

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

**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

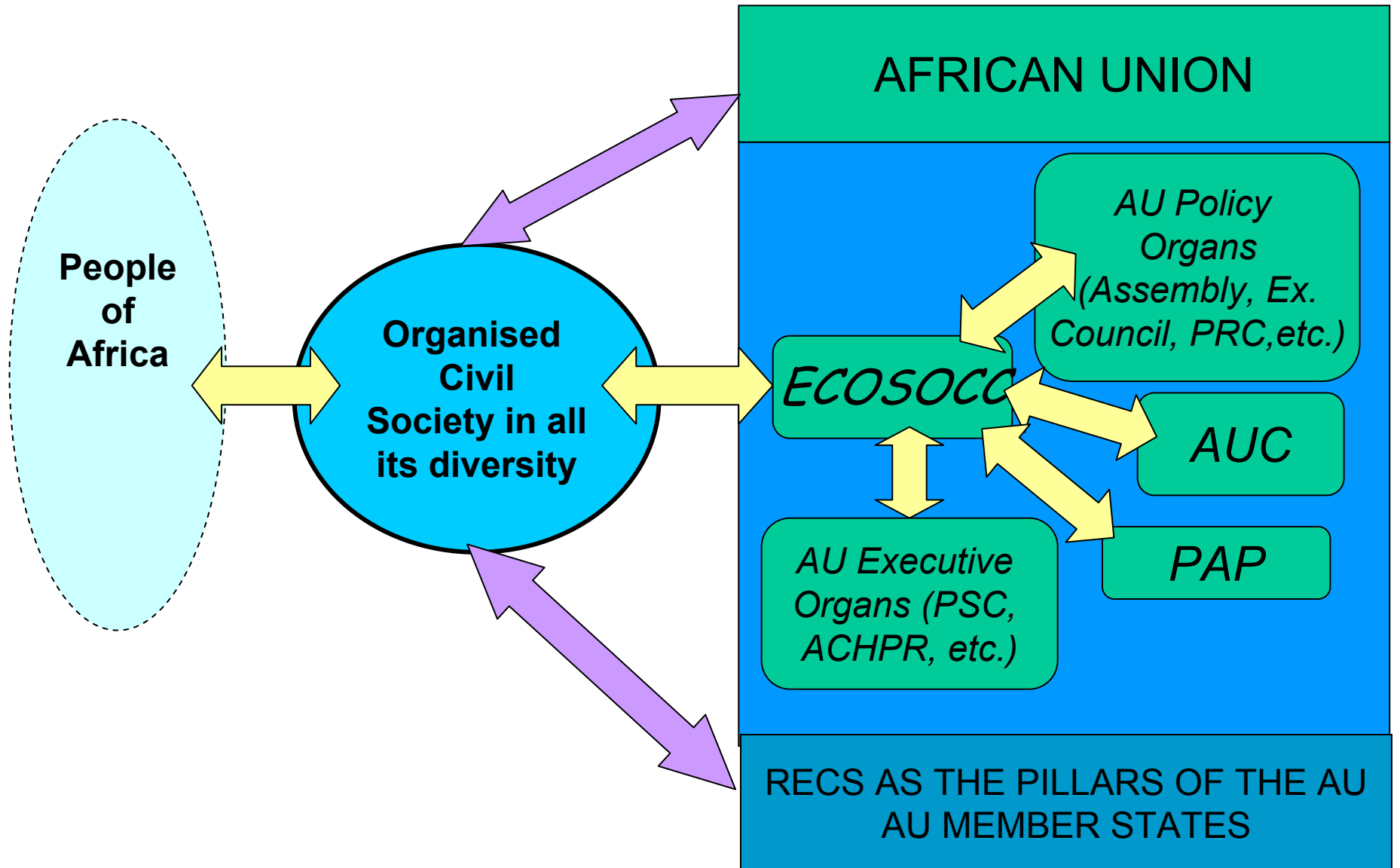
ECOSOCC created as an AU Organ for civil society engagement

