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INTRODUCTION

1. The Specialized Technical Committees (STCs) are important Organs of the African Union (AU). They were established under Article 25 of the African Economic Community Treaty (the Abuja Treaty). With the transformation of the OAU into the AU, the STCs were included in the Constitutive Act of the African Union under Articles 14 to 16.
2. The STCs are expected to work in close collaboration with the various departments of the Commission so as to provide well-informed inputs in their areas of specialization to the work of the Executive Council. They should also, be involved in monitoring program development and implementation by the AU (Member States - MS, Regional Economic Communities – RECs, Specialized Institutions -SI).
3. Therefore, the operationalization of the STCs becomes imperative, given the overall objective of accelerating continental integration and the importance attached to the effective implementation of programs and projects of the Union. To this end, the Assembly of the Union adopted Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.227 (XII) reconfiguring the existing STCs and creating one on Communication and Information Technologies called Committee on Communication and ICT (CCICT).
4. The CCICT meets on a biennial basis. Its main activities and objectives are the following:
 - (i) Approve projects and programs of the Union; on Communication and ICT;
 - (ii) Ensure the supervision, follow-up and evaluation of the implementation of adopted programs and decisions taken by the organs of the Union;
 - (iii) Ensure the coordination and harmonization of projects and programs of the Union on Communication and ICT;
 - (iv) Carry out any other functions assigned to it for implementation of the provisions of the African Union Constitutive Act;
 - (v) Support resources mobilization and capacity building for the implementation of projects and programs on Communication and ICT
 - (vi) Oversee the promotion, co-ordination and the strengthening of Communication and ICT programs for economic growth of Africa;
 - (vii) Promote public investments on Communication and Information Technologies infrastructure, services and applications;
 - (viii) Approve frameworks for the harmonization of policies and regulations in the Continent.
5. The third CCICT-3 is scheduled to take place on 22-26 October 2019 in Sharm El Sheikh (Egypt).
6. The Committee will consider the following:
 - Review of the implementation status of the Decisions and Declarations adopted at the CCICT-2, the previous Ministerial Conferences and the African Union Assembly related to Communication and ICT;

- Assessment of the implementation status of various programs, projects and initiatives in the field of Communication and ICT and review of the progress made in the fields of Telecommunications/ICT, Post and Communication sub-sectors in Africa since the CCICT-2 held in November 2017;
- Consider and adopt the Comprehensive Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa;
- Institutionalization of the Pan African Media Awards on Promoting Agenda 2063;
- Exchange and coordination among continental stakeholders and AU partners on Communication and ICT activities and programs for the continent.

PART I: PROGRESS REPORTS

SECTION I: REPORT OF THE STC CICT OUTGOING BUREAU

REPORT OF THE STC CICT OUTGOING BUREAU

7. The Outgoing Bureau of the Specialized Technical Committee on Communication and Information Communication Technologies (Bureau-CICT) Chaired by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia held its Ordinary Meeting on 15 March 2019 in Tunis (Tunisia) on the margins of the High Level Forum on Postal Digital Transformation and considered the following:

- (i) Progress report on the implementation of the STC decisions;
- (ii) Consideration and adoption of the Report and Recommendations of the Meeting;
- (iii) Any Other Business;
- (iv) Date and Venue of the STC.

8. The Bureau took note of the following major achievements as of 15 March 2019:

- (i) Endorsement of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government Declaration on Internet Governance and Africa's Digital Economy;
- (ii) Through AXIS Project, saved the continent millions of dollars by eliminating the international transit through overseas carriers by supporting the setting up of Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) in 15 Member States and provided grants to IXPs in 8 Member States to support them to grow to become Regional Internet Exchange Points.
- (iii) Trained an average of 3 experts from 42 Member States (policy maker, Technical and Law enforcement experts) on cyber security strategies, cyber legislations and cyber capabilities.
- (iv) Organized the first African Forum on Cybercrime attended by more than 300 African and International participants Including council of Europe, Interpol, U justice departments.
- (v) Launched the Guideline on Privacy and personal data protection in Africa.
- (vi) Trained 42 national Experts from Member States to develop solutions to unlock access to rural and remote areas using modern & innovative infrastructures.
- (vii) Developed AU white paper in Broadband for a harmonized ICT Infrastructure integration in the continent.
- (viii) Successfully organized the seventh forum of the Internet Governance Forum with Transforming Africa's Digital Economy as a key area of focus
- (ix) Like the last five years, trained additional 40 young experts at African School of Internet Governance.

