UN Development System reforms as well as AU-UN Frameworks

Draft Issues Paper

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

1.0 Background

1.   The Secretary-General is undertaking the reform of the UN Development System with the aim of repositioning the UN to efficiently deliver on the 2030 Agenda. The SG's report is based on extensive and inclusive consultations within the UN development system and Member States, and in-depth analysis of relevant studies and data on the system's present functions and capacities to support the 2030 Agenda. These consultations provided evidence on gaps and overlaps and make recommendations for the delivery of the Agenda. The reforms are also geared towards improving the accountability and overall coordination of the entities of the United Nations development system and their oversight by Member States, particularly the regional coordination mechanism (RCM) and UN Development Group (UNDG).

2.   It must be noted that for more than 30 years, the UN General Assembly has consistently been according special attention to the needs of Africa. This support was more pronounced in the 1980s when the continent was hit by a series of adverse events that led to a serious social and economic crisis of unprecedented proportions. On 3 December 1984, and at the request of the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the General Assembly adopted resolution 39/29 on the *Declaration on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa*. A year later, as conditions continued to deteriorate, the General Assembly decided, by its resolution 40/40 to convene a special session "to focus, in a comprehensive and integrated manner, on the rehabilitation and medium-term and long-term development problems and challenges facing African countries..."[1] The call for a special Session on Africa was based on a 1985 initiative of the OAU: "*Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990" (APPER)*. This priority programme not only reaffirmed the primary responsibility of African Governments for the social and economic development of their people, but also stressed that the socio-economic crisis that had gripped the continent in the 1980s called for concerted action by the international community in support of the efforts of African countries.

---

[1] See GA resolution A/RES/S.-13/2

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

3.   This was the time of Africa's so called "lost decade" where African countries faced an unfavourable external environment caused by a global economic recession, the collapse of commodity prices, adverse terms of trade, severely reduced financial in flows, high interest rates, increased protectionism, a heavy debt burden and debt servicing obligations, all contributing to restraining Africa's growth and development. To further compound matters, parts of Africa experienced a long period of drought, which worsened the desertification situation in a good portion of the continent and exacerbated the problems of hunger and famine in the Horn of Africa and certain parts of the Sahel. To address these challenges, the General Assembly adopted a programme of support for Africa's economic recovery: *"United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990" (UNPAAERD)*. Under UNPAAERD the international community was expected to intervene in the following sectors of the African economy: agriculture and food security; trade and finance; human resources development; economic management, etc. The financial requirement for the implementation of the programme by the international community over a five-year period was estimated at US$128 billion.

4.   An assessment of UNPAAERD by the General Assembly concluded that that the programme achieved limited success and therefore adopted a new initiative for Africa called: *United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF)*.[2] UN-NADAF called for "the   accelerated transformation, integration, diversification and growth of the African economies in order to strengthen them within the world economy, reduce their vulnerability to   external   shocks and increase their dynamism, internalize the process of development and enhance self-reliance."[3] In order to guarantee its successful implementation, the General Assembly called on all UN entities operating in Africa to design special programmes of support that would be consistent with the objectives and strategies of the Programme and ensure that adequate resources were dedicated towards their implementation. Priority was accorded to integration and infrastructure projects and programmes as well as to the continent's industrialization needs.

---

[2] UNGA Forty-sixth Session, 1991, Assessment of the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990, New York
[3] ibid

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

5.   However, in support of the newly created African initiative of the ***New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)*** and the birth of the African Union, the General Assembly adopted resolution 57/7 on 20 November 2002 to replace UN-NADAF. Resolution 57/7, called upon the UN system to "align their activities in Africa within the priorities of the New Partnership"and to "organize the activities of the United Nations system around clusters covering the priority areas of the New Partnership." It also "urged the United Nations system to work closely with the African Union and other regional and sub-regional intergovernmental organizations to ensure the implementation of the programme and priorities of the New Partnership."[4]

6.   In 2005, upon the request of the African Union for capacity building support, the General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/60/1, entitled, ***"Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation: Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the African Union"***[5] (***TYCBP-AU***). The objectives of the TYCBP-AU, focus and areas of priority of such a plan were subsequently elaborated in a Declaration which was signed in November 2006, by the Heads of the two organizations. The Declaration took into consideration the new, broadened mandate of the AU *vis-à-vis* that of its predecessor, the Organisation of African Unity, and sought to reinforce the partnership between the UN and the AU to strengthen the latter's institutions and build its capacities in order to empower it to better pursue its objectives and goals in peace and security, governance, human rights, conflict prevention, development and integration. The implementation of the TYCBP-AU was through the work of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa) which had been established by the General Assembly in 2002. At the expiration of TYCBP-AU in 2016, the General Assembly replaced it with *UN-AU Partnership for Africa's Integration and Development Agenda, 2017–2027* (PAIDA).[6]

