



**Workshop of Senior Officials of AU Member States and RECs to
validate the Draft Report of the Evaluation of the 2006
Ouagadougou Plan of Action on the Prevention of Trafficking and
Smuggling of Persons, especially Women and Children in Africa.**

**Kampala, Uganda
20-21 March, 2019.**

Concept Note

1. Background to the meeting

Human trafficking and smuggling is one of the worst forms of human rights violations that promotes exploitation of the victims. The perpetrators use different methods to achieve their mission, including deception, fraud, coercion and sometime force. Perpetrators of human trafficking use violence, physical and psychological abuse of their victims to keep them in constant fear and in control¹. Victims of this crime undergo untold exploitation by their perpetrators. They face sexual exploitation and forced labor, working in different low-level jobs like construction, domestic workers, agriculture and manufacturing, among others².

While this crime of gigantic proportions has posed serious challenges to many countries in terms of prevention and protection of victims, the international community has achieved

¹https://www.unodc.org/documents/westandcentralafrica//UNODC_Regional_Strategy_for_Combating_TIP_SOM_West_and_Central_Africa_2015-2020.pdf.

²https://www.unodc.org/documents/westandcentralafrica//UNODC_Regional_Strategy_for_Combating_TIP_SOM_West_and_Central_Africa_2015-2020.pdf

tremendous progress in addressing this issue globally. There are several international and regional legal and policy instruments that are aimed at building the capacity of states to effectively address and prevent the trafficking and smuggling of persons, especially women and children. These instruments include The UN Convention against the Transnational Organised Crime and its Protocols to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking and smuggling in persons, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. Others include the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1995 Beijing Declaration among others, which provides a framework for prevention of this crime.

In Africa, there is little evidence of an existence of a continental legal and policy framework to guide member states of the African Union to fight this vice based on the international legal instruments on TIP. However, The 2006 Ouagadougou Plan of Action on the Prevention of Human Trafficking especially on women and children is the only attempt by the African Union to fill this gap, albeit in a small way, in a bid to support its Member States and RECs to address this crime in Africa. The Action Plan provides different guideline on how the Member States can address this issue in the continent. These include prevention and awareness raising and victim protection and assistance. It also provides guidance on the legislative and policy propositions to promote the rule of law in addressing this crime while at the same time promoting cooperation and coordination among member states to sustainably address this crime in the continent.

As such, despite this efforts, over time, human trafficking and smuggling of migrants have continued to evolve, with tremendous evidence of emerging challenges such as tactical changes by the perpetrators to beat the Member States national protection and prevention regimes. Increasing level of poverty and the protracted nature of many conflicts in some African States has not only been the main root of human mobility and migration but also contributed to the rise of the numbers of persons being trafficked or smuggled across the continent. There was an urgent need to revise the 2006 Ouagadougou Plan of Action on the Prevention of Human Trafficking especially on Women and Children to enable it be proactive and responsive enough in addressing these new challenges associated with this crime.

It is against this background that the African Union Commission with the support of the Government of the Federal Government of Germany, through GIZ, commissioned an evaluation exercise of the 2006 Ouagadougou Plan of Action on the Prevention of Human Trafficking especially on Women and Children in Africa. This evaluation was meant to ascertain the level of implementation of the Action Plan by AU Member States and RECs, as per the commitments they made, in the prevention of Trafficking in Persons in Africa. The evaluation was also meant to identify good practices among them; while at the same time identify emerging issues with the view in addressing them either through recommendation of revision of the document or developing a substantive legal or policy

document to provide a solid guide to Member States and RECs to address this challenge in the continent.

The Evaluation was therefore conducted within the period of 3 months from the month of October to December, where a team of consultants visited 12 selected Member States across the continent and 3 RECs to conduct the evaluation. The Commission further developed an online survey and questionnaires that were also administered to Member States and RECs on the subject matter. The Evaluation Report has therefore been developed, highlighting key finding and way forward and is now ready to be submitted to AU Senior Officials of Member States and RECs for validation and endorsement.

The African Union Commission will therefore be hosting a Senior Officials meeting of the AU Member States to present this Draft Evaluation Report for the 2006 Action Plan for their consideration and adoption. It is hoped that this meeting will provide further input to the report and finally provide a go ahead to implement the recommendation of the report to address existing policy and operational gaps in the prevention of the irregular migration in the continent. The validated Evaluation Report and the subsequent policy and or legal draft documents on the prevention of trafficking in the continent will be submitted to the AU Specialised Technical Committee (STC) on Migration, Refugees and IDPs for their validation before submitting them to the Executive Council of the African Union and the 34th Assembly of the Heads of State in January, 2020 for their final endorsement.

2. Objective of the meeting

The Main objective of this validation workshop is to achieve the following:

- i. Present the Draft Evaluation Report of the 2006 Plan of Action for input by AU Member States and RECs to enhance ownership of the report.
- ii. Seek endorsement of the report with amendments based on the input received.
- iii. Present the situation Analysis of the Smuggling of Human beings and Modern-Day Slavery in Africa with a view of finding a way forward to prevent it.
- iv. Based on the above presentations, seek the approval of the meeting to implement the recommendations of the Evaluation Report that may include revision of the Plan of Action and or develop new solid policy and or legal instrument to sustainably support AU Member States and RECs in addressing Trafficking in persons and other forms of irregular migration in the continent.

3. Meeting outcome

The main outcome of this meeting will be an endorsed Evaluation Report with input from the participants.

4. Targeted Participants

This meeting will target a total of about 70 participants; including 55 senior officials of AU Member States from ministries and or departments dealing with the prevention of trafficking

in persons at national level. Specifically, a mix of participants drawn from law enforcement, judicial, prosecution and human rights departments of AU Member States. The meeting will also include 2 representatives from Regional Economic Communities dealing with trafficking issues and also representatives from UN agencies and other relevant partners dealing with irregular migration in the continent.

5. Meeting Methodology and Language

The meeting will observe AU rules and procedure in its methodology.

It will further be conducted indifferent sessions, including a general presentation of the report from one section to another, open discussions, questions and answer and lastly group discussions and presentations. The Chairs of each session will be AU Member States spread across all regions of the continent.

The meeting will be conducted in all the four languages of the African Union.

6. Meeting Venue and Date

The meeting will be held in **Kampala, Uganda on 20-21 March, 2019** at a venue to be confirmed.