

ECOSOCC  
STRATEGIC PLAN 2005-2007

# The main building blocks of the Strategic Plan

- 1) Vision, objectives, roles and added-value
- 2) Governance, Transparency and  
Accountability
- 3) Institutional development challenges of  
ECOSOCC

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**1. VISION, OBJECTIVES, ROLES AND  
ADDED-VALUE**

# The foundations of ECOSOCC

- Created by AU Constitutive Act
- Provided with Statutes specifying its mandate, composition, functions and structures
- Fully supported by the Vision and Mission of the AU :

“A peaceful, integrated and prosperous Africa

*Driven by its people*

A dynamic force in the global community”

(AU Vision Document 2004)

# ECOSOCC represents a major step forward in civil society participation

*OAU*

Restrictive OUA mandate so limited opportunities for participation

Lack of an institutional set-up for structural civil society involvement

Instrumental approach to involving civil society

*AU*

Broad AU mandate requiring civil society participation for effective implementation

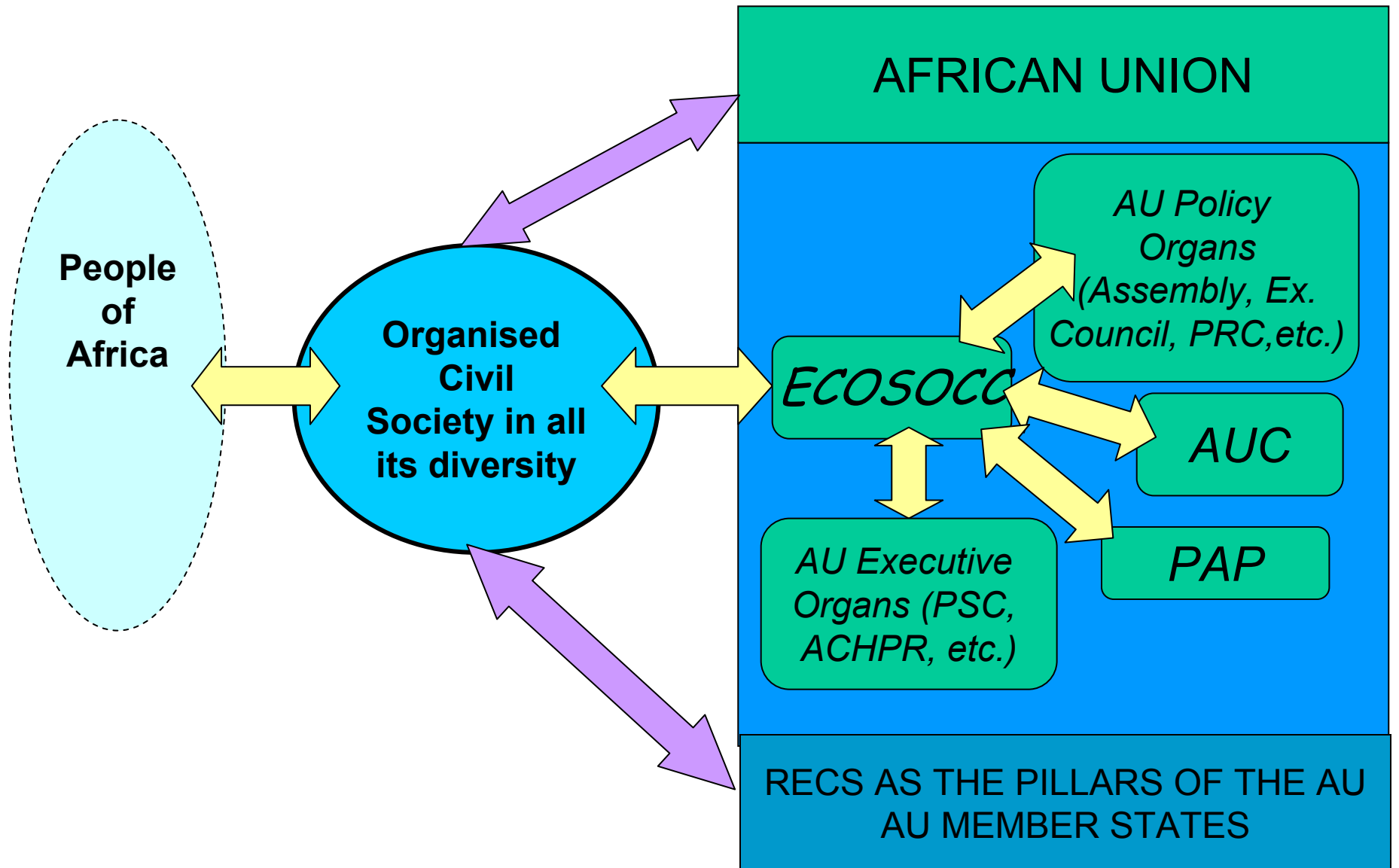
ECOSOCC created as an AU Organ for civil society engagement

Civil society in the driving seat

# The place of ECOSOCC in the overall African Union

- ❑ As an organ of the AU
- ❑ As the major (yet not exclusive) institutional framework for civil society participation in AU processes
- ❑ As a continental interface with African people and civil society