7.   Against this backdrop, this paper, reviews the SG preliminary report on the reforms and their implications on the RCM and the UNDG in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Agenda 2063. The paper also discusses the current frameworks of cooperation between the UN and the AU: *UN-AU Partnership for Africa's Integration and Development Agenda, 2017–2027* (PAIDA); *African Union - United Nations Framework for implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*; and *UN-AU Joint Framework on*

---

[4] UNGA Res 57/7, 20 Nov. 2002, New York
[5] UNGA Doc A/61/630, 2006, New York
[6] See UNGA resolution A/RES/71/254.

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. The paper begins with the priorities of the African Union, as encapsulated in the Agenda 2063, and its alignment to 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

2.0 Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development

Agenda 2063

8.   Agenda 2063, a framework for Africa's structural transformation, was agreed upon by African Heads of State and Government at the twenty-first ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union, in May 2013, which also marked fifty years since the establishment of the African Union. The Agenda is founded on the African Union's vision of "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena." It also builds on the Constitutive Act of the African Union and national and regional frameworks, both past and present, such as the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme and Minimum Integration Programme, including the Monrovia Declaration, the Lagos Plan of Action and the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.

9.   Agenda 2063 is anchored on the African Union's general vision and is based on seven aspirations derived from the broad consultations during the drafting process, namely:

1.   A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development;
2.   An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's renaissance;
3.   An Africa of good governance, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law;
4.   A peaceful and secure Africa;

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

5. An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics;
6. An Africa whose development is people-driven, especially relying on the potential offered by its women and youth;
7. Africa as a strong, resilient and influential global player and partner.

10.   Agenda 2063 is expected to be implemented in ten-year phases.. The first phase covers the period 2013-2023 and addresses the following priorities:

i.   Sustainable and inclusive economic growth;

ii.   Human capital development;

iii.   Employment creation;

iv.   Social protection;

v.   Women development and youth empowerment;

vi.   Good governance and capable institutions;

vii.   Infrastructural development;

viii.   Science, technology and innovation;

ix.   Peace and security;

x.   Culture, arts and sports.

11.   The first ten-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 calls upon African countries to fast-track the implementation of flagship projects identified as having the potential to have an immediate positive impact on growth, such as the integrated high-speed train network, the Grand Inga Dam, the single aviation market, the outer space programme, the Pan-African e-Network, the

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

annual African consultative platform, the virtual university, the African passport and the free movement of persons, the continental free trade area, silencing the guns by 2020, the development of a commodity strategy, and the establishment of continental financial institutions, including an African central bank by 2030.

12.   In addition, the implementation strategy of Agenda 2063 outlines 20 goals and 34 priority areas. The goals and priorities include: poverty reduction; the expansion of education at all levels; improved maternal and child health care, water and sanitation facilities; industrialization of the African economy; greater resilience to the effects of climate change and prioritized adaptation; modernized farming methods for increased production, productivity and value addition; better and more sustainable management of natural resources, including mineral and agricultural resources; the establishment of a continental free trade area and significantly developed intra-African trade; and a well-developed infrastructure network.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

13.   The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the General Assembly in 2015, at a time when billions of people are living in poverty, inequality is rising, and there are enormous disparities in terms of opportunity, wealth and power. Other challenges include gender inequality; rising unemployment, particularly among young people; global health threats; conflict, violent extremism, terrorism and related humanitarian crises and the forced displacement of people; and natural resource depletion, climate change and rising global temperatures and sea levels. The impact of climate change on coastal areas and low-lying coastal countries, many of which are least developed countries and small island developing States, is a particular cause for concern as it is reversing much of the development progress made in recent decades.

14.   The Sustainable Development Goals are made up of 17 goals and 169 associated targets. The goals were globally agreed upon through an inclusive process of intergovernmental

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

negotiations and take account of different national realities, capacities, levels of development, policies and priorities. While the targets are global, each Government has set its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition but taking into account national circumstances. Each Government has also decided how these aspirational and global targets should be incorporated into national planning processes, policies and strategies.

