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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

**North Africa Office**

Twenty-eighth meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE)

Rabat (Morocco)

26 February – 1 March 2013

**Report on Office Activities**

**March 2012 – February 2013**

**Draft**

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**REPORT ON ECA ACTIVITIES IN NORTH AFRICA (March 2012 – February 2013)**

1. **Introduction**

The 2012 activities carried out in implementation of the Office’s 2012-2013 work program are an integral part of ECA sub- program 7 entitled « Support for sub-regional development activities ». This program covers the seven countries of the sub-region: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Sudan and Tunisia.  The program strategic framework was reviewed and adopted by the 25th session of the ECA-North Africa Intergovernmental Committee of Experts held in Rabat from 16 to 19 March 2010, and backed by the African Finance Ministers Conference held in Lilongwe, Malawi held from 25 to 30 March 2010. And finally, the review and adoption of the framework by the UN General Assembly made it operational and ready to be implemented by ECA in charge of implanting program 14 entitled « Economic and Social Development in Africa », one of the regional components of the Program-Plan for 2012-2013.

The activities implemented in 2012 and the derivative products were accomplished in close collaboration with the Member States, ECA organic bodies, other sub-regional Offices and regional economic communities (REC) including the Arab Maghreb Union along with other partners.

The principal objective of the work program is to « strengthen the capacities of Member States leading to regional integration by granting special importance to the specific priorities of the North Africa sub-region in the general NEPAD framework and development objectives at the international level, and the Millennium Development Goals in particular».

Reaching this objective requires achieving three major outcomes: (i) better capacities of Member State administrations, of the Arab Maghreb Union General Secretariat and other intergovernmental organizations in drafting and implementing harmonized policies, macro-economic and sectoral programs with the aim of meeting the principal sub-regional development priorities in North Africa. This refers to assisting the Member States in jointly establishing and adopting master plans and strategies in priority fields; (ii) strengthened ability of the UMA in carrying out multi-year programs through the improvement of partnerships with the main stakeholders, in particular with other intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations, the ADB and NEPAD Secretariat with regard to the number of actions,   programs or projects jointly undertaken with the relevant RECs and other partners and completed at the sub-regional and individual country level; (iii) an extensive network of information and knowledge including governments, the private sector, civil society, the UMA and United Nations agencies, the specific objective is to increase the number of communities of practice partaking in the structure of knowledge sharing put in place by SRO-NA.

This report includes information on the Office’s work outcomes from March 2012 to February 2013 (section 2), a description of the special initiatives undertaken during the period under review (section 3), and inventory of the implementation of the recommendations issued by the 27th ICE (section 4). By way of conclusion the last section of this report analyzes the lessons drawn from the work program implementation for the period under review and presents some of the outlooks.

**II. The work program main accomplishments in 2012**

The activities included in the Office work program were carried out to achieve results in the priority fields of action as put forth by 2012-2013 strategic framework, the 2010-2012 ECA business plan and the 2010-2012 multi-year cooperation plan with UMA.

The recommendations issued by the meetings of intergovernmental experts (ICE), as well as other partners also contributed to defining the framework of intervention of the Office throughout the period under review.

In January 2013 the rate of accomplishment of the work program for the biennial year 2012-2013 came to 51% and is expected to reach 75% by the end of the 28th ICE. At the end of 2013 the objective is to complete all the activities included in the work program while responding to the *ad* *hoc* requests of Member States.

Major Outcome 1

**Enhanced capacity of Member States, the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), and other intergovernmental organizations to formulate and implement harmonized macroeconomic and sectoral policies and programs to address key sub regional integration priorities in North Africa**

Through its activities, the Office contributed to enhancing the capacities of Member States and UMA in the areas of economic and social transformation, youth employment, green economy, food security, financial integration, energy transition, gender issues and participatory governance, all issues which have become increasingly important for the sub region.

While strengthening countries' commitment to the principles and priority issues of sustainable development, the work of the Office has contributed to build consensus and reach concrete positions and recommendations for promoting effective integration based on the three pillars of sustainable development, including the human dimension.