*ECOSOCC as a bridge between organised civil society and the AU*



# Actors, Constituencies and Stakeholders

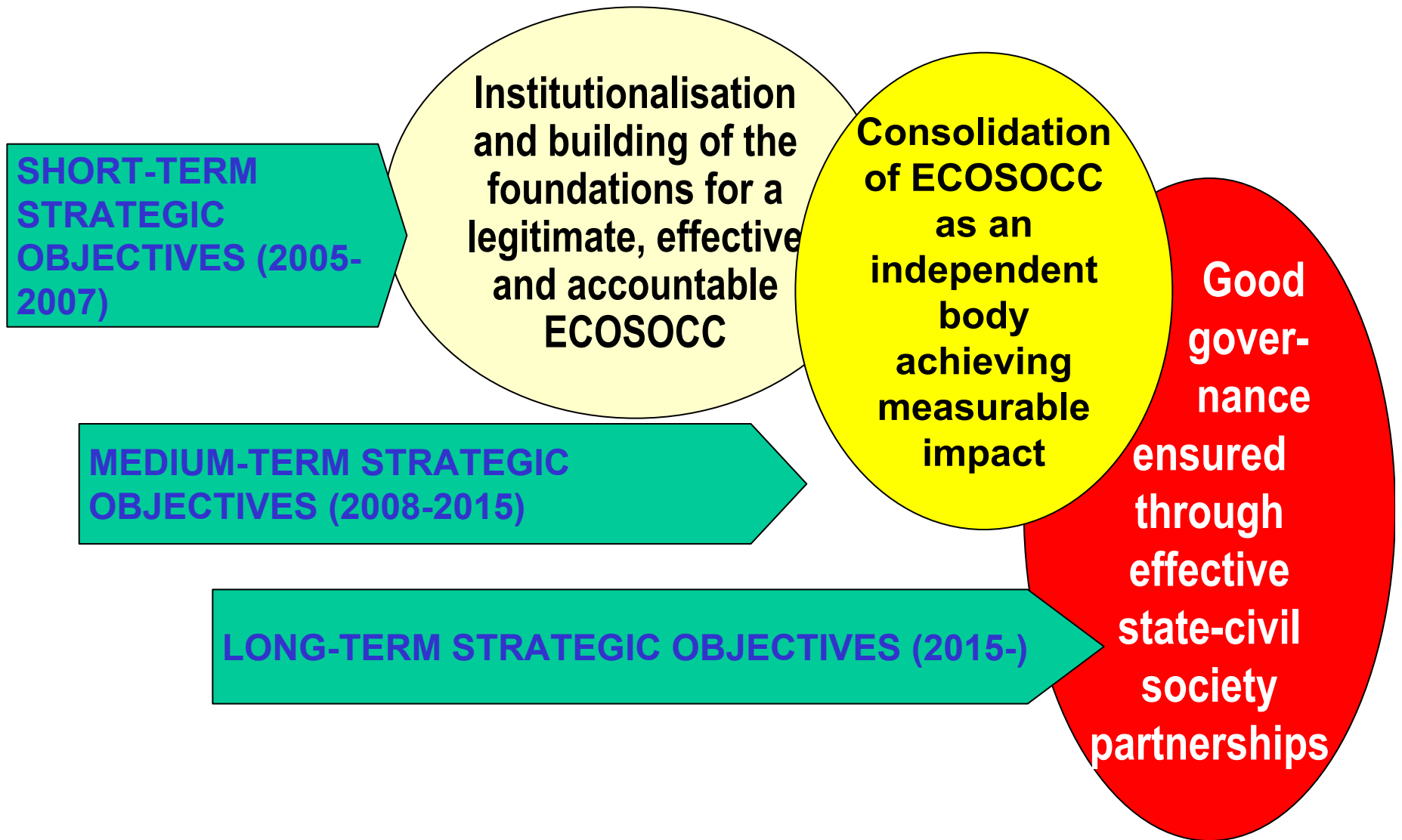
- ❑ The *Actors* of ECOSOCC are the **elected members** to the ECOSOCC General Assembly
- ❑ The *Constituencies* of ECOSOCC are **civil society** organisations that elected and gave a mandate to ECOSOCC members
- ❑ **The *Stakeholders* of ECOSOCC are :**
  - Africa's people
  - African Union Commission (including in its role as Secretariat to ECOSOCC)
  - Policy and Executive organs of the African Union
  - Regional Economic Communities
  - Member states
  - Development partners

# ECOSOCC Vision

*A well-organised, autonomous, transparent and accountable civil society at continental level that can contribute to:*

- ❑ Harnessing the potential of African people and civil society to raise voices and defend their interests in the AU
- ❑ Building a people's driven and responsive AU
- ❑ Achieving the mission of the AU through dialogue and partnerships
- ❑ Promoting a culture of good governance, democratic principles and institutions, human rights as well as social justice
- ❑ Charting Africa's future in a perspective of continental integration