15.   Africa's input into the development of the SDGs was through the Common African Position (CAP). The Common African Position, which has the same tenets of Agenda 2063, is Africa's consensus on the continent's challenges, priorities and aspirations, and the strategies for dealing with them. It therefore reflects Africa's development priorities based upon six pillars: structural economic transformation and inclusive growth; science, technology and innovation; people-centred development; environmental sustainability, natural resources management and disaster risk management; peace and security; and finance and partnerships. It is the view of the African Union that Agenda 2063 is in sync with the Sustainable Development Goals because most of the recommendations of the Common African Position were taken on board by the General Assembly and therefore there is an alignment between Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Need for a common approach to the implementation of Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

16.   African countries have committed to the implementation of the Agenda 2030 as well as Agenda 2063. They also have their own national development plans and strategies. It is therefore important to have a common strategy for the implementation of both frameworks so as to achieve the goals and targets and minimize the challenges associated with implementing both agendas.

17.   Most of the Sustainable Development Goals are in congruence with the goals of Agenda 2063. For example, Goal 1 of Agenda 2063 aims at achieving "a high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens". Goals 1 (end poverty in all its forms everywhere), 2 (end

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture), 6 (ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all), 7 (ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all), 8 (promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), 10 (reduce inequality within and among countries) and 12 (ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns) of the Sustainable Development Goals are clearly consistent with achieving Goal 1 of Agenda 2063. The alignment between most of the goals of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals provides an opportunity to implement both within a single framework without unduly burdening policymakers with multiple development frameworks.

18.   Despite some level of alignment between Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals, some of the goals of Agenda 2063 are unique to Africa. These are 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).

19.   Equally important is the need for better coordination to ensure effective implementation and follow-up, addressing areas of convergence as well as those unique to Africa. That is why a coherent and common framework that integrates both Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals into national planning frameworks is needed. The Sustainable Development Goals attempt to respond to the global dimensions of Africa's development challenges, while Agenda 2063 responds to the regional dimension. Implementation of both will require advocacy and sensitization about the details of both frameworks, strengthened capacities to integrate in a coherent fashion such initiatives into national planning frameworks, and research to support evidence-based policymaking.

20.   Accompanying a common framework for the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals should be a sound monitoring and evaluation framework and tools. Such tools would reinforce the culture of results-based management with regard to the

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

implementation of the common framework. A monitoring and evaluation framework, by setting targets and milestones, would also ensure that all parties involved work towards achieving the development goals. It would also ensure that the causes of non-performance are identified and addressed through evaluation processes.

3.0 The Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM), United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and the "Statement of Collaboration" as vehicles to deliver the UN Reforms and the implementation of the Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda

21.   The Secretary General of the United Nations is embarking reforms which are aimed at repositioning the UN to deliver on the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. Central to the implementation of the Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda is enhanced coordination mechanisms such the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa) and UN Development Group (UNDGs) as well as the Statement of Collaboration between the Regional Economic Commissions (Secretariats of the RCM) and the UNDG.

22.   **The Regional Coordination Mechanism** draws its mandate from UN General Assembly of A/RES/32/197 (para 24) of December 1977 and UN Economic and Social Council Resolution 1998/46 of July 1998 (Annex III, B para 13) calling on the Regional Economic Commission to hold regular inter-agency meetings in their respective regions with a view to improving coordination among the work programmes of the organizations of the United Nations system in the regions. The annual session of such meetings is expected to be chaired by the UN Deputy Secretary General (UNDSG). Since 1999, the annual Session of RCM-Africa has taken place under Chairpersonship of the UNDSG or by the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), who deputizes for the UNDSG in his/her absence. It has to be noted that since the transformation of the Organization of the African Unity into the African Union, the Sessions of the RCM-Africa have been co-chaired by the UNDSG and the Deputy Chairperson the African Union.

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

23.   The RCM-Africa has served as a vehicle for the United Nations system operating in Africa to share information on their respective activities and agree to coordinate their strategies for programme delivery in support of the African Union priorities. This mandate was strengthened by the UNGA through its resolution A/RES/71/254 calling for UN-AU cooperation to be based on the Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017-2027 (PAIDA), the successor programme to the 2006 United Nations-African Union 10-year capacity-building programme. PAIDA, which is anchored on the AU Agenda 2063, therefore serves as the overall platform for UN-AU cooperation. Accordingly, the RCM provides an opportunity for the UN system to use PAIDA as a framework for "Delivering as One" as well as to enhance coordination and coherence of its support to the African Union, its organs and organizations. It should be noted that PAIDA also preserves the tenets of the UNGA resolution 57/7 which calls on the United Nations system in Africa to coordinate its activities, through the RCM-Africa, in support of AU NEPAD framework.