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

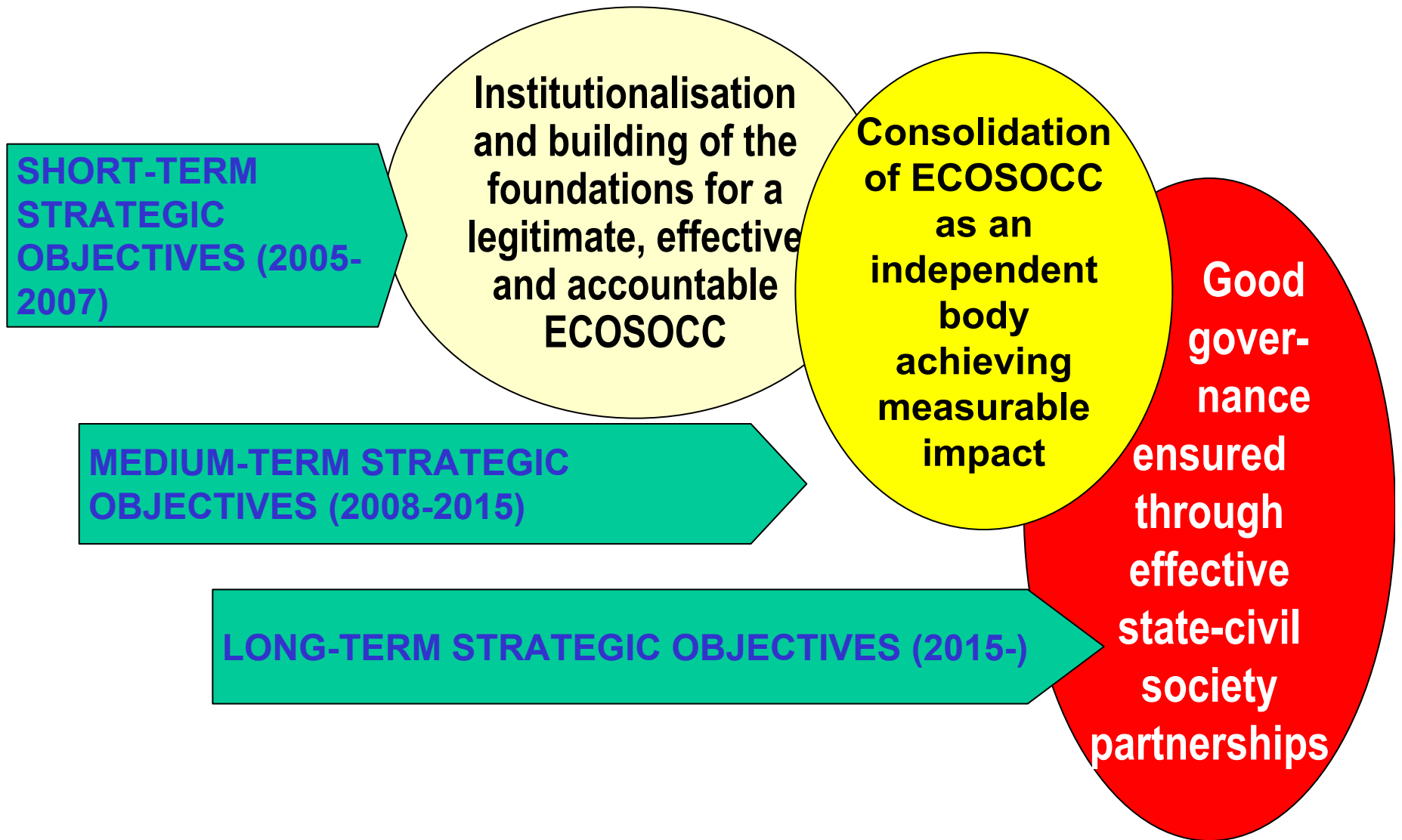
- ❑ The *Actors* of ECOSOCC are the **elected members** to the ECOSOCC General Assembly
- ❑ The *Constituencies* of ECOSOCC are **civil society** organisations that elected and gave a mandate to ECOSOCC members
- ❑ **The *Stakeholders* of ECOSOCC are :**
 - Africa's people
 - African Union Commission (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