# Strategic objectives of ECOSOCC



# Values & principles

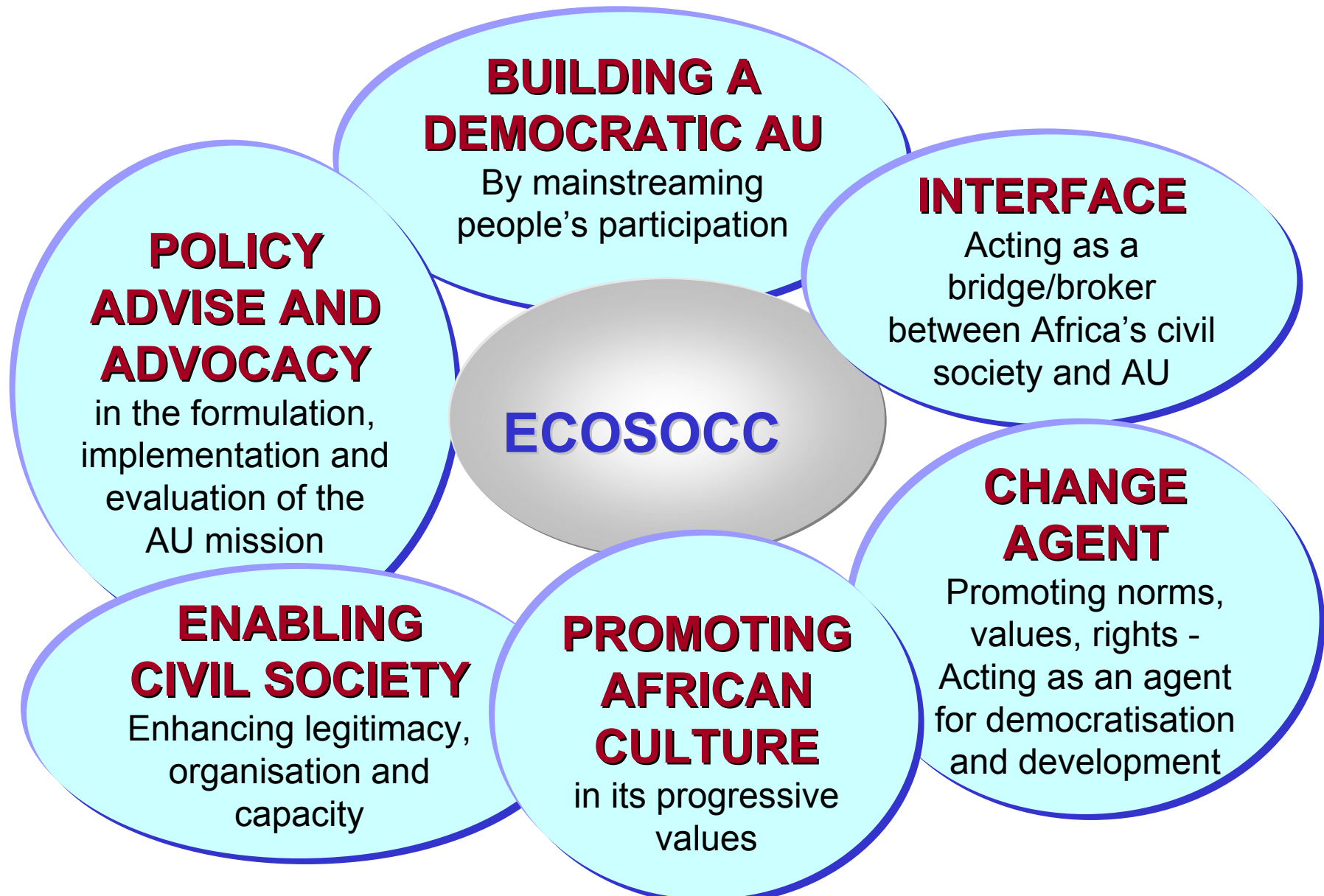
## Values

- Good governance, accountability, transparency, shared responsibility, unity in diversity, gender equality, tolerance, culture of voluntarism

## Principles

- **Inclusiveness** (i.e. all segments of civil society, including women and youth)
- **Interactivity** with constituencies / two way process : enabling CSOs to feed the policy discussions and to build links among themselves and ensuring feed-back
- **Result oriented approach** with a view to deliver relevant services to both the AU and the ECOSOCC constituencies
- Systematic **linkages** with the AU strategic plan and programmes
- **Subsidiarity** or the need for ECOSOCC to concentrate on areas where it has a comparative advantage (as a Panafrican structure) and to complement the work of other institutions and actors

## *KEY ROLES OF THE ECOSOCC*



# What is the added-value of ECOSOCC?

- Connecting the people of Africa to the AU
- Providing a democratic foundation and legitimacy to the AU and its Member States
- Broadening the space for people's participation at all levels of governance in Africa
- Injecting the values, knowledge and ideas of African civil society into AU policy processes
- Monitoring, evaluation and democratic feedback on results achieved by AU

# Understanding ECOSOCC's operating environment

- ❑ Political, social and cultural realities in the African continent
- ❑ The nature and role of ECOSOCC as an advisory body of the AU
- ❑ Opportunities

# The political, social and cultural environment

Limits: mid and long-term constraints linked to the nature of the operating environment in Africa