24. The actions outlined in the system-wide strategic document will build on and complement the actions already taken to reposition the system within existing resources and mandates. To strengthen strategic direction, oversight and accountability with respect to the system's collective contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, I have revitalized the United Nations Development Group to enhance strategic direction, impartial oversight and accountability regarding the system's in-country contributions to the implementation of the Agenda. I have also established a Joint Steering Committee to advance humanitarian and development collaboration. Operating under the chairmanship of the Deputy Secretary-General, both mechanisms rely on strong operational leadership by the respective Vice-Chairs.

25. Specifically, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) serves as the Vice-Chair of the United Nations Development Group, with critical functions in leading a core group of Development Group entities that ensures operational coordination and coherence and programmatic support for United Nations country teams, under the strategic guidance of the full Group. The Emergency Relief Coordinator and the UNDP

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

Administrator serve as Vice-Chairs of the Joint Steering Committee, leading a joint support team in service of the Committee. I am also renaming the United Nations Development Group as the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNDSG) to reflect the comprehensive, integrated nature and the scale of ambition of the 2030 Agenda. Those steps respond to the special mandates for greater system-wide cohesion set out in resolution 71/243[7].

26.   The UN programme of support to the African Union, through the RCM-Africa, is expected to be tailored to the developmental priorities of the continent. Currently, development frameworks of the African Union are encapsulated in the AU Agenda 2063 and its Ten-Year Implementation Plan. The African Union Commission also has a Medium Term Plan for 2018-2023. These frameworks have been formulated incorporating sectoral blueprints such as Programme for Infrastructure Development for Africa (PIDA), Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), Africa Mining Vision (AMV), Accelerated Industrial Development for Africa (AIDA), as well as others. Africa Union seeks the support of the UN in implementing the activities related to these sectoral programmes.

27.   The RCM-Africa has been functioning through a network of clusters. The mechanism's work is delivered through nine clusters. The programme of work of the clusters is fully aligned to the goals identified in 2030 Agenda, Agenda 2063 and the priorities of the AUC. The Clusters are:

1. Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industry, trade, agriculture and agro-processing and regional integration;

2. Infrastructure development;

3. Human capital development, health, nutrition, science, technology and innovation;

---

[7] Secretary Generals Report on Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on agenda 2030

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

4. Labour, employment creation, social protection, migration and mobility;

5. Gender equality, women and youth empowerment;

6. Humanitarian matters and disaster risk management;

7. Environment, urbanization and population;

8. Advocacy, information, communications and culture.

9. Governance, Peace and Security

28.   The RCM has made modest accomplishments. The UN as a family continues to support the African Union in the implementation of its developmental priorities. The AU Commission's commitment and involvement in the work of the Clusters is evident at the highest level of decision making at the Commission. However, like all institutions there is a need for improvement in the functioning of RCM-Africa. The efficacy Clusters of the mechanism continue to face challenges, perhaps due to the lack of clarity on who is responsible for the implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the RCM-Africa. There is also lack of follow-up action on decisions taken. As a result, decisions are not implemented.

29.   There is evidence of the need for more clarity on the mission, objectives and processes of RCM itself so that the cluster business plans accurately reflect the priorities of AUC, RECs and other organs. This calls for further strengthening of coordination in the cluster/sub-cluster system. The effectiveness of the RCM-Africa depends on having a practical structure and functions of the cluster system anchored firmly in the development priorities of the AU and its organs.

30.   In going forward, greater participation and involvement of all stakeholders are needed so as to address challenges and enhance the efficacy of the RCM-Africa. There is also a need to

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

enhance relationship/partnership between the UN and the AU outlining clear expectations of the type of relationship, support and outcome in the context of RCM-Africa. This should extend to the relationship in sub-regional levels between the UN and the RECs and other Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs). It is also important for there to be an M&E Framework to support the implementation of the activities of RCM-Africa and its clusters.

31.   **The UN Development Group** serves as a high-level forum for joint policy formation and decision-making. It is responsible for providing guidance, supporting, tracking and overseeing the coordination of development operations.[8] The UNDG unites the UN funds, programmes, specialized agencies, departments, and offices that play a role in development in over 150 countries. It was established in 1997 following the UN General Assembly's endorsement of the report "Renewing the United Nations: A Programme of Reform."[9] Since 2008, the UNDG has been one of the three pillars of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the highest-level coordination forum of the United Nations system. The CEB brings together the executive heads of UN organizations under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General to provide broad guidance, coordination and strategic direction for the system as a whole in the areas under the responsibility of executive heads.