Specifically, to better address the structural factors that are key impediments to the structural transformation of North African economies, Member States adopted innovative recommendations to be further implemented at national and regional levels with their partners, including ECA/NA. These include strategies and recommendations related to: unleashing North Africa potential as a regional pole of growth for Africa, strengthening social protection in North Africa, promoting gender equality, promoting financial integration and regional governance, converting trade potential within the region in growth results etc.

In the area of sustainable development, the Office was instrumental in preparing Member States, technical stakeholders and UMA for Rio+20 Conference. This resulted in: (i) Drafting of a regional report on progress made to implement sustainable development, (ii) the organization of consultative and experts group meetings to identify North Africa priority issues and expectations for Rio +20 that were included in the Africa consensus for Rio+20. In the specific area of climate change, the Office in cooperation with ACPC and UMA contribute to the establishment of a sub-regional framework for action and cooperation which will serve as a guiding tool for the elaboration of the Strategy of Adaptation to Climate Change in the Maghreb.

During the year 2012, the Office continued to provide technical support to its Member States through direct technical advisory missions but also through its work with UN Country Teams in the seven Member States. In this context, the Office visited Algeria and Mauritania at the request of these two Member States. In Mauritania, the Office provided technical assistance by conducting a feasibly study on employment offices in Mauritania. Based on the diagnosis of the existing data, the study proposed an integrated legal framework for the effective establishment and operating of private employment agencies. The study defined, in particular, the status as well as the overall and specific missions of the employment agencies, and provided a coherent institutional framework that is, well adapted to the specificities of the Mauritanian labor market. A legal instrument was also drafted and attached to the study report, to facilitate a quick implementation of the new structures. Good feedback came from the Ministry of Employment of Mauritania and the SRO-NA agreed to organize a restitution mission of the report study during the first semester of 2013, to facilitate a proper ownership of the proposed new framework by all national stakeholders.

In Algeria, the Office provided technical advisory to NABNI, a coalition of Algerian Civil Society Organization working for better governance in Algeria by giving inputs on the preparation of a prospective report “Algeria 2020” and sharing with them experiences from other countries in the sub region and across the continent. Democratic transitions in North Africa must be accompanied by the strengthening of civil society as an actor to be fully involved in the strategic reflection on economic and social development policies. The finalized report is launched on January 26th 2013.

The Office also collaborated with UNECE to undertake an environmental performance review (EPR) at the request of Morocco. The review is under course. The EPR is a key strategic tool for Morocco which has recently adopted a national charter for environment and sustainable development. This charter will be implemented through a legal framework (2011) and the development of a national strategy for sustainable development (2012) as well as a national strategy for the environment. The EPR will provide an accurate diagnosis to guide future development strategies. It will also serve as a starting point for the development of new expertise within SRO-NA, which will be used to respond to future requests as countries will be encouraged to start the process.

The Office continued to facilitate joint collaboration activities between Morocco and Mauritania during the period under review and facilitated contacts between UNDP Office in Mauritania to have HCP Morocco assist the Mauritanian Ministry of planning in its efforts to build an integrated Social Account Matrix. A preliminary mission has already taken place, and this technical assistance will deliver its outcome during 2013. The Social Account Matrix is a key tools for decision makers in terms of forecast and analysis of social and economic aspects of public policies in Mauritania

The Office, in collaboration with UN Statistic Division and the European Environment Agency conducted also consultative and training workshops on water statistics and accounts, during which Morocco was chosen at the pilot stage to implement the proposed water statistics system nationally. Water statistics and account represent most challenging area for North Africa as the region is already suffering from a shortage of water resources (less than 1000 m3/person/year, except in Mauritania and Sudan). This situation is critical for the agricultural sector which is key as it uses about 85% of water that is available but also because non- agricultural demand is growing rapidly. Given the region’s climate change vulnerability, this shortage may worsen in the future if adequate and integrated policies are not implemented.