- **Fragile** political, social, cultural and institutional environment (poverty, HIV/AIDS, marginalisation of)
- **Fragile democratic culture** (top-down approaches)
- Level of **mistrust** between states and civil society: the beginning of a partnership
- A **rapidly growing** civil society that is not always legitimate and not fully prepared to assume its role and responsibilities

# Nature and role of ECOSOCC as an advisory organ to the AU

- ECOSOCC has an advisory role to play, NOT a decision-making role in AU policy processes
- ECOSOCC is an organ of the AU, so all its activities need to be framed and integrated into overall AU system
- ECOSOCC faces a number of **short and medium term limitations** as an organisation at the inception phase of institution building (e.g. limited level of **autonomy**; absence of predictable and sustainable **financial** resources and **capacity constraints** at all levels)
- Yet an advisory body like ECOSOCC can make a difference if it can deliver high quality products and services

# Opportunities

- Global advance of participatory development and rights-based approaches
- Strong demands for democracy and good governance across Africa
- Revived spirit of pan-African and regional integration
- Growing recognition of need for public-private partnerships (e.g. in AU Constitutive Act)
- The governance imperative in building new partnerships with donor community

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## **2. GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

*Translating ECOSOCC values into practice*

# Governance

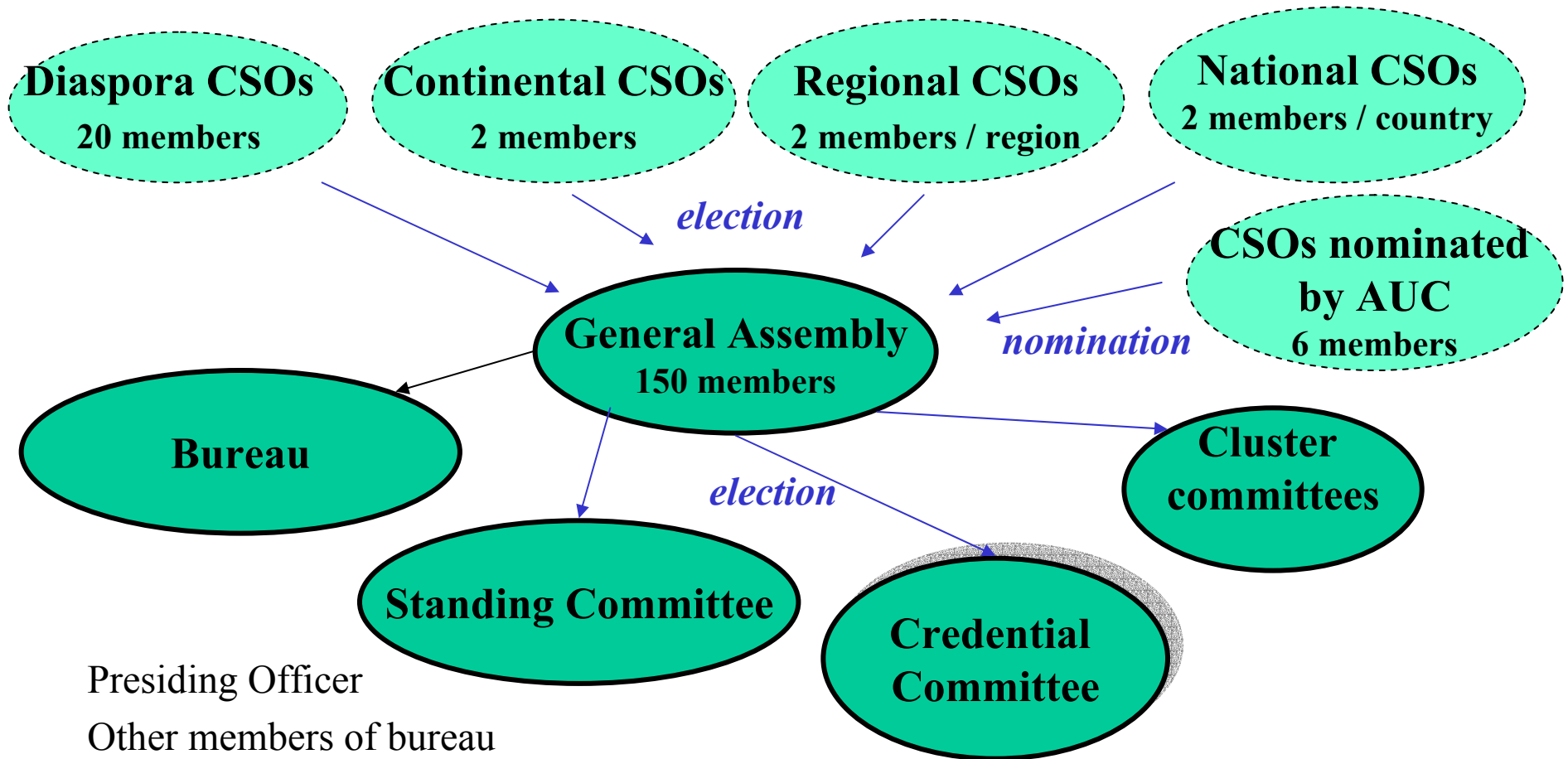
*How do you ensure that people's voices can be responded to by decision makers?*