32.   Within the structure of the CEB, the UNDG is responsible for coordinating UN operational activities at the global and regional levels. The UNDG is chaired by the Deputy Secretary General. The common objective of the UNDG is to deliver more coherent, effective and efficient support to countries seeking to attain sustainable development. The UNDG therefore seeks to:

---

[8] The write on the UNDG is drawn for the TOR: https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/UNDG-Functioning-and-Working-Arrangements-3-1.pdf
[9] See resolution A/51/950.

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

    i.   Serve as a policy development and management instrument geared to contributing to, and affecting, policy, administrative and operational decisions by each of the member entities in support of the development work of the United Nations;

    ii.   Contribute to strengthening policy coherence and cost-effectiveness of UN development operations by reducing duplication and by pooling resources and services so as to maximize programme impact and minimize administrative costs;

    iii.   Provide a forum for heads of entities to consult on submissions to their governing bodies on both substantive and administrative matters relating to operational activities that have implications for other members of the group as a whole;

    iv.   Promote a more unified UN presence at the country level through, inter alia, providing a forum for concerted directives to Resident Coordinators (RCs) and field representatives in order to ensure a greater unity of purpose and coherence in performance at the country level;

    v.   Assist the Secretary-General in leading the process of change and instituting sound management throughout the Organization; and

    vi.   Advocate the comparative advantages and results of UN multilateral development cooperation.

33.   The strategic priorities and work plan of the UNDG are fashioned based on the resolutions of the General Assembly, particularly on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, guidance from ECOSOC, the Secretary-General's priorities, and the evolving international development and

cooperation environment. The work plans are expected to support UNDG efforts at the global, regional and country levels.

34.   Implementation of the UNDG strategic priorities and work plan is driven by a core set of UNDG working mechanisms – Working Groups and Task Teams – with focus on fostering system-wide norms, standards, and policies, as well as operational effectiveness. At the regional level, six Regional UNDG Teams play a critical role in driving the UNDG strategic priorities by supporting UN Country Teams with strategic priority setting, analysis and advice based on their four core functions: (i) technical support to UN Country Teams; (ii) quality assurance of UNDAFs; (iii) performance management of Resident Coordinators; and (iv) troubleshooting in difficult country situations. They provide reinforced support to UNCTs for strategic priority setting and addressing cross-fertilization of best practices among countries to ensure that UN operational activities are rendered to maximum effect and are consistently aligned with national priorities in areas of UN comparative advantage. At the country level, Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams implement the UNDG strategic priorities by identifying the national policies, programmes and capacity development gaps and challenges, to which the UN system can best contribute under national ownership and leadership by mobilizing the full range of mandates and expertise of the UN development system.

35.   The UN Secretary General's reform positions the **United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)** is the single most important UN country planning instrument in support of the Agenda 2030. The UNDAF is part of the implementation strategy of the UNDG plan of action, developed in response to calls for accelerating reform within the United Nations system.[10] The plan of action seeks to align UN development cooperation with new aid modalities such as the Rome, Paris and Accra declarations on Aid Effectiveness. The UNDG plan of action focuses on three major areas:

---

[10] World Outcome Summit, September 2005.

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

i.   Putting national development plans at the centre of UN programming

ii.   Increasing focus on strengthening national institutions and capacities

iii.   Increasing usage of national systems.

36.   The UNDAF is a results-driven framework whose main purpose is to provide a coherent and integrated UN response to national priorities and needs. In this regard UNDAFs primarily serve two purposes: Firstly, they serve as a basis upon which individual UN agencies, funds and programmes formulate their actions for a programme cycle. Secondly, as part of the UN's response to new aid modalities, UNDAFs serve as the UNs contribution towards the Harmonisation, Alignment and Simplification agenda (HAS) of cooperating partners.

37.   Based on the UNDG guidelines on common programming, the UNDAF is the result of a consultative process involving the UN system, national governments and development partners. An assessment of a country's development challenges is done through analytical work such as a national development plan, or the UNs Common Country Assessment (CCA), the latter being conducted by the United Nations Country Team (UNCT).

38.   The structure of the UNDAF is such that all UN programmes are focussed into two to four thematic areas in which UN agencies have a collective comparative advantage and therefore existing synergies can enhance the impact of UNCT activities. The thematic areas of cooperation are agreed upon at an UNDAF meeting that brings together the UNCT (including non-resident agencies and UN regional offices), representatives from Government planning departments, civil society and donors. Different UN agencies are given theme groups to lead based on their comparative strength.