- (x) In less than a month, mobilized resources and African volunteers to design and set up a digital platform for knowledge management for exchanges of best practices on Digital policies and Internet Governance matters (<https://knowledge.afigf.africa/>).
- (xi) Concluded negotiation with EU and commenced implementation of the 5 Million Euro funding of the new program – the Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA) – aiming at enhancing the coordination mechanisms, the harmonization policy and Regulation in Africa and building capacity on Internet Governance for all AU Member States.
- (xii) Promoted media engagement on Agenda 2063 and increased visibility of Agenda 2063 on digital media platforms and continental media including production of 4 documentaries;
- (xiii) Produced for the 1st time AU Anthem in Swahili, English, French, Portuguese, Spanish and Arabic and availed to public, member states and also popularized on Social Media
- (xiv) Promoted awareness of AU Treaties through publication and distribution of list of signatories and ratifications of OAU / AU treaties since 1963 to date.

9. Challenges raised included:

- Budgeting process that did not allow the Commission to include the implementation of some decisions;
- Delay in release of funds by partners;
- Freeze of recruitments;
- Lack of required resources for specific projects such as postal services development;
- Delay in ratifying the AU (Malabo) Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection while the Budapest has been ratified by most of African countries.
- Lack of feedback on implementation of decisions by Member States.

10. Major comments from the Bureau included the following:

- The Bureau underscored the importance of cybersecurity for Africa as well as a strong coordination with Regional Economic Communities (RECs).
- They regretted the lack of updates from Member States on the implementation of key projects under their purview, which is key for monitoring the joint action plan and they subsequently urged Member States to provide updates.
- The meeting expressed interest in getting update on the establishment of the Digital African Strategic Center from the Government of Tunisia.

11. The Draft Action Plan was adopted with amendments. The adopted Action Plan is attached as **Annex 1**.

12. The date of the third ordinary session of the STC proposed to the Republic of Algeria was communicated to the Bureau.

13. The Chair of the Bureau also interacted with the AU Commission on e-commerce initiatives to seek synergy among them.

Expected decision from the Committee

14. **The honourable are requested to:**

- (i) Take note of the progress report and commend the Bureau for the achievements;
- (ii) Request Member States to support the AUC to implement AU organs decisions related to Communication and Information Technologies (CIT).

SECTION II: INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND POSTS SECTOR

SUB-SECTION I: HARMONIZATION OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. Comprehensive Digital transformation strategy (DTS) for Africa (Annex 2)

15. Africa presents a sea of economic opportunities in virtually every sector, and the continent's youthful population structure is an enormous opportunity in this digital era and hence the need for Africa to make digitally enabled socio-economic development a high priority. Digital Transformation is a driving force for innovative, inclusive and sustainable growth. From innovations such as for mobile money platforms to large-scale business process outsourcing developments, digitalization is creating jobs, addressing poverty, reducing inequality, facilitating the delivery of goods and services, and contributing to the achievement of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

16. Furthermore, Africa has fewer legacy challenges to deal with and is therefore adopting digitized solutions faster out of necessity. For Africa, the current moment offers a leapfrogging opportunity. Today's technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, block chain, drones, internet of things, wearable technologies, 3D printing, Big Data, and software-enabled industrial platforms — indicate the scale and speed at which technology is transforming traditional socio-economic sectors.

17. Recognizing the efforts of the continent's leadership to prioritize and accelerate digital transformation, and building on the vision of many African leaders, African countries are ready for a comprehensive digital transformation strategy to guide a common, coordinated response to reap the benefits of the fourth industrial revolution.

18. Based on African Union Executive Council Decision EX.CL/987(XXXII) endorsing STC- ICT-1 declaration, ECA Resolution (812 –XXXI) on the African Information Society Initiative and the Smart Africa Board meeting held on the margins of the 32nd African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government that highlighted the need for the ICT sector to lead the process, the AU Commission undertook to develop a comprehensive Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa in collaboration with the UN Economic Commission for Africa, Smart Africa, AUDA-NEPAD, Regional Economic Communities, African Development Bank, Africa Telecommunications Union, Africa Capacity Building Foundation, International Telecommunication Union and the World Bank.

19. The Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa will build on the on existing initiatives and frameworks such as the Policy and Regulatory Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA), the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the African Union Financial Institutions (AUFIs, the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM); and the Free Movement of Persons (FMP) to support the development of a Digital Single Market (DSM) for Africa, as part of the integration priorities of the African Union. The Smart Africa Initiative has set the creation of a Digital Single Market in Africa as its strategic vision.