- Preaching this principle within the AU
- Expecting good governance from national political organs : governments, Parliaments...  
=> ECOSOCC should apply it first to itself

# Governance

- Risks:
  - A top down approach in the selection process
  - ECOSOCC members coming with their own agenda
  - National ECOSOCC members defending national interests
- Challenges :
  - Ensuring envisaged ratio of youth and women participation
  - Defining rules of engagement for ECOSOCC members and CSOs:
  - Eligibility requirements clarified in the Statutes
  - CSOs defending collective interest

# ECOSOCC internal organs



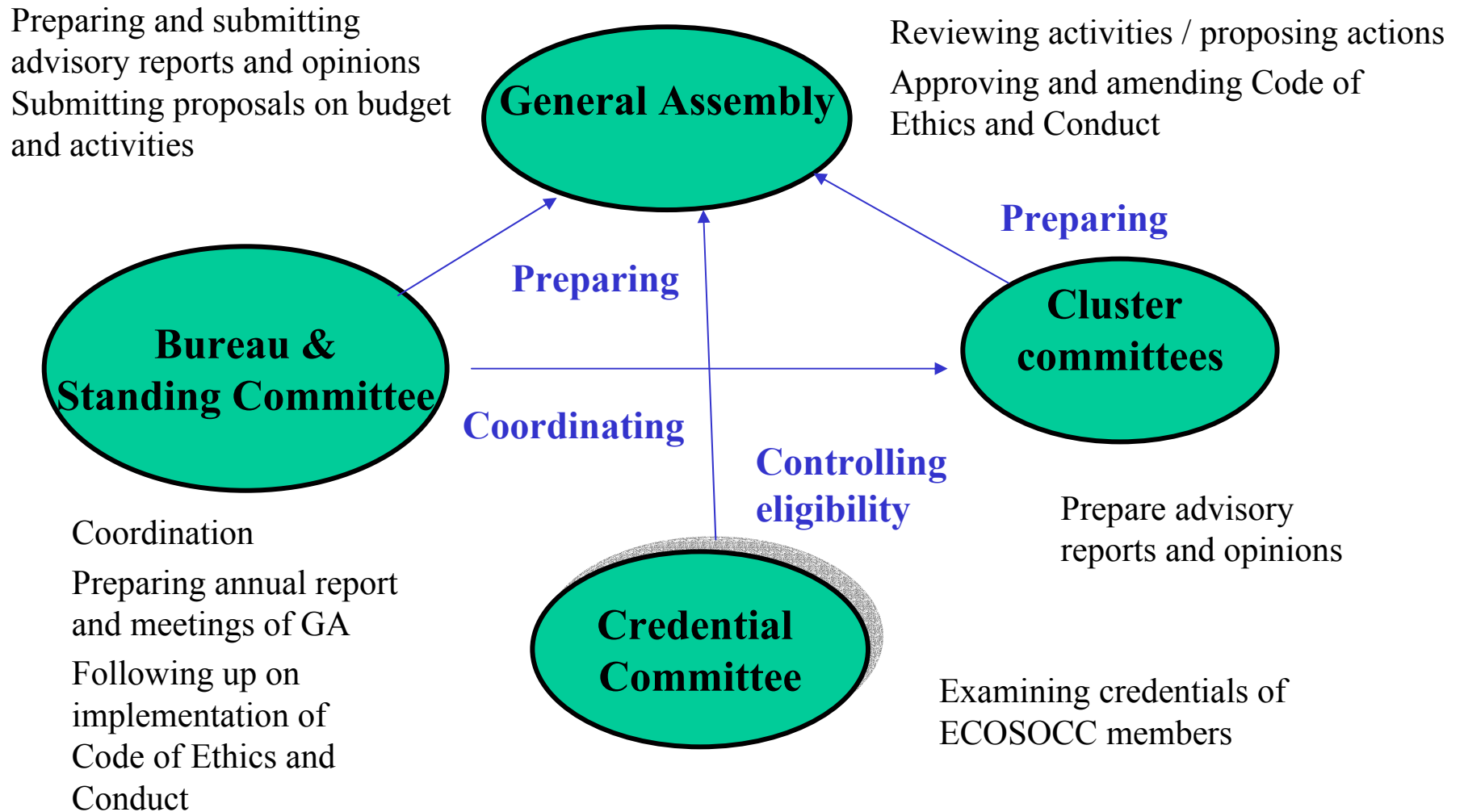
Presiding Officer

Other members of bureau

Chairpersons of cluster  
committees

2 AUC representatives

# Role of the ECOSOCC organs



# Transparency

*A transparent consultation process will ensure the legitimacy of ECOSOCC members*

- Consultation should be as wide as possible
- Involvement of consensual and neutral players within the region: Credentials Committee, Bureau members, AUC, etc.
- Establishment of a common methodology allowing quality control
- Clear definition of roles and responsibilities of every actor in the process