39.   A major strength of the UNDAF lies in its results-based approach. Each thematic area of cooperation is associated with clearly identified national priority goals, the UNDAF outcomes, the

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

intended country programme outputs, the role of each implementing UN agency and cooperating partner, as well as resource mobilisation targets. The UNDAF also contains a division of labour matrix showing lead agencies, and a monitoring and evaluation plan that includes indicators, baseline data, and sources of verification and underlying assumptions. These elements contribute to a successful implementation of UN programmes at the country level.

40.   On 1 January 2016, the then UNDG Chair and UNDP Administrator, Ms. Helen Clark, and the then Coordinator of the United Nations Regional Commissions and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), acting on behalf of the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Economic Commissions (RECs), Ms. Rima Khalaf, signed a "**Statement of Collaboration**" in support of the implementation by member States of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

41.   The Statement builds on the Cooperation Framework between UNDP and the five Regional Commissions, which was signed on 24 October 2007, and reaffirms the commitment by the RECs and the UNDG to strengthening collaboration with the goal of enhancing UN policy coherence at the national, regional and global levels in support of Member States' implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Hence the need for stronger cooperation between the Regional Commissions, Regional UNDG teams, and Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams (UNCTs).

42.   The Statement commits the UNDG and the RECs to the following actions:

1. Regional Commissions and the Resident Coordinators and UNCTs will mutually reinforce each other in supporting the SDGs implementation and share information on country demands in this regard;

2. UNCTs will be able to draw on the Regional Commissions' normative and policy support work, technical expertise and platforms for policy discussion and exchange of experience, and on the Regional Commissions'

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

support to Member States for the integration of SDGs into their national development planning and fiscal frameworks; and the Regional Commissions will facilitate such access to their work and expertise;

3. The Regional Commissions will keep the Resident Coordinators and UNCTs informed and where possible coordinate with them when working with the respective country governments. The Regional Commissions will be able to draw on the UNCTs' programmatic expertise, coordination mechanisms including results groups, and body of analytical work as needed. The Resident Coordinators will facilitate such access;

4. Resident Coordinators, UNCTs and the Regional Commissions will enhance their cooperation in assisting governments for the implementation and follow up of the 2030 Agenda at the country level including, where appropriate, through joint programmes and other common programming mechanisms;

5. Working jointly, Regional Commissions and UNCTs will apply, where appropriate and based on country priorities, the common methodologies and approaches agreed to by the UNDG in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in terms of mainstreaming and acceleration of the SDGs and integrating policy support to Member States;

6. Regional Commissions and UNCTs will use common data and indicators where appropriate, and share data and other analytical, processing and dissemination resources, such as modelling, methodological and visualization tools;

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

7. Regional Commissions and UNCTs will coordinate and, where possible, integrate capacity development efforts and policy advisory services to Member States;

8. Regional Commissions and UNDG teams will enhance cooperation in the regions between the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) convened by the Regional Commissions and the relevant Regional UNDG team to enhance the impact of United Nations development activities in response to regional and sub-regional priorities of Member States;

9. Regional Commissions and UNCTs will align United Nations system efforts in the regions in support of regional and sub-regional priorities and policy frameworks articulated by Member States and translate them into action at the country level in accordance with country priorities and in support of 2030 Agenda implementation;

10. Promote United Nations system policy coherence and analytical frameworks for SDGs, in line with the priorities expressed by Member States. Communicate and advocate shared sustainable development policy messages;

11. Support the Follow-up and Review by Member States of the 2030 Agenda at the national, regional and global levels, in particular the support of UNCTs at the national level, and the support of Regional Commissions at the regional level, including through the Regional Forums on Sustainable Development, and ensure systemic, timely and coherent nexus and interaction among the three levels, and, when appropriate, by collaborating on regional inter-agency reports; and

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

> 12. Undertake any additional needed collaborative actions in support of Member States' sustainable development plans.

43.   The vision of the UNSG on his reforms was first announced in his **report of June 2017**.[11] He notes in the report that the Regional Commissions (RECs) are essential components of the UN development system policy backbone. This is because the RECs are policy think thanks, providing data and analytical services and policy advice to address regional issues, and supporting the development of a wide range of regional norms, standards and conventions. On the other hand, the Regional UN Development Groups (UNDG) provides leadership, strategic guidance and services to UN Country Teams; quality assurance and monitoring of UNDAFs and joint initiatives; ensure performance management of Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams, as well as 'trouble shooting' in difficult country situations and dispute resolution.

