

**Operation ASEOWA:**  
**A Model for Africa**  
#ASEOWASAVESLIVES



## STRENGTHENING AFRICA'S EFFECTIVENESS FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTION

CONCEPT NOTE





## **ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment 2016**

### **STRENGTHENING AFRICA'S EFFECTIVENESS FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTION**

**ORGANISERS: AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION (AUC), ECONOMIC  
COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS), AND UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS (UNOCHA)**

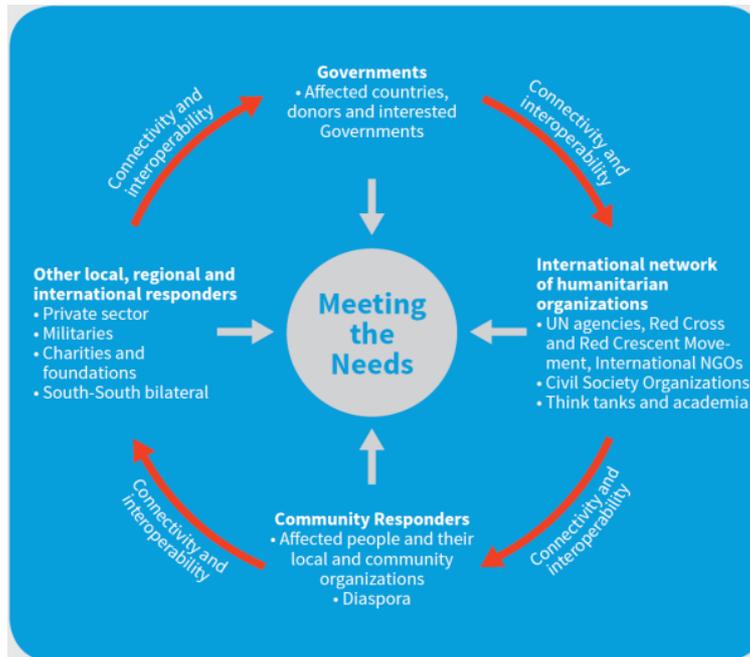
**Wednesday, 29 June, at 8.30-9.45 a.m. in Conference Room 5  
United Nations Secretariat, New York**

This is one of the side-events to be convened during the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment, in keeping with this year's theme: Restoring Humanity and Leaving No One Behind: Working together to reduce people's humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The African Union (AU) and its member states have in the past few months released a number of key humanitarian policy documents including the Common African Position (CAP) on Humanitarian Effectiveness, derived after comprehensive inter-governmental consultations and presented at the World Humanitarian Summit of May 2016 in Istanbul. One of the principal focus areas of the AU CAP is strengthening the role of states to prevent, prepare, respond and recover more effectively from humanitarian crises.

In an ideal post-World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) world, interoperability of systems and networks that tackle humanitarian problems will become the new standard. According to the OCHA Policy Brief "Interoperability: Humanitarianism in a Shared Space", the model for taking advantage of changing capacities and opportunities presented by a greater number of actors meeting humanitarian needs will ideally look like the working of a system of systems as depicted in the figure below:



The AU Commission and its Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have also developed a number of platforms and networks that could form the basis of an operational structure in a new post-WHS humanitarian architecture. In 2014, the AU and ECOWAS collaborated to expand the network, Gestion des Catastrophes en Afrique de l'Ouest (GECEAO), a network of West African Disaster Managers, to form the continental platform called the African Disaster Managers Platform (ADMAP). The ADMAP, which was presented at ECOSOC-HAS in 2014, has been used to mobilize continental response for flooding in Southern Africa in 2015 and 2016 through the sharing of information, knowledge and good practices as well as coordination of AU member states solidarity efforts.

In 2014, the AUC led a coordinated continental effort to respond to the Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak in West Africa (ASEOWA). Operation ASEOWA was the largest deployment of international medical workers who saved more lives safely, effectively and cheaply. It provided a replicable model for humanitarian coordination and emergency health response. This model led to the 2015 initiative undertaken by ECOWAS and the US, working with the Kofi Annan Peacekeeping Training Institute in Ghana: the West Africa Disaster Preparedness Initiative (WADPI). The Initiative has trained up to 1400 people, cadres of disaster management stakeholders in 17 West African member states. The AU is now working with the WADPI Team to see a roll out of the collaboration in other regions of Africa.