20. The Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa has been developed using the following approach:

¹ EX.CL/Dec.739(XXII), EX.CL/Dec.545(XVI), EX.CL/Dec.613(XVIII), EX.CL/Dec.835(XXV), EX.CL/Dec.987(XXXII)

- a. **Informed by previous initiatives and documents:** The strategy takes into account the broad and diverse range of previous activities, initiatives, directions and mandates at the continental level.
- b. **Collaborative/Multi-stakeholder:** The AU Commission developed the strategy in collaboration with the UN Economic Commission for Africa, Smart Africa, AUDA-NEPAD, Regional Economic Communities, African Development Bank, Africa Telecommunications Union, Africa Capacity Building Fund, International Telecommunication Union, World Bank and other partner institutions. In addition, input and consultations with the private sector and civil society were sought.
- c. **From the conceptual to the practical:** From Foundational Elements, to Analysis, to Pathways to Transformation, from there to Strategies to Unlock the Pathways, and finally Tools for Success.

21. The Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa is based on foundation pillars (Enabling Environment, Policy and Regulation, Digital Infrastructure, Digital Skills and Human Capacity, Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship), critical sectors(Digital Industry, Digital Trade and Financial Services, Digital Government, Digital Education, Digital Health, Digital Agriculture) to drive the digital transformation and cross cutting themes (Digital Content & Applications, Digital ID, Emerging Technologies, Cybersecurity, Privacy and Personal Data Protection, Research and Development) to support the digital ecosystem (See diagram below). It will also include policy recommendations and actions under each foundational pillar, critical sector and cross-cutting theme. Some of the proposed recommendations and actions include those highlighted in the AU-EU Digital Economy taskforce report.

Annexed to the strategy will include a set of tools that Member States can use at their discretion, to assess and guide their policy, investment decisions and actions. These tools will include; a) An Assessment toolset that Member states can utilize to self-assess their digital transformation readiness; b) A Digital Maturity² Model where Member States can identify their current digital state (as is), and where they want to go (to be) along a development continuum; c) A set of flexible “pathways to prosperity” that bring together the various foundational pillars in different configurations to provide Member States with a range of options and alternatives to consider in pursuing digital transformation, in a way that is best suited to their needs.

22. The strategy is further guided by the following principles:

(i) SOLIDARITY AND COOPERATION:

² Digital maturity is a measure of how ready a country/organization is to digitally transform.

Solidarity between African Union Member States; Cooperation between the AUC, RECs, African Institutions and International organizations; and Linked to Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

(ii) COMPREHENSIVE:

Adopting an ecosystem approach that avoids a silo approach and is comprehensive in defining and applying the requisite elements and foundations for digital transformation;

(iii) TRANSFORMATIVE:

Fully leverage, harness and accelerate impact on society by accelerating Africa's socio-economic development through digital transformation;

(iv) INCLUSIVE:

Digital Transformation for everyone, everywhere, that is affordable and ubiquitous, creating equal access to opportunities and mitigating risks of exclusion;

(v) HOMEGROWN:

Led and owned by Africa's Institutions, it will be embedded in Africa's realities and unleashing the African spirit of enterprise and creativity, to generate homegrown digital content and solutions, while embracing what is good and relevant;

(vi) NEW MINDSET:

Benefitting from the digital transformation requires a mindset change and new types of collaboration among stakeholders, and across sectors, with facilitation and retooling;

(vii) SAFE:

Society that is well informed about both the opportunities and risks arising from a digital economy and society, and that healthy disruption to markets and business models is ensured;

Proposed recommendations

23. The Honourable Ministers are requested to:

- (i) Consider and adopt the Comprehensive Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa(2020-2030)
- (ii) Request the AU Commission to mobilize the necessary resources to implement the Comprehensive Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa;
- (iii) Urge Member States, the AU Commission, UN Economic Commission for Africa, Smart Africa, AUDA-NEPAD, Regional Economic Communities, African Development Bank, Africa Telecommunications Union, Africa Capacity Building Foundation, International Telecommunication Union, the World Bank and other digitalization stakeholders in Africa to consider the Comprehensive Digital Transformation Agenda as the common digitalization agenda for the continent and

create synergies for optimal use of scarce resources and expedite its implementation;

- (iv) Appeal to the UN Economic Commission for Africa, African Development Bank, the International Telecommunication Union, the World Bank, the European Union and other development partners to support the implementation of the comprehensive Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa.

2. Policy and Regulatory Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA)

Background

24. Despite a significant progress in developing digital infrastructures and enhancing connectivity, the ICT sector in the AU space has been characterized by a low access to broadband services comparing to other regions in the world and also by a lack of harmonization of policies and regulations as well as low level of coordination of common positions on many ICT related issues of global interest. Many decisions adopted by the AU organs have called for better harmonization of policy, legal and regulatory frameworks at regional and continental levels to create an enabling environment that will attract investment and foster the sustainable development of competitive African Telecommunication/ICT markets and encourage Africa participation in the global debates especially those related to Internet Governance (IG).