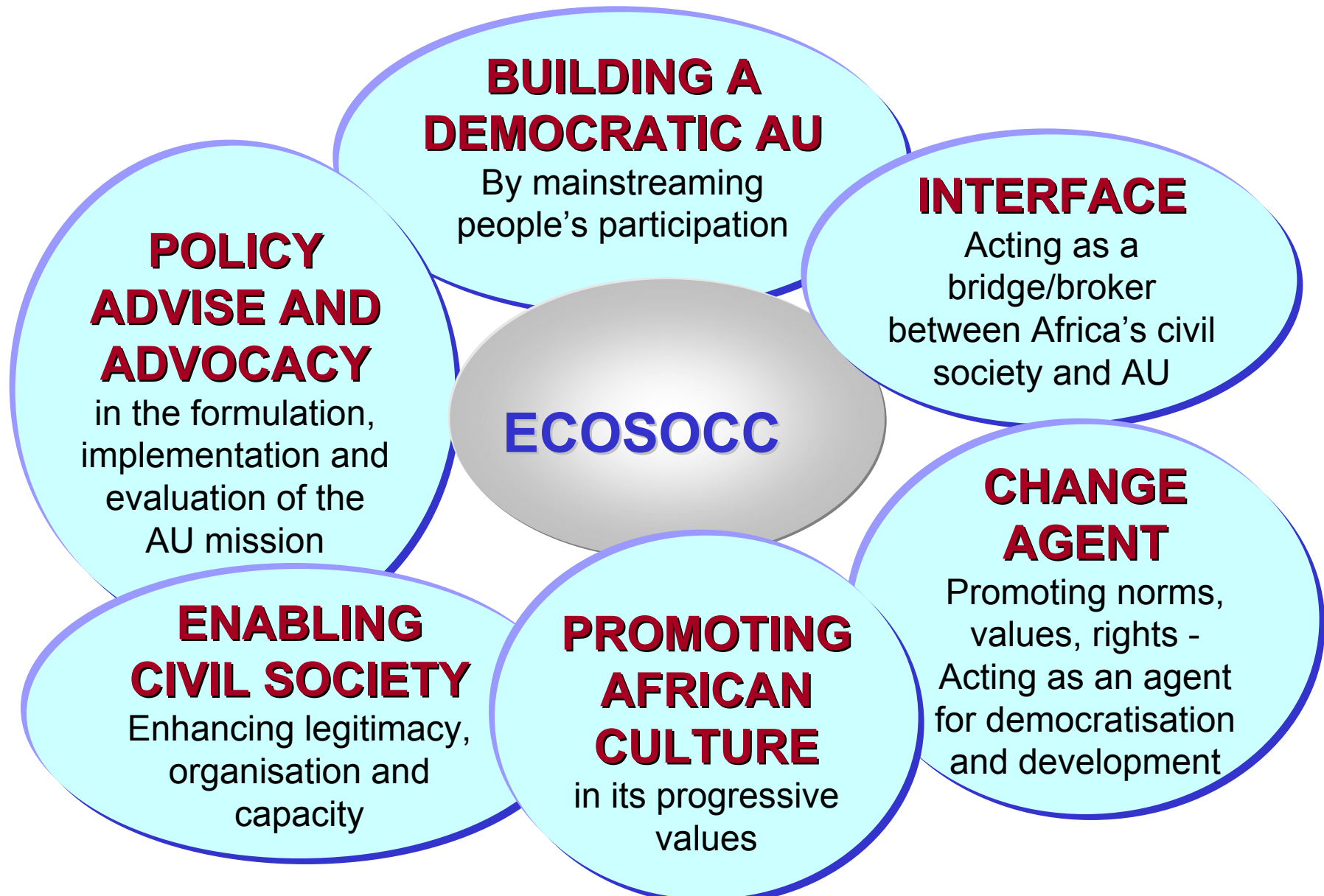
Values

- 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

2. GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Translating ECOSOCC values into practice

Governance

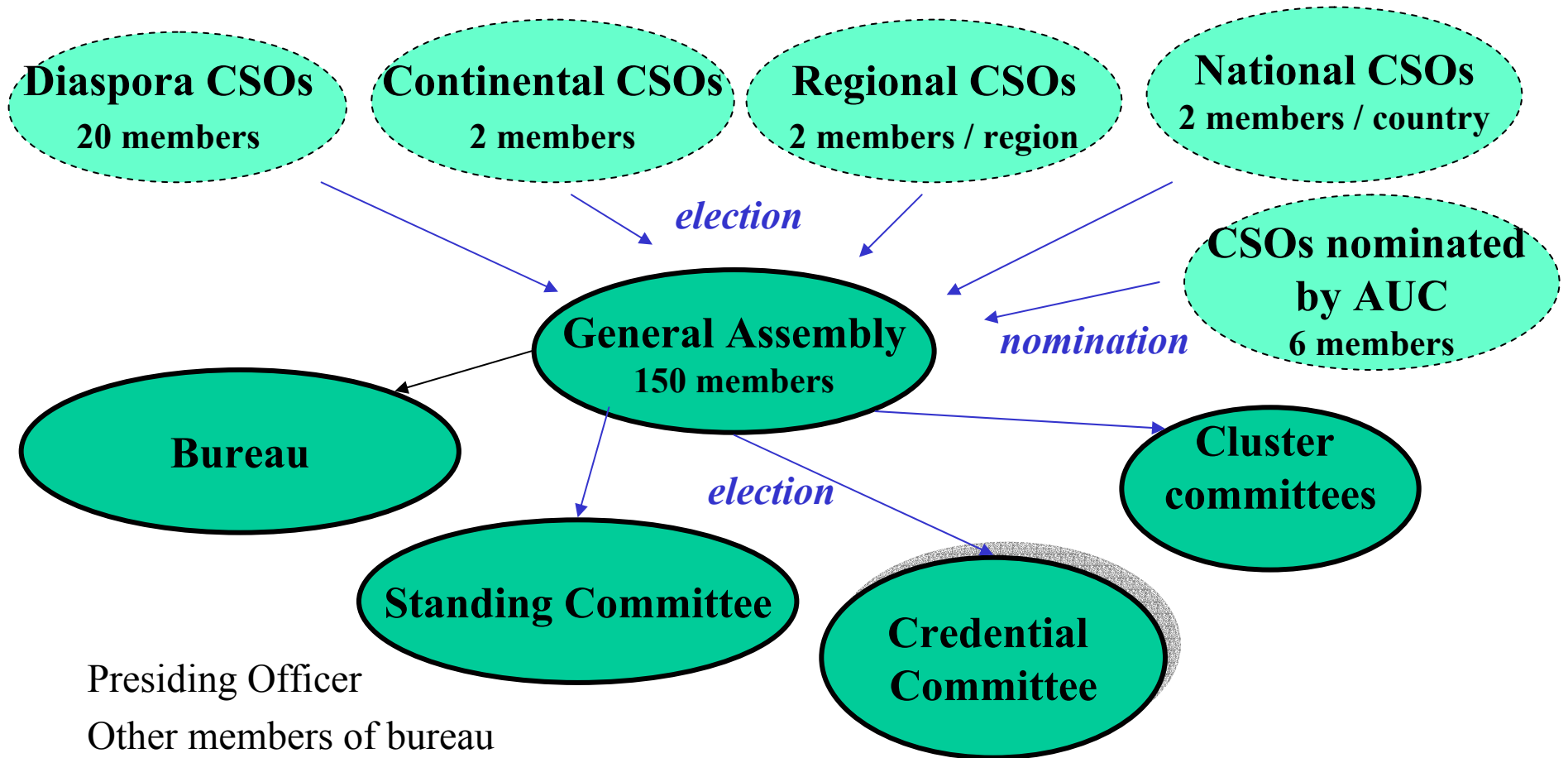
How do you ensure that people's voices can be responded to by decision makers?