44.   The SG's report suggests that the "Regional Economic Commissions should be empowered as the lead voice of the UN development system on policy making and research and production of knowledge products at the regional level that nurture integration and balanced progress on sustainable development. UN Country Teams, in turn, should preserve the primary role in supporting national governments in implementing, monitoring and reporting on the SDGs. In this regard, it is important to build on the "Statement of Collaboration" between Regional Economic Commissions and the UNDG, with related accountabilities to ensure a clear division of labour (paragraph 86)."

45.   Furthermore, the SG Report recommends that Regional Economic Commissions (Secretariats of the RCM) focus on three key functions (paragraph 87):

---

[11] Report of the UN Secretary General on Repositioning the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda – Ensuring a Better Future for All (June 2017).

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

     i.   as think tanks of the UN system at the regional level, providing world-class analysis and knowledge on region-wide priorities, innovation, financing for development and transboundary issues. In doing so, they need to strengthen their interface with DESA on the one hand, and with UN Country Teams on the other;

     ii.   as the regional platforms for the exchange of best practices, follow up and review of regional progress on the 2030 Agenda, as well as analysis of existing and emerging challenges, engaging the broader UN development system; and

     iii.   for supporting and strengthening the normative and policy capabilities of UN Country Teams, which would ideally rely more systematically on the expertise of the Commissions, rather than external actors. The Commissions' capacity for upstream policy advocacy, sought especially by Middle Income Countries and countries with special needs, should be further utilized by Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams. In addition to being cost-effective, this approach would promote consistency in United Nations' diagnostics and advice.

46.   The report notes that synergies and significant cost-efficiencies in rationalizing and strengthening the coherence of the physical presence at the regional level. It argues that the rationalization will not only yield cost-savings but it will generate high-quality expertise that only the United Nations can provide through its unique combination of normative legitimacy and operational reach.

47.   Building on the June 2017 report, **the SG's reform report of December 2017** provides its findings, among others, of the review of the regional architecture of the UN development system.[12] It notes that the regional architecture must offer a convening platform and deliver integrated policy

---

[12] Report of the UN Secretary General on Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: our promise for dignity, prosperity and peace on a healthy planet (20 December 2017).

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

advice, normative support and technical capacity on regional priorities. The architecture also has an important role to play in enhancing policy and analytical capacities of Resident Coordinators and UNCTs, and contextualising country analysis in key regional dimensions.

48.   The report notes that while there is collaboration between UN entities at regional level, there is also overlap in the areas of support to the SDGs, data, analysis, policy advocacy and advice, technical assistance, knowledge management, and South-South cooperation. It finds that, in the area of data, there is no clear leadership as there are multiple data centres co-existing with limited coordination. It also finds horizontal overlaps, with entities addressing similar topics and issues, and vertical overlaps where global and regional actors extend their activities to the country level.

49.   While acknowledging potential overlaps in the development system, it notes that the overlaps are driven by competition for resources, competing mandates and diverse demands from Member States. Disconnects between Regional UN development system entities and RCs/UNCTs are exacerbated by seriously insufficient mutual exchange on planned country-level activities and engagements.

50.   The report recommends that the UN development system needs to be "fit for purpose" where division of labour among its regional structures is clearly articulated. It calls for the full implementation of the Statement of Collaboration between the Regional Economic Commissions and the United Nations Development Group. The arrangement should be extended to Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) for strengthened policy coherence. In this regard, there will be an immediate "reprofiling" process of Regional Economic Commissions and Regional UNDGs so as to ensure effective division of labour.

51.   The report indicates that, in 2018, a clear protocol for country engagement by Secretariat entities and other non-resident agencies will be developed and implemented to ensure that Resident Coordinators are informed of all in-country development activities. New Resident Coordinators are

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

expected to undertake familiarisation visits and liaise more systematically with the RECs and regional offices of Agencies, Funds and Programmes so as to improve understanding of regional assets that can be used to the advantage of the UN Country Teams.

52.   The report indicates that UNDAFs would be revamped and strengthened as the single most-important UN planning tool in all countries responding to national priorities. Adequate resources would be made available for UNDAF in countries, while strengthening and incentivising UN Country Team's integrated policy capacities and reducing transaction costs for partners. Furthermore, it is expected that the RECs will play an important role in the development and review of UNDAFs with emphasis on analysis of regional and trans-boundary issues.