25. After many unsuccessful resources mobilization activities and following 3 years of negotiation with European Union, the AU Commission is now implementing a new project -Policy and Regulatory Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA)- aiming at addressing the following issues:

- (i) Improving the spectrum allocation, licensing, management across the continent including the treatment of harmful interferences and pricing based on international best practices with a forward looking approach towards the use of radio spectrum resources for Internet of Things (IoT) and deployment of 5G technology .
- (ii) Address the policy and legislative harmonization gap through the development of a Monitoring and Evaluation methodology and forward-looking agenda on areas of common interests for AU Member States.
- (iii) Strengthen cooperation between National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs), Regional Association of Regulators and The African Union Commission to create an enabling environment that responds to the new regulatory requirements, addresses emerging ICT issues and fosters Africa Digital Transformation.
- (iv) Create and operate a collaborative Pan African Digital Platform to support the harmonization of ICT policy and regulation in Africa and ensure the sustainability of the PRIDA project . This platform to be used intensively by all stakeholders to :
 - Create one stop shopping for all national , regional and continental policies and regulations
 - Create a work space for African experts to discuss and develop Africa Common positions and ICT& Internet related matters
 - Create African proper statistics, outlooks and reporting;
 - Support for the delivery of continuous online trainings for African Experts both

- on ICT policy and regulations and Internet Governance.
- Develop communication tools and knowledge sharing: Publications and decisions, Calendars and events, pool of expertise, sharing news and inquiries etc...
- (v) Building African Capacity on Internet Governance (IG) and safety use of the ICT. This program shall allow to:
 - Enhance Africa's Involvement and Advocacy on IG;
 - Develop African IGF Culture and build the required Institutional Competencies;
 - Create and promote an ecosystem for the safe use of Internet for socio-economic development.
- (vi) Raise awareness on the cross cutting use of ICTs (policy) by public authorities and civil society notably through :
 - Developing studies on mainstreaming ICTs in key sectors such education health, agriculture, gender.
 - Sensitizing on the convergence of services and changes in the regulatory approaches across the world with the move to more collaborative and cross-sectoral regulations
 - Initiating discussions on the importance of data protection and privacy in building trust and confidence in the use of digital technologies.

Expected outcome

26. The overall objective of PRIDA project is to provide support towards creating harmonized policies and efficient regulatory frameworks for the development of ICT sector in Africa through the establishment of a consolidated continental spectrum market; the creation of an enabling Policy & Regulation environments for more efficiency and affordability of services across the continent and also strengthening Africa's voice in the global Internet Governance debate.

2.3. Policy recommendations and proposed actions

27. To create an enabling and trusted environment that fosters and supports Africa digital transformation.

28. **The Honourable Ministers are requested to:**

- (i) Take note of the importance of PRIDA as an enabler of Africa Digital Transformation and Digital Integration ;
- (ii) Support and facilitate the implementation of PRIDA activities both at national, regional and continental levels;
- (iii) Use the PRIDA Digital Platform as a space to share experiences, best practices and exchange lessons learned on ICT and digital policies;
- (iv) Consider harmonisation of ICT policy , legal and regulatory frameworks as precondition for the creation of common Africa ICT/Digital market
- (v) Consider Internet Governance as an essential component of the development of Africa digital ecosystem.

3. Postal Sector Action Plan

29. Due to lack of resources, the major activities includes (i) Contribution to the Comprehensive Digital transformation Strategy and (iii) the Organization of High Level Forum on Postal Digital Transformation.

3.2. Postal Digital Transformation

Background

30. To meet its development objectives, Africa needs to undergo a deep socio-economic transformation. In this regard, the Post can play an important role in this transformation, thanks to the wide reach of its physical infrastructure of nearly 30,000 outlets, interconnected to the global network of more than 660.000 Post Offices. The transformation should usher countries into the realm of the knowledge economy, characterized by access to relevant information, digital, social and financial inclusion of the marginalized population.

31. Given the capillarity of postal outlets and trust of local populations, the postal sector plays a significant role (a multipurpose platform and one stop shop) in socio-economic development, particularly in Africa in which 70% of the population live in rural areas, by facilitating communication, delivery of goods and services as well as providing wide universal access to many governmental and non-governmental services. For instance, nearly 1.5 billion people worldwide use postal financial services.