On its part, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), in the Greater Horn of Africa, has developed a forum for climate prediction that provides early warnings to its member states to respond to and mitigate climate-related challenges. The IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) convenes member state experts twice a year to discuss early warnings and design appropriate responses.

In similar vein is the Women's Situation Room (WSR) established by the Angie Brooks International Center for Women's Empowerment (ABIC). The initiative which is an outcome of the Women's Summit in 2009 in Liberia deploys women early warning experts to African countries ahead of elections whilst supporting conflict prevention and peace building before, during and after elections. Their recent successful involvement in the Ugandan presidential elections of 2016 provides a testament of the relevance of the initiative.

As Africa develops its humanitarian roadmap for 2015-2026, these three key initiatives on climate early warning, on disaster preparedness and conflict prevention provide replicable models for the African Union Commission to bring to scale at the regional and continental levels. They also provide key anchors international stakeholders could support in the bid to ensure no one is left behind in the implementation of the post-WHS agenda.

## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the ECOSOC Side Event on Strengthening the *Africa's Effectiveness for Humanitarian Action* are as follows:

- a. To appraise participants of the opportunities for enhancing and fostering developing disaster preparedness and response capacities in Africa.
- b. Explore networks and collaborations that could be forged to support a robust implementation of the post-WHS agenda of the African Union.
- c. Examine the coordination requirements necessary for adapting and scaling up initiatives around the post-WHS agenda, including the SDG Implementation framework, the AU Humanitarian Policy Framework and the AU Vision 2063.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

Against this backdrop, the side-event will focus on the following suggested questions:

1. How can Africa leverage new initiatives on disaster preparedness, early warning and response, to reduce humanitarian risks and vulnerabilities across the continent?
2. How can partner and stakeholder networks in disaster management in Africa complement or contribute to the major regional or continental frameworks for driving the post-WHS agenda?
3. What innovative ideas can be proposed to strengthen linkages between global humanitarian initiatives for humanitarian effectiveness and the roadmap for the AU CAP on Humanitarian Effectiveness?

## INTENDED OUTCOMES/CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The expected outcomes include:

- a.** A set of recommendations on bringing to scale regional initiatives that could be used to improve early warning, preparedness and response requirements relevant for realizing the objectives of the AU CAP on Humanitarian Effectiveness and the post-WHS agenda.
- b.** Identification of existing networks and partnership frameworks in Africa and beyond that could be linked up to support regional and continental implementation of the AU CAP for Humanitarian Effectiveness.
- c.** Recommendations on strengthening inter-operability of national regional and continental coordination frameworks with each other and with the global humanitarian system; and the facilities needed to be in place to help the AU and the RECs maximize complementarities of the diverse capacities existing or emerging towards the implementation of the post-WHS agenda and the AU CAP on Humanitarian Effectiveness.

## FORMAT

Moderated Dialogue, followed by an interactive session

### (Co-)Chair(s):

- **Leone Kone Tanou** ECOWAS Representative to the United Nations

### Moderator:

- **Mr. Bisi Dare**, Head Humanitarian Affairs Refugees and Displaced Peron Division, African Union Commission.

## PANEL COMPOSITION:

- **Guleid A. Artan**, Director, IGAD Climate Prediction & Applications Centre
- **Yvette Chesson-Wureh**, Establishment Coordinator for the Angie Brooks Center for Women's Empowerment and Development
- **Kennedy Osemwegie**, Director Koffi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center Accra Ghana.

## BACKGROUND MATERIAL

- **The IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre**  
<http://www.icpac.net/>
- **Angie Brooks Center for Women's Empowerment and Development**  
<http://www.angiebrookscentre.org/index.php/wsr>

- **West Africa Disaster Preparedness Initiative** [http://www.kaiptc.org/West-African-Disaster-Preparedness-Program-\(WADPP\).aspx](http://www.kaiptc.org/West-African-Disaster-Preparedness-Program-(WADPP).aspx)
- **AU Common Africa Position on Humanitarian Effectiveness** [http://www.au.int/en/sites/default/files/newsevents/workingdocuments/29543-wd-cap - simplified version - one pager.pdf](http://www.au.int/en/sites/default/files/newsevents/workingdocuments/29543-wd-cap_-_simplified_version_-_one_pager.pdf)

## CONTACT

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