- 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



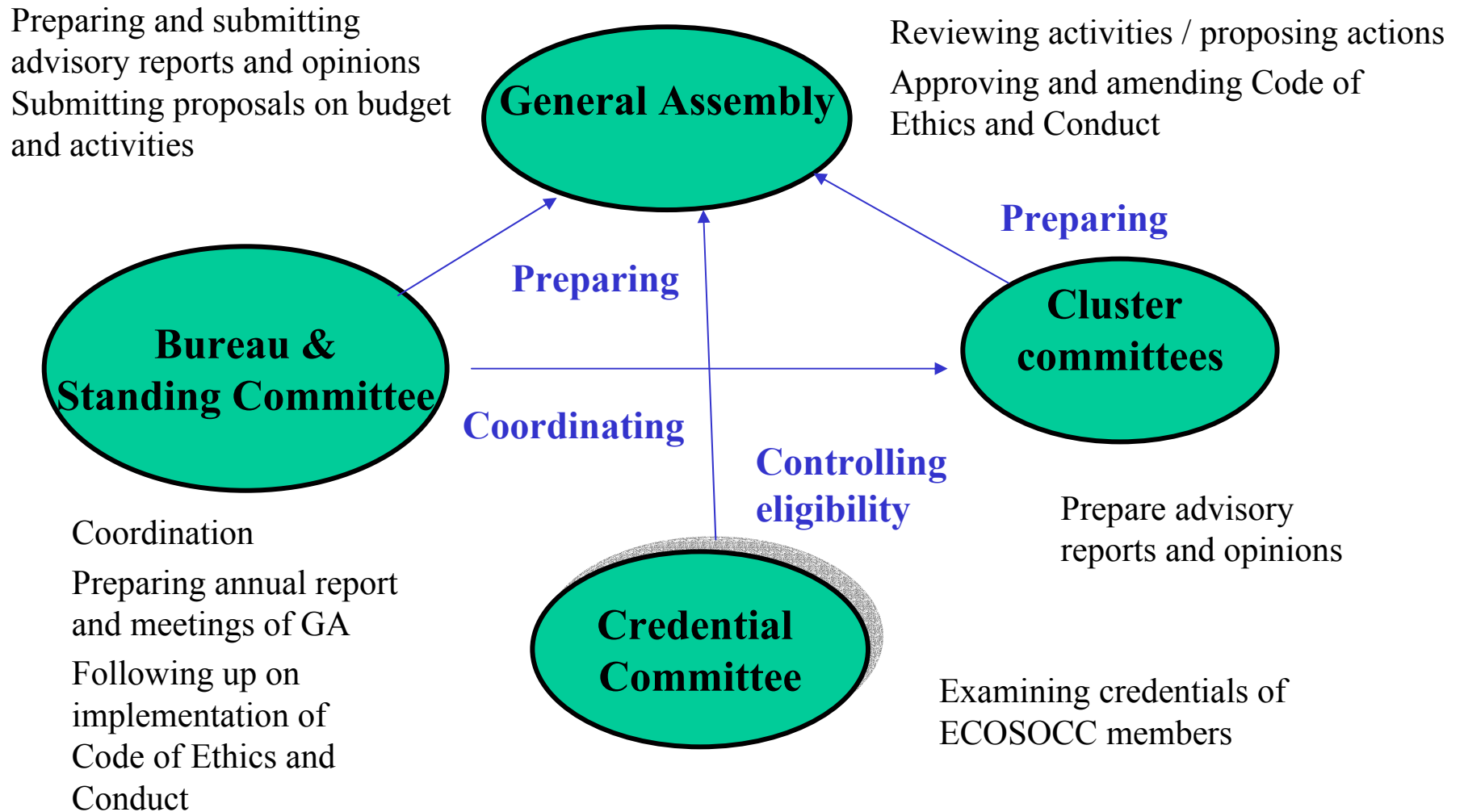
Presiding Officer

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

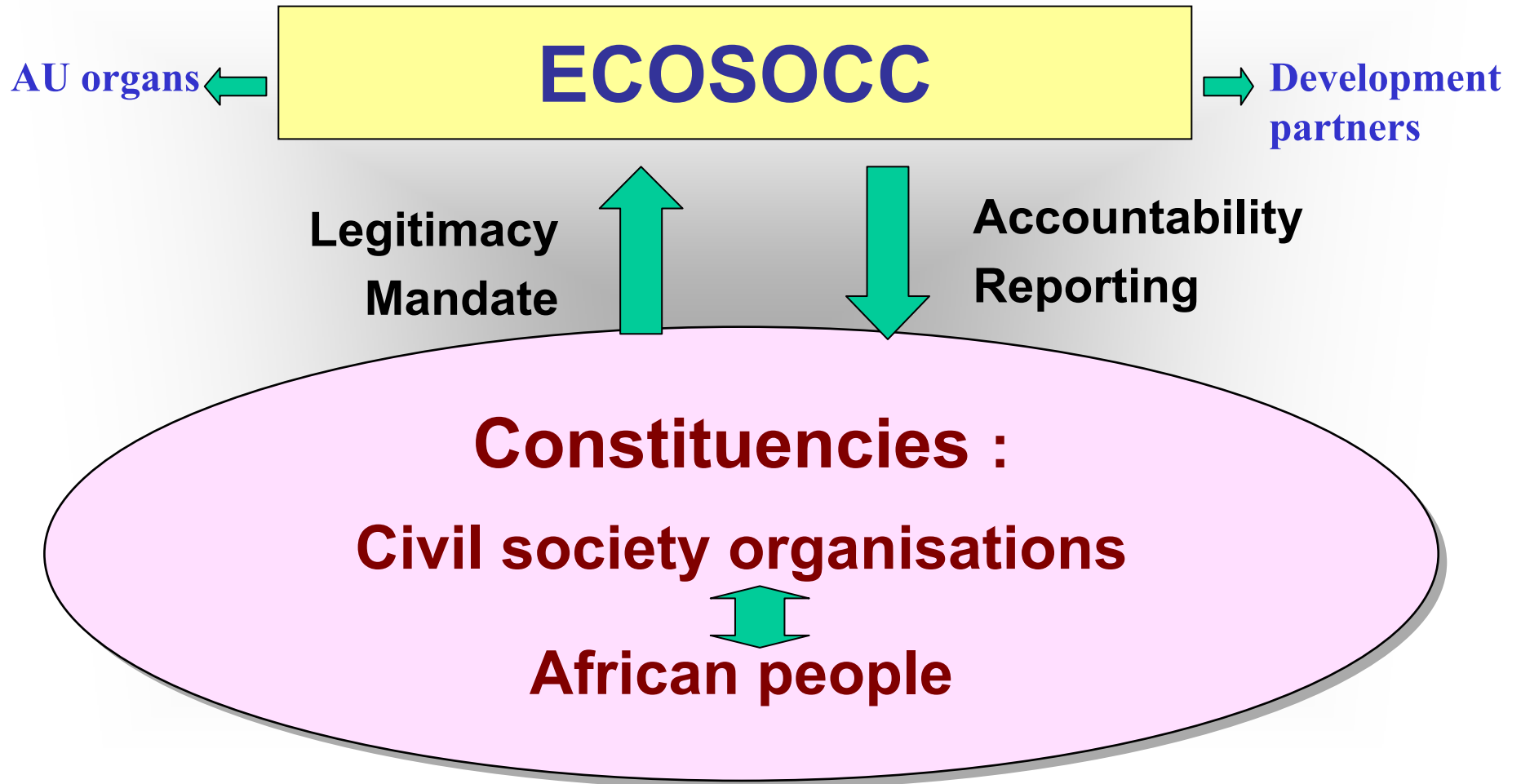
Existing mechanisms foreseen in the Statutes