53.   In line with his vision of strengthening leadership, the SG plans to empower the Regional Economic Commissions as lead voice of the UN development system on policy making, research and production of knowledge projects at the regional level that nurture integration and balanced progress on sustainable development. UN Country Teams, in turn, are to be enhanced to continue to play their primary roles in supporting national governments in implementing, monitoring and reporting on the SDGs.

54.   Regional UNDGs and RCMs will be required to hold meetings jointly or back to back, with the view of enhancing coordination. The meetings will be serviced by a common Secretariat with the active participation of DESA. The participation of UNDG entities in the Regional Sustainable Development Forums will also be strengthened, under the auspices of the RECs. A joint publications committee is expected to be established to reduce duplication in knowledge products. It has to be noted that the SG is considering the redeployment of staff of the RECs away from Headquarters to enhance capacities of UN Country Teams and fill substantive gaps in support of the 2030 Agenda.

4.0 The Implication of the SG Reforms for RCM-Africa and UNDGs

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

55.   The SG reform agenda is bound to have an impact on the functioning of the RCM and the Regional UNDGs. Hence there is a need for a "thinking out of the box" approach to the way the RCM and the UNDG work. Against the background of the SG reforms, there is a need for strengthening of the collaboration and coherence between the RCM and the UNDG.

Guiding Principles for enhancing cooperation between the RCM-Africa and UNDG

56.   The fundamental principles that should be kept in mind when considering the coordination/synergy between the UNDG and RCMs should include:

   i.   Coordination is intended for a specific objective—avoiding overlap and duplication, maximizing synergy and thus ensuring the highest combined value-added from limited resources;

   ii.   Processes for coordination should be "light" and not, in any way, add to existing Bureaucracy;

   iii. Coordination is a mutual responsibility between the RCMs and Regional UNDGs and should be based on stronger, mutual collaborative interaction;

   iv.   The relative positioning and division of labour between the RCMs and Regional UNDGs should be based on clear, distinct roles deriving from their respective mandates. It is particularly important to avoid issues with respect to the RCMs' clear regional and policy mandate on the one hand, and the Regional UNDGs' clear Resident Coordinator/UNCT oversight mandate on the other.

57.   Finally, it should be noted that coordination is a UN-wide objective undertaken in the interest of all agencies, and is thus a responsibility that must be shared among the RCM, UNDG and their respective members.

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

Recommendations

58.   Based on the aforementioned principles and agreements, to strengthen the linkage between RCM and UNDG it is recommended that:

   i.   The RCM-Africa and the UNDGs would benefit from support from AU, UN leadership, starting with the AUDCP and UNDSG (as co-chairs of the RCM-Africa) and the UNDG Chair. In this regard, the Chairs of the RCM-Africa and the R-UNDG for Africa should meet at least once a year to provide strategic guidance on the partnership in support of the priorities of the African Union and its organs including the Regional Economic Communities and member States.

   ii.   The work of the RCM-Africa/R-UNDG must be organized around thematic areas of 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2030. The current clusters of the RCM could be the starting point.

   iii. RCM-Africa and the R-UNDG should seek to coordinate their work plans to ensure highest combined value added with those of the UNDG. Regular meetings of the Secretariats of R-UNDGs and the RCM-Africa are therefore strongly recommended.

   iv.   RCM-Africa and R-UNDG should support the Resident Coordinators in the preparation of the UNDAFs as envisaged by the SG. In this regard, the RCM-Africa and R-UNDGs should support capacity building efforts of the UNCTs in African Union member States.

   v.   RCM-Africa and R-UNDG, in collaboration with UN DESA, must hold periodically high policy dialogues on topical issues of relevance to the AU, African regional communities and members States.

Nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa
Second Joint Meeting of RCM-Africa and R-UNDG

UN System Support of the AU in Winning the Fight against Corruption:
A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 12 and 13 May 2018

vi. RCM-Africa and R-UNDG should be adequately resourced to develop a common knowledge management platform for the sharing of knowledge products, creation of Communities of Practice, blogs on key issues, skills bank and expert roster, etc.

vii. The Secretariats of the RCM-Africa and UNDG should jointly prepare the Annual Sessions of the RCM and the meetings of the UNDGs in Africa.

viii. RCM should participate in the meetings of the UNDGs and vice versa.

ix. With a view of avoiding duplication and overlaps PAIDA, UN-AU Frameworks of Collaboration on Peace and Security and on Development should be implemented through the RCM-Africa and the UNDG.