# Transparency

## *Building blocks for a transparent management of ECOSOCC activities*

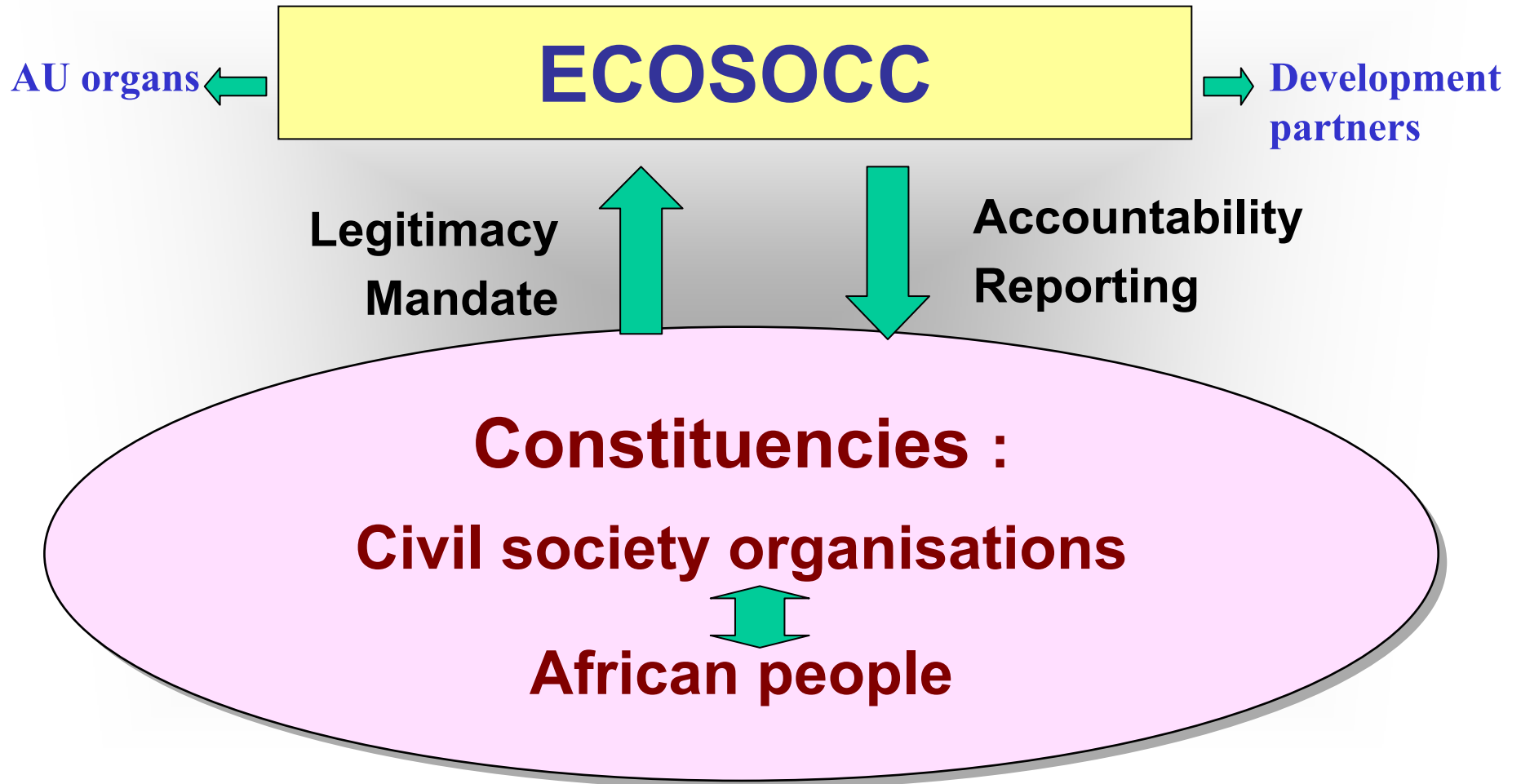
### Existing mechanisms foreseen in the Statutes

- Roles of ECOSOCC organs defined in Statues
- Publication of all programmes, decisions, minutes, list of members, reports on selection process and activities,...
- Definition of a Code of Ethics and conducts

### Governance issues to be clarified by ECOSOCC

- Possibility of having observers, public hearings
- Reflection on the mandate of ECOSOCC members in the statutes in view of ECOSOCC values :
  - Clarification on identity of ECOSOCC decision making body
  - Limitation to the number of mandates than can be held by the same CSO

# Accountability chain



# Accountability

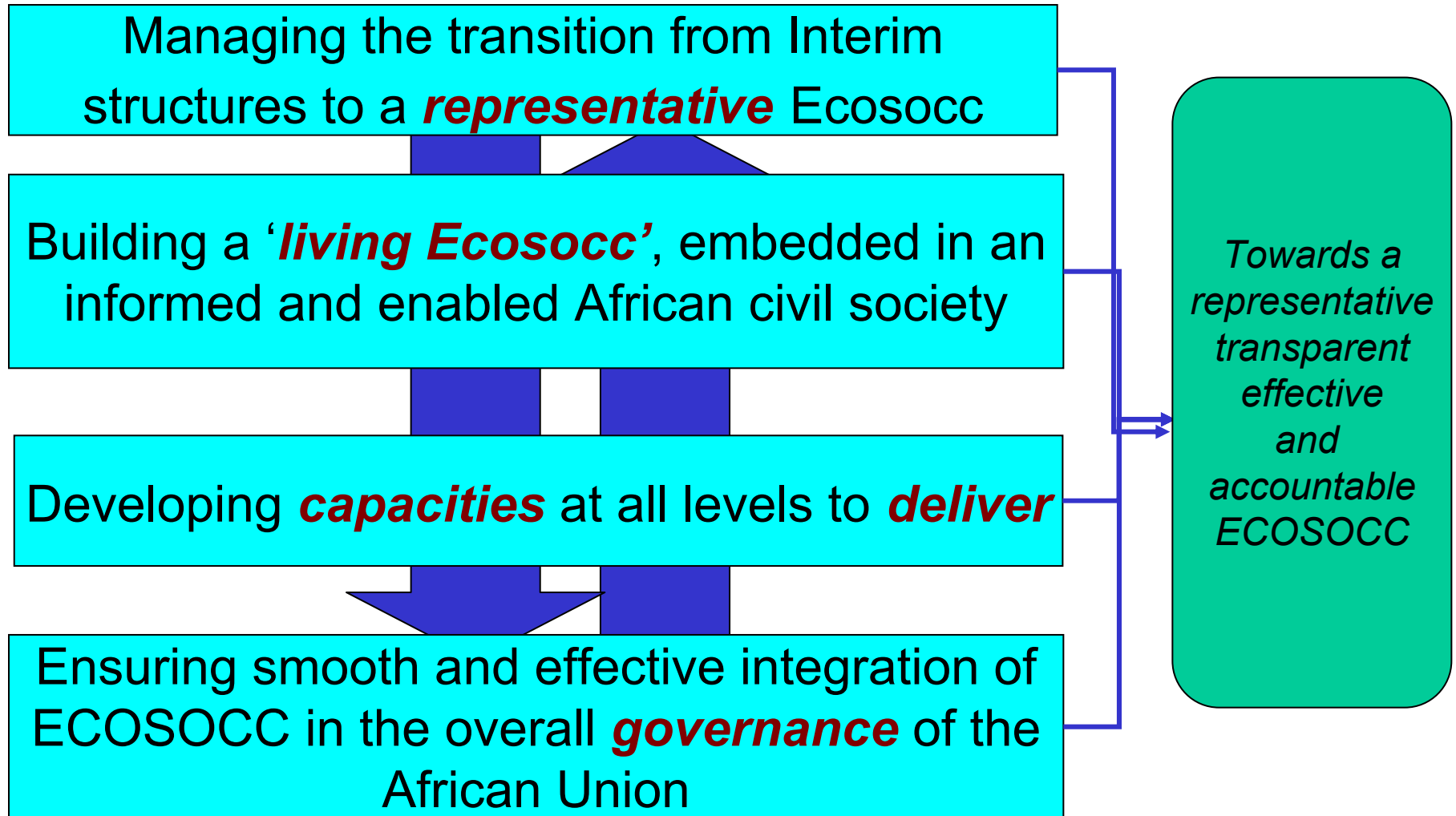
## What does it mean in practice?