- 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



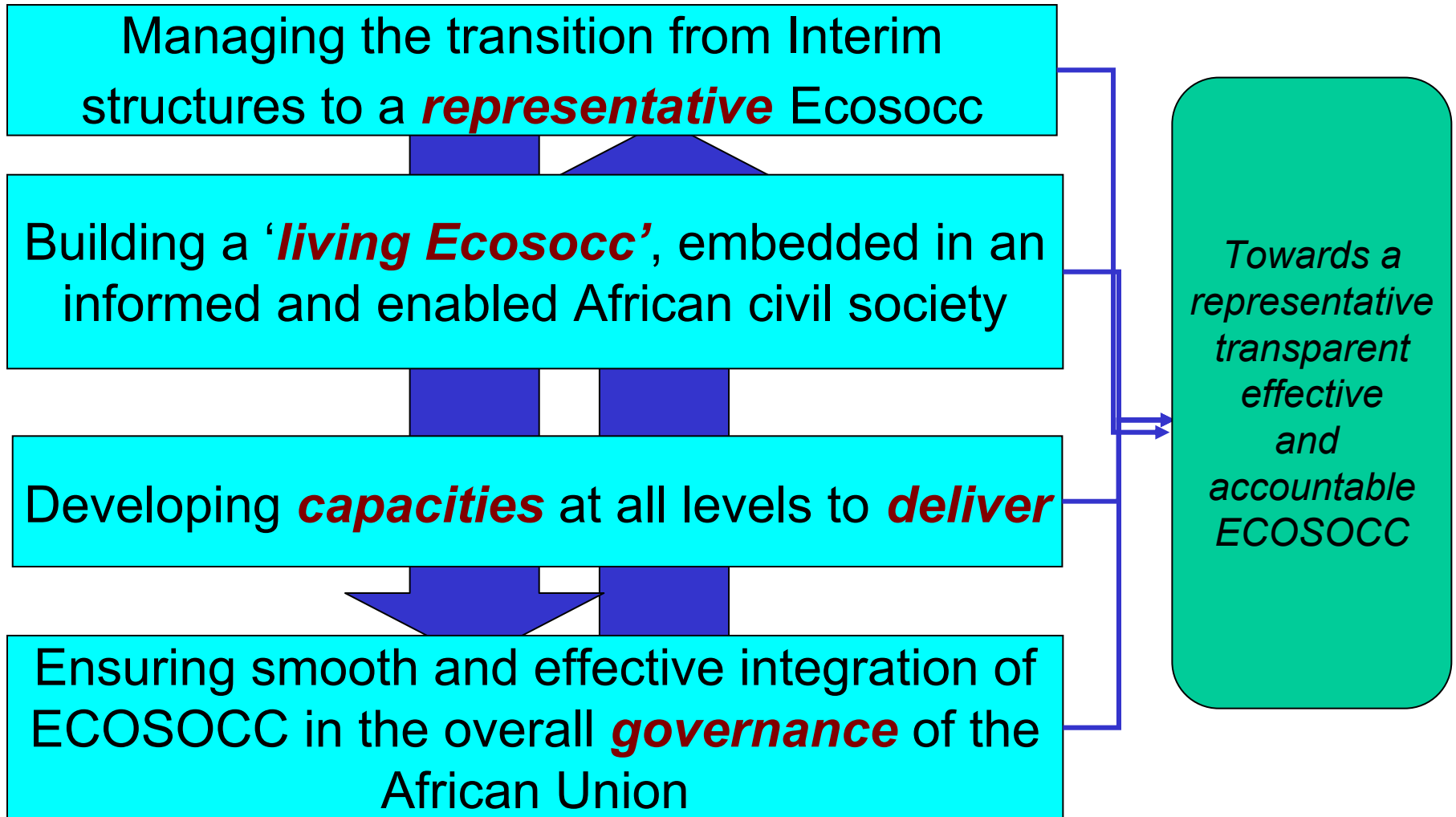
Accountability

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