By organizing three expert group meetings, the Office contributed to the formulation of policies in number areas of interest for its member countries namely: strengthening social protection in North Africa, promoting financial integration and regional governance, setting North Africa’s priorities for RIO+20 and mobilizing regional actors for regional integration in the Maghreb.

The parliamentary documentation, other supportive documents and the events tabled and organized during the ICE meeting helped raise awareness about the status of economic and social development in the Sub Region, and address the major developmental challenges facing North Africa in particular those that have since been re-affirmed. This platform offered an opportunity for Member States and Regional Organizations to debate on policy options and strategies. The 27th ICE gave the opportunity to Member States to converge on the need to implement some key measures for their economic and social transformation, and to better integrate their economies. These include and are not limited to : (i) adopting an efficient social protection policy approach that integrates the concept of equity and is more effective in targeting the beneficiaries, to adequately address the needs of the vulnerable groups, establish decentralized institutions or strengthen the capacity of existing ones ; (ii) developing statistical systems for decentralized data collection and data management that allow a more accurate decision-making, and develop a more consistent meta data for a better comparability, particularly with regard to the fight against poverty, gender disparity, local investment and better targeting of social protection systems, (iii) promoting a better income redistribution and reducing inequalities, especially through better allocation of budgetary resources and improvement of the quality of the public expenditure, (iv) establishing and strengthening a culture of monitoring and evaluation of public policies and promoting a result-based approach in the context of governance improvement, (v) accelerating the implementation of the Maghreb agricultural strategy for 2030, its action plan and the sub regional program for the fight against desertification, (vi) strengthening synergies between agricultural and environmental policies and incorporating climate risks in food security strategies, (vii) setting up a prospective vision to promote green economy in North Africa taking into account national specificities and needs.

As evidenced by the evaluation process that is regularly undertaken by the Office, participants in the various meetings have all expressed their satisfaction with the organization, the relevance and the outcomes of the meetings/activities held by the Office. They have also argued that the meetings have responded to numerous questions raised by the parties involved, and helped reach consensus on strategies and policies to be implemented.

Responses to the evaluation questionnaires showed that all the activities evaluated were very satisfactory and highly rated them: almost 90% of the participants where highly satisfied (9/10) by the work of the Office in terms of capacity building. Many letters of appreciation sent by various stakeholders and partners acknowledged the work of the Office and its staff.

In addition, very positive feedback came from Member States on the advisory missions organized so far, especially from Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania.

Major Outcome 2

**Strengthened capacity of UMA to implement multi-year programs through improved partnerships with key stakeholders including other intergovernmental organisations, UN agencies, the ADB, and NEPAD Secretariat**

SRO-NA has increased its share of joint activities with regard to the global accomplishment during the year 2012. The partnership with UMA has improved significantly, as well as the partnership between UMA and other regional institutions. Many joint activities have been organized in the context of the MYP 2010-2012, among which: a workshop on the harmonization of the cyber legislation in North Africa, an EGM on financial integration and regional governance in North Africa, the EGM on the situation of Social protection in North Africa in light of the current demographic issues, an EGM on RIO+20, a regional media workshop on African Governance Report (AGR III). UMA officials participated actively to the activities of the Office, including the ICE meeting during, which a specific session on regional integration was organised with a focus on the intra-regional trade, and an assessment of trade potential in the Maghreb Arab countries.

SRO-NA Office pursued its efforts to establish and to operationalize a consultative mechanism. This mechanism includes all key regional actors who are involving in the integration process. In this regard, the Office has organized an important consultative meeting on regional integration which succeeded to bring together IGO’s, NGO’s and UMA Secretariat. The meeting served as a major opportunity to increase the involvement of all stakeholders in the UMA re-launching process and to help them having a common vision on the development challenges of the sub-region. It contributed in building a consensus on the priority areas of intervention by the major non-governmental actors working towards an integrated Maghreb region. The outcomes of this rich exchange will serve both as an advocacy tool for decision makers, as well as a reference platform for partners who are supporting the regional integration process. The consolidated version of the report will be presented to Member States through both the institutional channels of ECA-NA and the UMA General Secretariat and then will be disseminated to other partners including UN agencies.