- Identifying ECOSOCC members responsible for the monitoring of its activities and the analysis of the performance of the body on the basis of result indicators
- Annual activity report of ECOSOCC presented to General Assembly
- ECOSOCC members systematically integrating reporting / feedback on ECOSOCC activities into their own reporting
- Financial accountability :
  - financial reporting according to AU procedures
  - Audited by responsible policy organs

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**3. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
CHALLENGES OF ECOSOCC**

## *Four inter-related institutional challenges for ECOSOCC*



*The transition to a properly elected and truly representative ECOSOCC will be the first CRITICAL TEST of 'good governance' and institutional credibility*

**Launch situation  
(March 2005)**

**Interim ECOSOCC**

**'selected' members,  
for limited duration  
(impaired  
legitimacy)**

**provisional  
mandate**

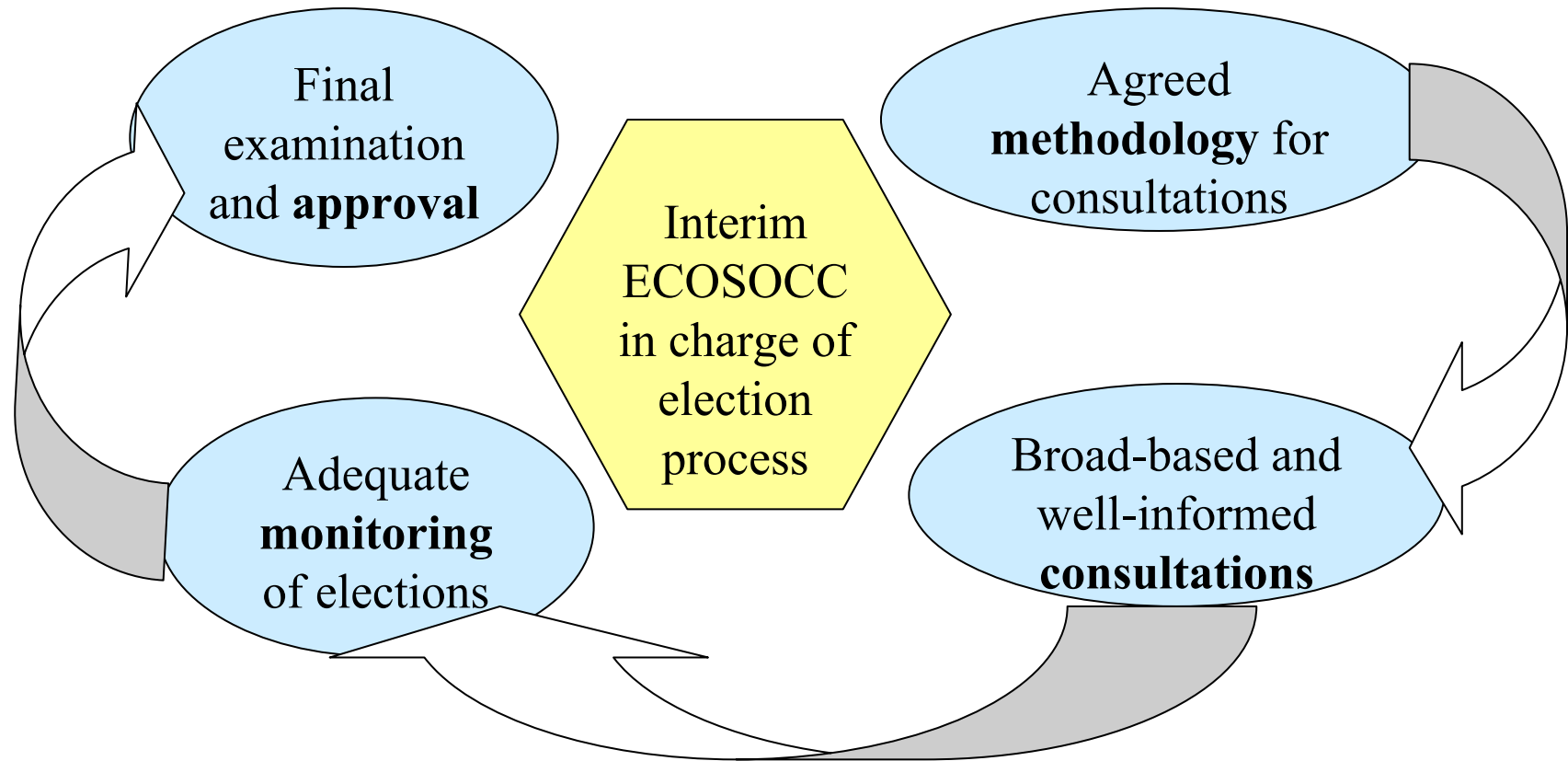
**Formal establishment  
(March 2007)**

**Representative  
ECOSOCC**

**'elected' members  
with legitimacy and  
fixed term**

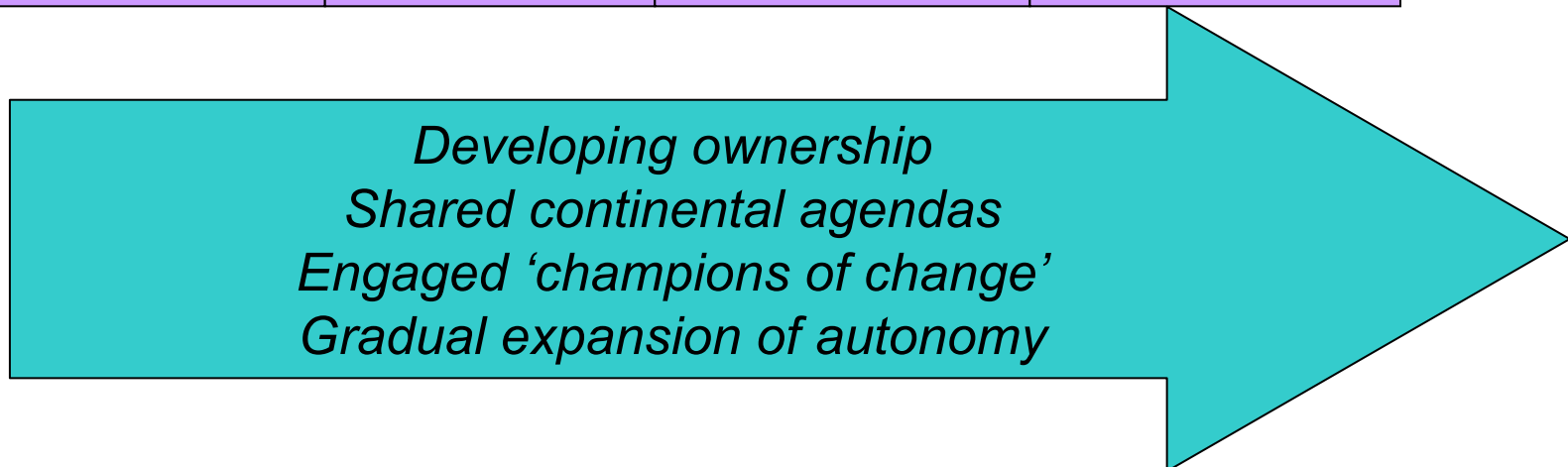
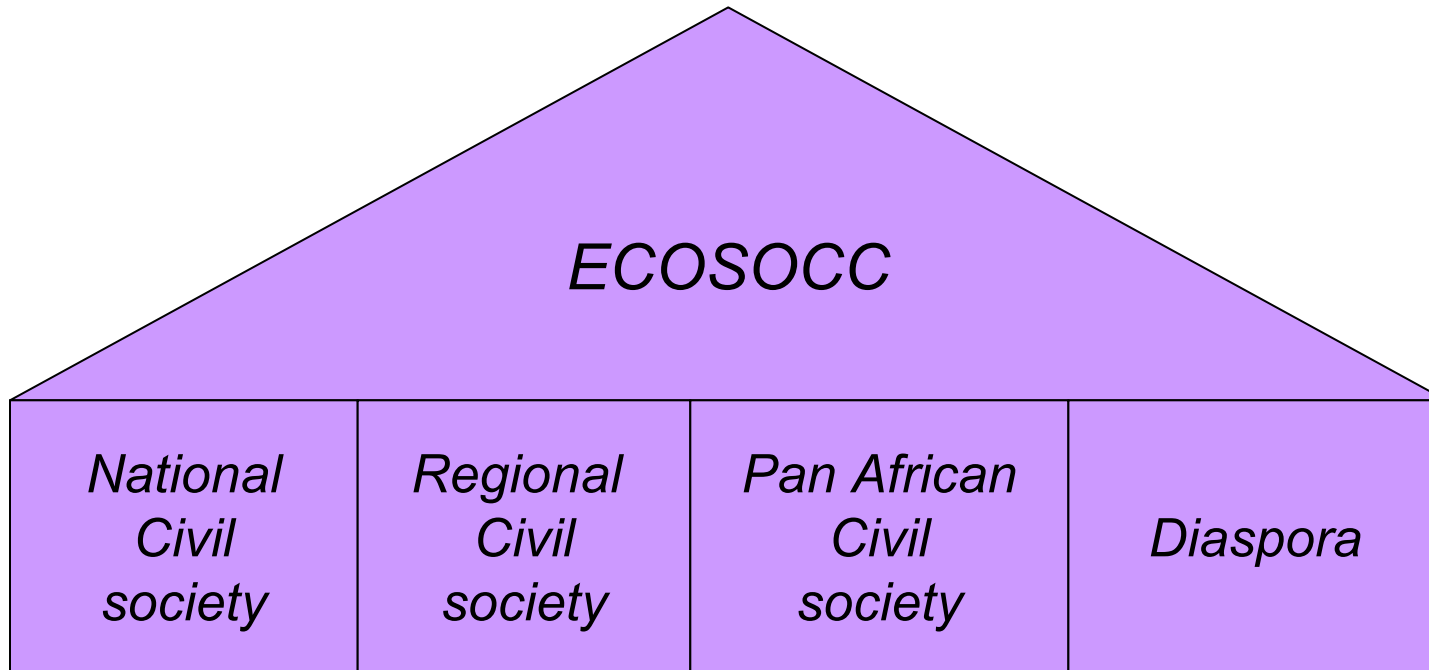
**Full-fledged mandate  
by civil society**