**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**

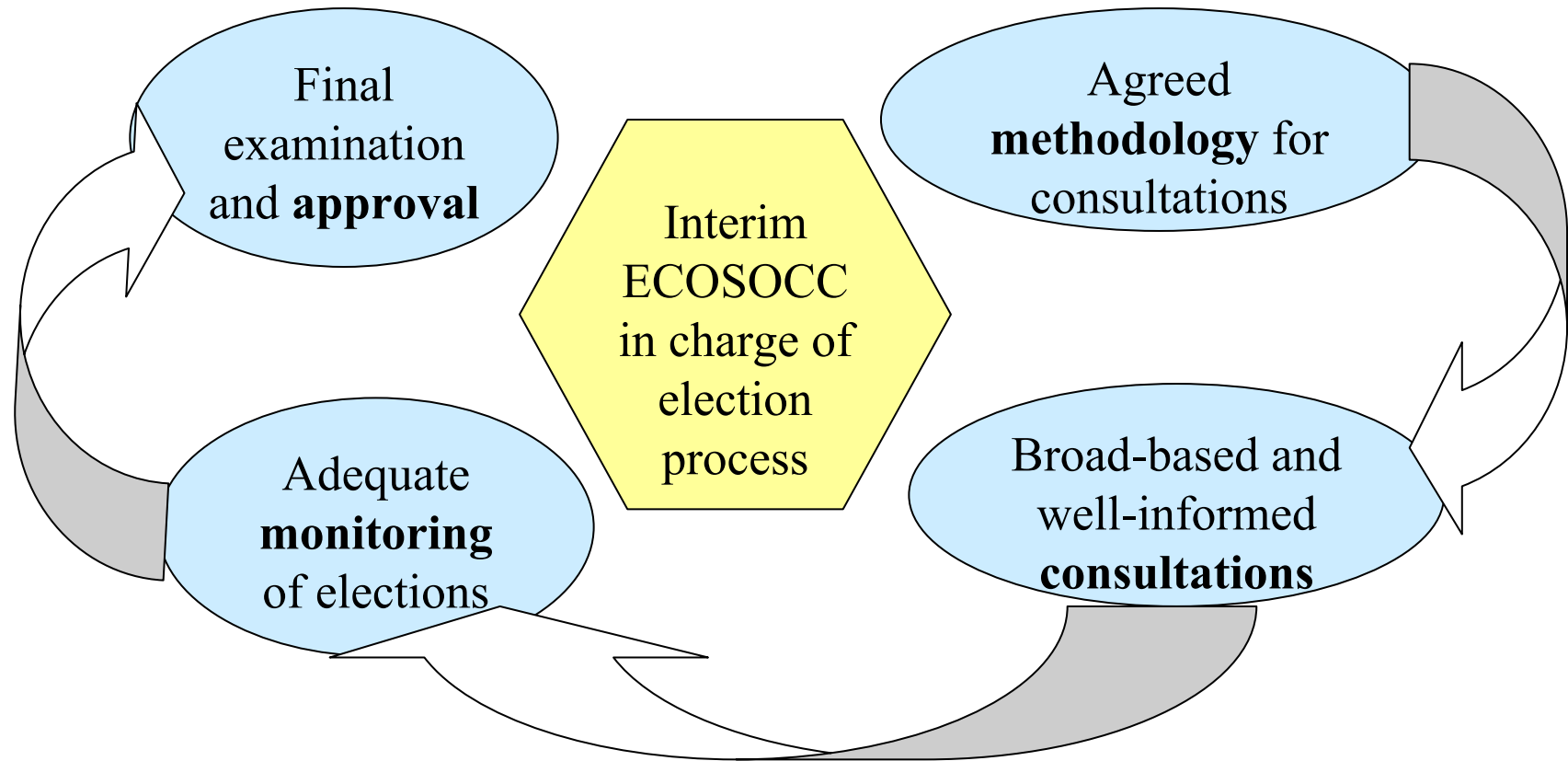
**Formal establishment
(March 2007)**

**Representative
ECOSOCC**