The Office has also facilitated the participation of UMA to several key events organised at ECA HQ, especially the 8th session of the ECA Committee on food security and sustainable development, the 8th African development Forum on Managing and Mobilizing natural resources for African development. The Office also facilitated the implication of UMA in the preparation of North African region to the RIO+20

Major Outcome 3

**Strengthened information and knowledge networking with key stakeholders involved in sub-regional development activities including governments, the private sector, civil society, and the UMA and UN agencies**

The office has also strengthened its network of academics, researchers and institutions working on international trade, growth and regional integration. The Mediterranean Economic Colloquium in which the Office is involved annually contributed to share knowledge and give a better understanding of economic issues of interest for the region. Following the recommendation of SRO-NA Member States, this Colloquium has become an annual event, the "Rendez-vous" of eminent experts interested in the development of the sub-region and in its interactions with other sub-regions. The 2012 Colloquium focused on the theme *Trade in the Mediterranean countries in the context of current political transitions: problems and promises*. A special session on West Africa was organized by WTO Chair of Cheikh Antar Diop University. It has also contributed to strengthening the relations with the Academia and among members of North Africa Academia themselves. As a result, the Network of experts created during the past meetings of the Colloquium became more important. The members of this network are also involved in SRO-NA activities as resource persons, experts, consultants or peer reviewers.

Three new Networks have been established as part of the SRO’s Knowledge platform: one devoted to the promotion of renewal energy in North Africa, one deals with social protection and the third devoted to the promotion of financial integration in North Africa. These communities of practice served as a tool to exchange information and ideas between the members, the renewal energy experts on the one hand, and practitioners and financial and regional cooperation for development experts on the other hand. The platforms served also as a tool to disseminate a number of reports and knowledge material produced by the Office. In addition, SRO North Africa seized the opportunity of some Expert group meetings and the Colloquium to share with participants the content of the platform and to promote its use as a platform for a two –way exchange between ECA and all its constituencies.

During the period under review, the Office contributed regularly to the activities of the UN country team in Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia. This strengthened the network of the Office and augmented its audience for more impact at country level. The Office participated in Tunisia to the initial steps aiming to prepare and mobilize the country officials, the UNCT, and other key stakeholders for the drafting of the national UNDAF for the period of 2015-2019. The main objectives of the three day workshop held in this context were to identify and assess current UN system capacities (programmatic and non-programmatic), key needs in the country, and areas where the UN system can achieve the impact, The office took this opportunity to reiterate ECA’s commitments to put its technical expertise and comparative advantage in knowledge generation, advocacy and capacity building at the disposal of the UN country team.

Specifically, the Office identified several thematic areas where it can intervene. In Morocco, the Office is working closely with UN thematic groups (Youth, Migration Gender, Governance, MDGs, etc.) to implement the UNDAF and bring in its regional mandate and expertise for networking, advocacy, experience sharing and consensus building at the sub regional level.

Additionally, the Office is part of the ICPD Beyond 2014 process, and is also working closely with the UNFPA Arab Regional office, ESCWA and the League of Arab States within the Interagency Steering Committee. The Office is assisting the North African countries, in close collaboration with the UN national team, for the national assessment of the progress made in implementing the ICPD plan of action. The expected outputs of the steering committee are to coordinate the activities planned within ICPD Beyond 2014 process and to prepare the Regional conference on population. National implementation assessment of ICPD plan of action was done through a standardized questionnaire, and SRO/NA was assigned to assist and follow up on the process with four North African countries.

The Office has also endeavored to review and revamp its Observatory on Regional Integration. A strategic plan was established to this end, while developing its content is currently in progress.

The activities implemented during 2012 contributed to strengthening information and knowledge networking with the private sector, civil society organizations, UMA and UN agencies as recommended by ECA business plan 2010-2012.

