



Economic Commission for Africa

A service of the UN system-wide support to the African Union and its NEPAD Programme

NEPAD TODAY

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Social and Human Development Cluster meets with UN Women's Bachelet in Addis Ababa

In another trail-blazing event, the Social and Human Development Cluster of the RCM-Africa yesterday held a meeting with the visiting Executive Director of UN Women, Mrs. Michelle Bachelet at the African Union Commission.

Cluster Co-chair and AU's Commissioner for Social Affairs, Bience Gawanas under whose leadership the Cluster was adjudged the "best run and most functional" last year, told Ms. Bachelet that AUC believes that sustainable development is impossible without empowering, educating and securing women. "Social development," she said, "is built on a woman-centred approach".

In this regard, Gawanas said her pet project, CARMMA (Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa) has been launched in 24 African countries and would soon spread to more countries. Gawanas said the key to improving the lots of women is in forging broad partnerships.

For Emmanuel Nnandozie, Director of ECA's Economic Development and NEPAD Division (EDND), partnership is exactly the mandate of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM-Africa). He said RCM was established to enhance UN system-wide coherence, coordination and cooperation at

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Africa prioritizes infrastructure

At the 24th meeting of NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee, 29 January 2011 in Addis Ababa, African leaders put focus on programme delivery.

"The next decade provides the opportunity for better performance and results on the NEPAD agenda at the programmatic level. That will mean giving the NEPAD Agency the necessary means and resources to fully deliver", said Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of

Ethiopia at the start of the 24th meeting of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC). "Now that the integration of NEPAD into the African Union (AU) structures and processes has materialised, with the establishment of the NEPAD Agency, a new dawn beckons to actualise the NEPAD vision," Zenawi said.

Despite the presence of high growth rates averaging at about 6 percent per annum between 2004 and 2007, the decline of 2.4 percent in 2009 due to the global financial and economic crises it is now essential that the modest gains made over the past few years in development and governance are consolidated advised Zenawi.

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Social and Human...

the regional and sub-regional levels to 'deliver as one' in promoting development in Africa and in support of African Union and its NEPAD programme.

He gave a brief history of RCM, its various clusters, progress made and its sub-regional dimensions, Nnadozie said the RCM had long recognized gender as a crosscutting issue which should be embedded in the activities of all nine clusters.

On gender equality in Africa, Ms Thokozile Ruzvidzo, Director of ECA's African Center for Gender and Social Development presented the progress, challenges and priorities. She said all the priorities of "UN Women" resonate well with the UN family in Addis Ababa. Stating that the strategy on coordination needs resources, she assured that working with RCM, there is a potential to tap into financial and technical resources that are available in various Clusters. Litha Musyimi-Ogana, Director of Women, Gender and Development Directorate at AUC said the African Women's Decade (2010-2020) presents an opportunity to implement the various frameworks and declarations on women which African heads of state had committed to.

Responding, Ms. Bachelet, who is also an Under Secretary-General and Former President of Chile, said it was painful to see how much effort had been made which had not resulted in improving women's life.

She said UN Women has three mandates --- working through the CSW to develop standards and commitment to education, science, innovation, etc; Continue operational activity and pursue coordination, coherence and accountability. She said UN Women would not seek to replace other UN agencies or duplicate their work. Instead, UN Women would embrace the RCM and seek to produce synergies, build real partnerships, scale up best practice and carry out analytical studies on the costs of not acting to improve the condition of women as well as

the gains that could be made by improving the status of women.

This, she said, is the evidence governments need to take decisions. In this regard, Nnadozie promised to work with Ms Ruzvidzo's Centre at ECA in carrying out the analytical work that could be used by UN Women.

Source: Special to ECA

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In his remarks, Jean Ping, the Chairperson of the AUC, said that 2010 was a crucial year for the AU and NEPAD – especially with the mainstreaming of NEPAD into the AU.

On the work of the NEPAD Agency, Ping said the Agency had assisted the AUC and Africa in the preparation of African positions at the global level – at the G8 and G20 engagements concerning the follow-up on global commitments to Africa.

Ibrahim Mayaki, the CEO of the NEPAD Agency, presented an activity report that focused on the achievements being made in the roll-out of NEPAD programmes and projects in the thematic areas of: agriculture, climate change and natural resource management, regional integration and infrastructure, human development, economic and corporate governance and the cross-cutting issues of gender, capacity development and information and communication technologies.

A key area that has been identified for delivery is infrastructure - whereby eight African countries on the HSGOC infrastructure sub-committee are working to champion regional and cross-border infrastructure projects in order to attract investments and enhance regional integration.

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