## *Ensuring a transparent election process*

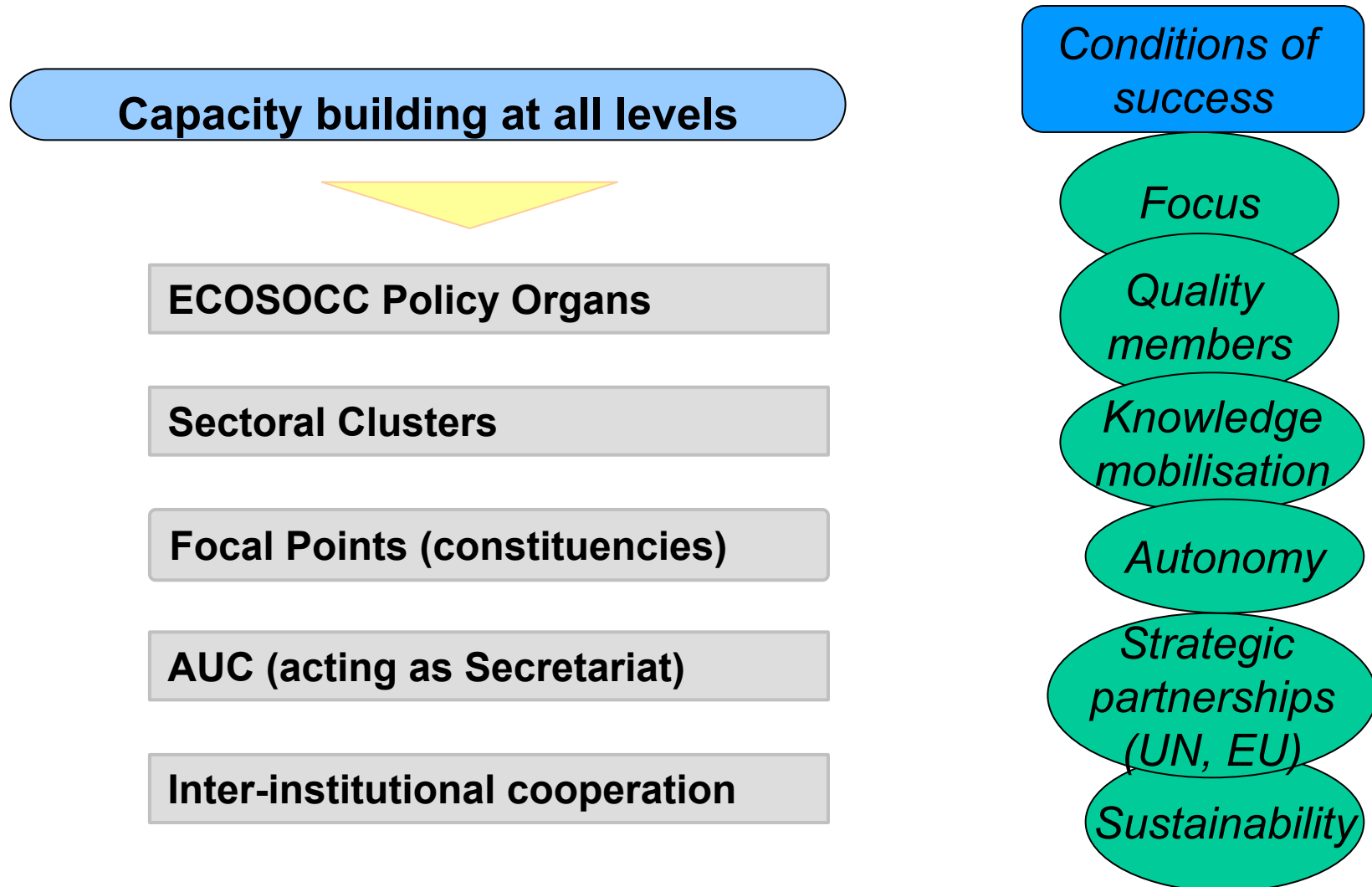


*For each step, appropriate implementation modalities have to be defined*

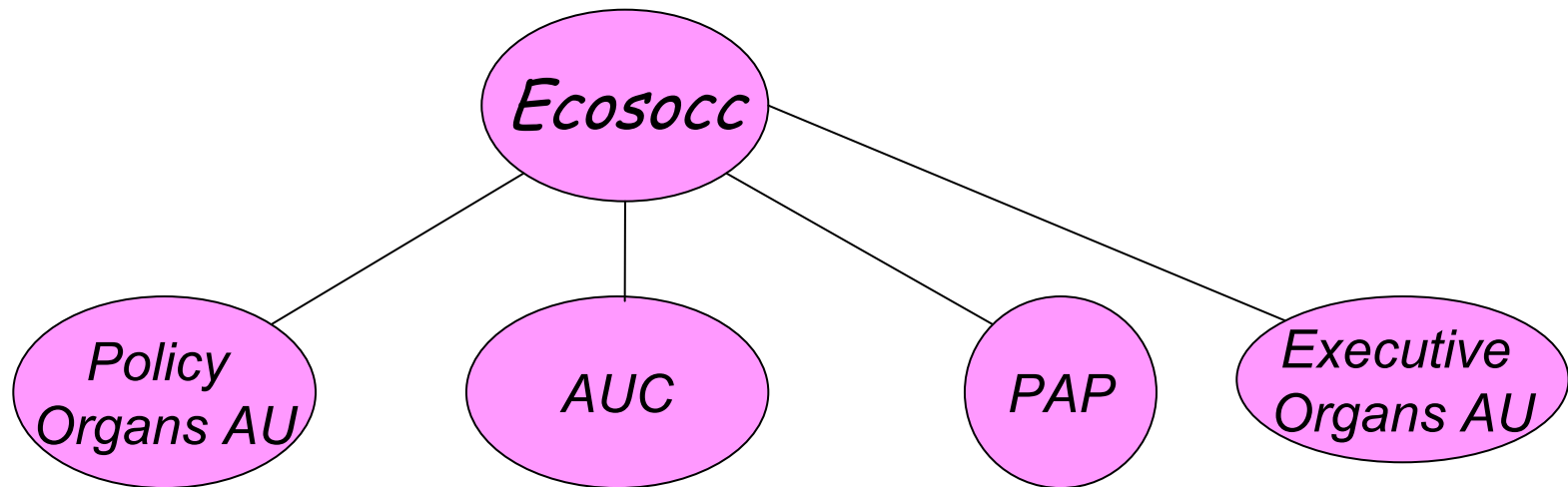
# ***BUILDING A 'LIVING' ECOSOCC***



## *Developing capacity to deliver and achieve impact*



## *Effective integration of ECOSOCC in the governance of the African Union*



*Participating in the AU institutional transformation/governance process*  
*Clarifying role division (e.g. with PAP)*  
*Institutionalising programmatic linkages with AUC*  
*Agreeing cooperation agreements with other AU organs*