**III. Special Initiatives and Interaction with Head Office Divisions and other Partners (DA project)**

***Project implementation on innovative funding mechanisms for renewable sources of energy in North Africa (DA project)***

The project on innovative mechanisms for funding renewable sources of energy (RE) in North Africa is directly linked to the objectives of the UN Initiative entitled « Sustainable Energy for All » targeting a 30% increase in the use of renewable energy across the world. At this juncture, the project managed to develop an inventory of renewable energy sources in North Africa and propose a compendium of good practices for the funding of RE based on an in-depth analysis of the RE funding issue, of needs with regard to current policies and the lessons drawn from international experiences and of the sub-region.

In this framework the Office held a meeting of experts on « innovative funding of renewable energy source mechanisms in North Africa » (Tunis, 3-5 October 2012). This meeting made it possible to identify the main hurdles still limiting the expansion of these technologies, in particular those in connection with funding and cooperation. It analyzed the constraints limiting the implication of the private and banking sector for the funding of renewable energy projects. Recommendations were issued for increasing funding and the establishment of financing mechanisms and partnerships based on the best practices observed. Particular emphasis was placed on the role of regional integration in the development of renewable sources of energy in North Africa. The harmonization of policies and regulations and the devising of a North African strategy for the development of renewable sources of energy remain a priority.

The project activities emphasized synergy with the other initiatives instituted by the partners to capitalize on experience and provide national and regional actors with a knowledge base on the policies and measures (institutional, technical, regulatory and financial) put in place in the different countries. To continue and widen the sharing of information and knowledge, a community of practice on fostering of RE in North Africa was created in conjunction with the meeting of experts on innovative funding mechanisms for renewable energy. It made possible uniting of the various competencies in the public and private sectors and associative circles around the issues in connection with funding of the development of renewable energy in North Africa. The network of experts is expected to play an active role in the preparation of the last activities of the project in conjunction with the devising of a document on sustainable regional energy in via the strengthening of cooperation and regional integration.

This document will serve as a term of reference for the development of a North African strategy for renewable sources of energy by the Council of Ministers for Energy and Mines (Rabat, November 2010).

***Taking the regional dimension into account in national policies***

The Office lent support to the Division in charge of regional integration in order to collect data in the three countries of the sub-region and to conduct the required interviews to undertake a study on taking the regional dimension into account in national policies in Africa. Missions were conducted for this purpose by the Office in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

A report was edited by the Division in charge of integration on this subject and will soon be available.

The missions conducted in North Africa made it possible to learn a few major lessons.

The national authorities consulted underscored the need for regional integration in North Africa as a strategy for strengthening economic growth and the capacity for job creation inside these States.

More specifically, Algeria sees in regional integration a means to approach a twofold objective: building a strong Maghreb and the achievement continental integration. Alongside North African integration Algeria joined the free trade area of Arab States (GAFTA). However, for a certain number of reasons in connection with the little diversified nature of the Algerian economic fabric (highly hydrocarbon dependent) or the de-structuring thereof, Algeria approaches the trade liberalization process with a high degree of prudence. Although well aware of the potential gains gleaned from greater regional integration, it also insists on the need to upgrade its economic fabric prior to any substantial commercial overture. This has led to lists of exclusion of certain major projects in the trade agreements negotiated.

In Morocco the national authorities consulted underscored the importance for their country of regional and bilateral partnerships given the Kingdom’s key geographical position at the crossroads between Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Hence Morocco makes regional integration and the trade agreement attached thereto a key component of its growth strategy and diversification of its economy. In particular, North African integration constitutes an objective enshrined in the constitution. Growing interest has been increasingly shown over the past few years in sub-Saharan Africa given the growth prospects heretofore represented by this part of the Continent and signs of a ceiling being reached in the opportunities so far offered by the European market. The numerous trade agreements already in existence or in the process of negotiation are all part of this strategic vision of making Morocco a platform for trade and the development of services, in particular with regard to investment, transport and logistics.