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

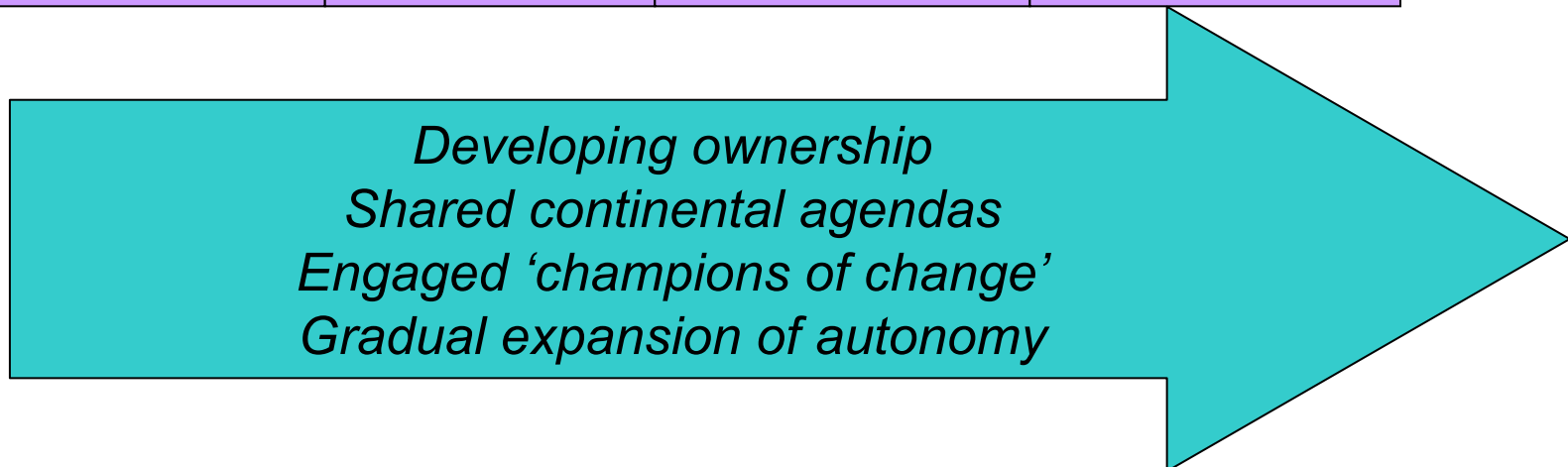
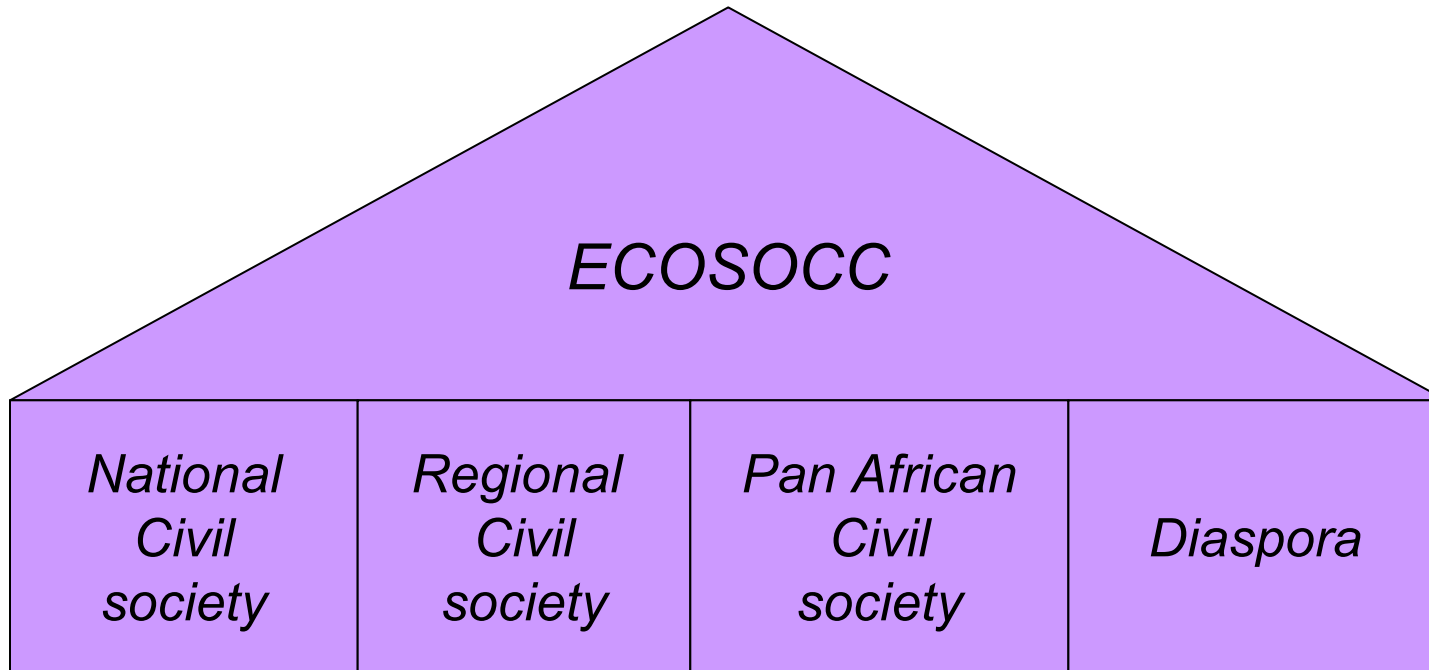
**Full-fledged mandate
by civil society**