Tunisia demonstrates a high predisposition with regard to the global integration process, and in particular for the liberalization of trade. Proof enough is the plurality of bilateral free trade agreements or projects in which this country is a stakeholder. However, the multiplication observed in bilateral endeavors is demonstrative of the country’s interest in widening its scope of partnership, as well as the absence or insufficiency of progress in the attainment of the objectives of the UMA, the CEN-SAD and the FTA/Arab League for trade. Well beyond the specific problems entailed with operation of the UMA it appears timely to analyze the causes behind the partial failure to implement the trade agreements and therefore in proposing effectively adopted responses.

With regard to the integration process initiated in the framework of the UMA, the officials consulted mention, however, the differentiated visions between Member States on the order of priority or implementation timeframes. Morocco – like Tunisia- emphasizes liberalization of trade and ancillary services (facilitation of inter country transport, logistics and tourism) but over a more extensive period of time compared to Tunisia, while Algeria stresses the development of sectoral policies such as agriculture and infrastructures.

**IV. Implementation of the 26th ICE recommendations Status**

The Office initiated several actions pertaining to the implementation of the recommendations of the 27th ICE. Note is to be taken of six recommendations:

1. Assess the social protection systems in North Africa, show the way to improve their effectiveness and identification of the ways and means to ensure better funding;

The Office carried out two activities to meet this objective: a study on the inventory of the social protection systems in North Africa that served as a basis to discussions at a meeting of experts on this issue in light of current demographic stakes. The study included an inventory of social protection in the seven countries and tabled proposals for the setting up of genuine social protection mechanisms beneficial to the local populations. These mechanisms should be generalized and reach out to the global population, in particular its most vulnerable members. However, it should also be sustainable for governmental budgets. The experts of the seven Member States and the participants from partner organizations partaking in the meeting held with UMA in the framework of the ECA-UMA cooperation program validated the proposal made in the report and asked the ECA to support the UMA to revisit and update the social security agreement. The Office has already undertaken activities designed to mobilize resources to this end.

1. Assess the impact of crises on the countries of North Africa by taking into consideration all aspects that regional integration could have mitigated.

The 2013 edition on the economic and social situation in 2012 and the outlook for 2013 proposes an analysis of on-going crises in this context.

1. Greater in-depth analysis of North Africa’s potential in terms of high value added;

The Office coordinated the preparation of a study on diversification and the sophistication of North African economies. The study analyzed the determining factors of the low level of diversification of the sub-region’s economies, the relationship between sophistication, productivity and growth, and the role of regional integration in the sophistication of North African economies. Proposals for facilitation mechanisms, diversification and sophistication of the economies were discussed in the study, as well as the role each actor could play, in particular with regard to the national States. This study will be the subject of a presentation followed by discussions at the meeting of experts on diversification and sophistication of North African economies. In addition, the Office integrated an analysis along these lines into the 2012 economic and social report and outlook for 2013.

1. Continuation of the implementation of the multi annual Program for assistance to the UMA as planned, and aiding the UMA in the establishing the operability process in the free trade area, in particular via the execution of studies pursuant to the instruments and mechanisms for assistance and bringing it into fruition including the equalization instruments for costs and benefits at the regional market level and funding of integration.

The Office continued the implementation of the multi-year program for assistance to UMA and carried out the activities originally planned therein for 2012. An assessment of the implementation of this program was performed and is slated for submittal to the delegates for approval in conjunction with the 28th ICE session.

In addition to this assessment to be noted is that at the behest of the UMA General Secretariat the Office issued an analysis note on the optimal condition of operability of the North African free trade area in the context of the impending integration process in Africa. This note dealt with the choice of strategies, standards and instruments that would make possible the dismantling in a reasonable timeframe of tariff and non-tariff trade barriers in view of a medium term conclusion of trade agreements with the other RECs of the Continent.

Another study was conducted on the potential of intra North Africa trade, the use of quantitative assessment tools and analysis of empirical data. This study made possible quantification of the potential for trade in the sub-region and identification of the product groups thought to be inducements to rapid development of inter-regional trade, as well as the conditions for the exploitation of this potential in addition to greater stimulation of growth, investment and jobs in the sub-region.

In January 2013 the Office held a joint meeting with the UMA, its affiliated institutions and bodies, North African GIOs and NGOs on the outlook for North African integration in the new socio-political context of the sub-region. This meeting made it possible to build a consensus on the current challenges for development in the sub-region and the priority fields of renewed efforts in the integration process. The outcomes of this get-together led to the issuance of a consolidated document intended to serve as a tool for advocacy to the political decision-makers and platform for the partners supporting the regional integration process.

1. Set up a follow up mechanism for the recommendations issued by meetings held by the Office;

The Office decided to report on the implementation of the ICE recommendation at the 28th session. This initiative went hand in hand with the submittal of a request addressed to Member States (in letter form) for the exchange of communications during the Committee meeting on the recommendations put into practice in the different countries or that have at least begun to be initiated. In all events, the communications must emphasize the measures undertaken to implement a recommendation whether in the short, medium or long term.

1. Submittal of the 2014-2015 strategic framework project to the Council of Ministers for final approval.

The project was submitted to the Ministerial Conference along with the 2012 ICE report.

**V. Challenges, lessons learnt and outlook for 2013**

***Strengthening the capacities of the Member States and the UMA***

During the period under review, the Office received much positive feedback from its clients, including from the host country Morocco, Mauritania and Algeria. Its efforts were also recognized and appreciated by respective UN country teams who underlined the dynamic participation of its experts to the work of UN and on the Office’s efforts to ensure that the regional dimension is constantly present in UN work inside North Africa.

The Office has enhanced its communication and outreach activities which increased significantly the visibility of the Office as a valuable and reliable development player and partner, and gave more momentum to its various activities and interventions as evidenced by the enhanced media coverage and reviews in the host country and the sub region of the Office’s activities, and as shown by the increasing interest of/and partnership with development community at large. Besides, the number of spontaneously self-invited and self-sponsored participants to the various activities and meetings held by the Office has risen significantly and steadily, and has become more systematic over the period under review.

The Office has also increased its efforts to maintain constructive relation with its traditional partners, including UMA and Members states, while developing new relation with other actors in the regional development process. What comes out of our analysis of the Office’s interactions is that the nature of the implication of these new actors in the integration process of North Africa for effective social transformation is also key and increasingly important for the success of UN action as a whole.

The regional integration process lacks this implication and the work of the Office during the period under review and did not sufficiently contribute thereto in view of improvement. The challenge now is to find the best way to improve and sustain these implications in 2013 and beyond.

***Capacities of the UMA and implementation of the MYP***

The UMA Secretariat still lacks human resources capacity to face its challenging work and needs also more predictable resources to fulfill its mandate but this will not be possible before the holding of the Summit of Head of States. Such a situation explains its increased need for more support from its partners including ECA. The Office received support from the XB resources committee to undertake a feasibility study for self-financing mechanism. This will be done in 2013 but the implementation of the outcome of this study is still challenging without high level decision from UMA statutory Organs.

The activity of the period under review showed that regional integration is still a priority for Member States even if their commitment to revamp the UMA is not yet translated into concrete action. Non-Governmental actors as IGOs, NGOs and technical institutions can play a key role in the revival of regional integration but also for the socio economic transformation of North Africa. The need for more synergy was confirmed by the interaction of the Office with stakeholders during joint meetings and especially during the consultative meeting on regional integration held in early January 2013.

***Networking with and to the benefit of Member States***

Collaboration with North African RECs, especially the UMA, Moroccan official institutions such as the High Commission forPlanning and its senior officials, as well as universities, civil society organizations, the private sector, young professionals, other UN agencies and development actors, has greatly enhanced the visibility of the Office. Its efforts to develop and use KM tools contributed actively to this visibility, and the Office is determined to address the challenge of using this tool in a more extensive and systematic manner.