Ensuring a transparent election process

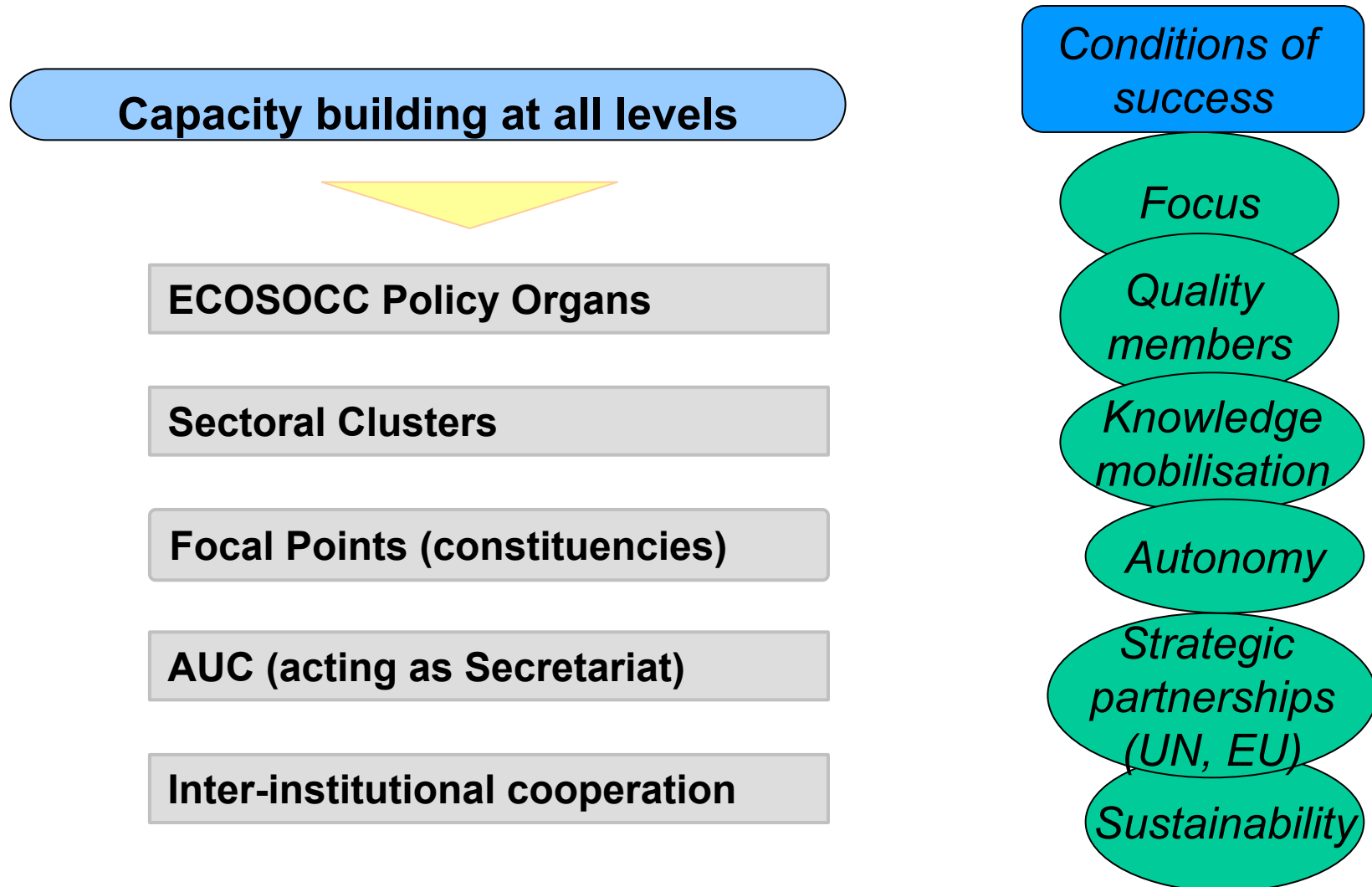


For each step, appropriate implementation modalities have to be defined

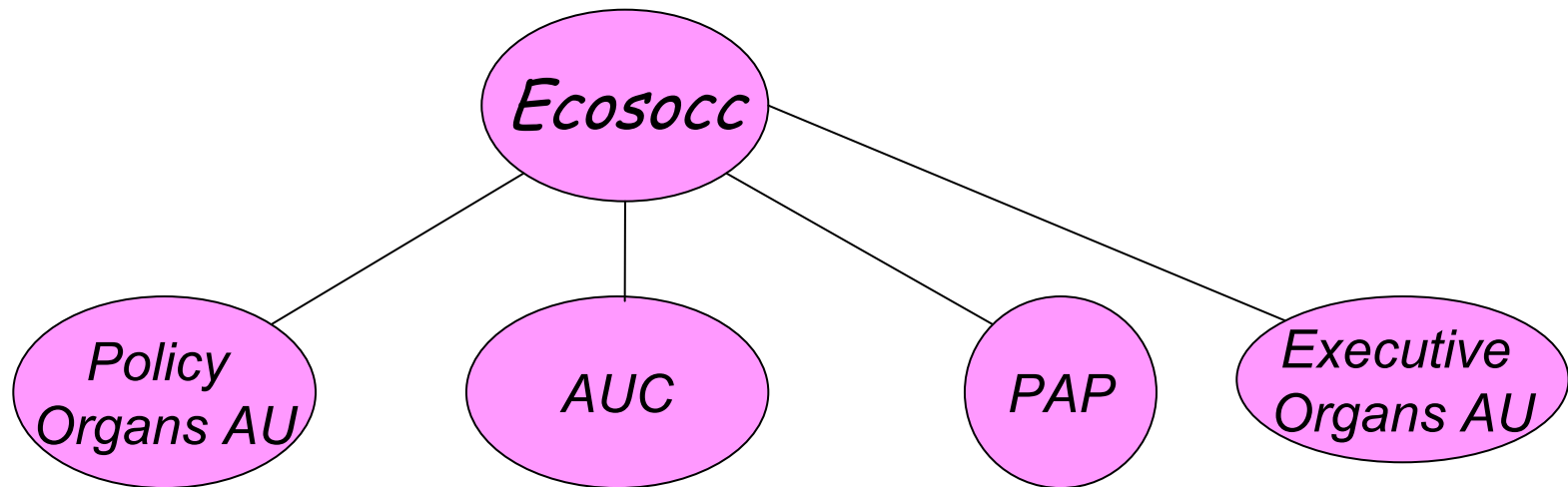
BUILDING A 'LIVING' ECOSOCC



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