32. Likewise the Post contributes to UNCTAD B2C E-commerce Index that consists of four indicators that are highly related to online shopping, without forgetting that the sector plays also three other roles including Account ownership, Individuals using the Internet (% of population) and Secure Internet services (per 1 million people)³. Post is the second largest financial inclusion player, behind the banks but way ahead of microfinance institutions and mobile telephone operators.

33. As per 2018 UPU Report, postal sector contributes to the realization of numerous UN SDG, notably SDG 8 by promoting financial inclusion and to SDG 9 and 17 by facilitating citizens' access to Internet and services and N011 thanks to its resilience to natural catastrophes, reliability and relevance.

34. This shows that modern postal system which is truly endowed with appropriate ICT infrastructure can provide the most relevant products ranging from e-governance services to e-commerce and financial inclusion to Africa's people notably those in rural and remote areas.

Situation of postal sector

³ https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/tn_unctad_ict4d12_en.pdf

35. The postal world and particularly African Postal Services are at a major crossroads with the development of the digital economy, which is leading to a decline in traditional mail volumes. Some countries are moving forward but the majority of the Post Offices on the continent remain with outdated equipment, lack of electricity and Internet Connectivity and the staff needs to be capacitated with the required skills for the revolution 4.0.

36. In addition, the combined effects of imposed global liberalization, the lack of investment in critical production infrastructure, the weakening of government institutions through conditionality set by “donors”, the opportunism of external actors, lack of appropriate and harmonized legislation, conflicts of interest between legislators and operators as well as unnecessary peddling of influences, have resulted in the African postal market being generally invaded by a pack of private predatory operators that undermine the public operators and, consequently, the provision of universal service which they are supposed to offer to everyone everywhere.

37. Such switch to digital technology has become a strategic priority for Posts wishing to remain at the forefront in the increasing digital world. While the expected switch will lead to postal digital transformation and diversification of products, readiness for e-commerce, and postal payment services, numerous actions shall be taken including having the political will, policies and regulations and investment as well as skills development. In addition initiatives on postal digital transformation are going on in some countries but most of them need to be properly guided.

Expected outcome

38. The post office as the center of socio-economic activity in the 21st century, including government services, e-commerce development, financial and digital inclusion, and entrepreneurship leading to the attainment of the AU Agenda 2063 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Policy recommendations and proposed actions

39. The policy recommendations and proposed actions include the followings:

- Commit to undertake or strengthen ICT and postal policies reforms.
 - Consider the postal sector as an essential component of digital economy and postal financial services (PFS) as well as part of the financial inclusion ecosystem and assign to the sector specific objectives to be achieved;
 - Include postal sector Postal digitalization in both national priorities and national digital strategy but not as final solution for posts but should be a part of innovation strategy;
 - Accelerate and intensify policy reform and speed up the implementation of existing decisions from the AU policy organs on reform, universal postal service, financial inclusion, post codes and addressing systems
 - Promote the postal sector as a key vehicle to foster socio-economic development

- Use the postal sector as a platform to implement governmental policies and deliver government's services to all citizens for digital, financial and social inclusion;
- Facilitate postal services access to funding for investment and infrastructure development and capacity building
 - Digitalize the basic information infrastructure for postal services especially for e-commerce development in particular;
 - Encourage public-private partnership for increased investment in the posts;
 - Accelerate implementation of addressing systems
- Encourage capacity development
 - Encourage/include public operators in strategies aimed at embracing the emerging technology (block chain, Artificial Intelligence...) through research and development.

3.2. High Level Forum on Postal Digital Transformation

40. The High Level Forum on Postal Digital Transformation (DiGiPost) was organized on 14-15 March 2019 in Tunis with the strong support of the government of Tunisia.

41. DigiPost brought together AU Member States, African and International organizations, postal organizations and private sector in order to exchange expertise and know-how in terms of progressive digital transformation and to raise awareness among African postal operators about the opportunities offered by ICT revolution to transform, evolve and reposition itself on markets, especially on e-commerce, financial inclusion and valorisation of postal work which are reinventing themselves at all levels.

42. The major recommendations are as follows:

On e-commerce development

- Harmonization and modernization of legal and institutional frameworks related to e-commerce between African countries.
- Promotion of the culture of Digital Innovation in African Posts
- Take advantage of global trends related to the rise of e-commerce in order to develop a regional postal strategy encouraging the development of content (software and programs) and services related to ICT and supporting young people entrepreneurs through creation of start-ups and incubators to reinvent the postal profession.
- Improvement of the competitiveness of African postal operators through investment in ICT and positioning in the digital economy.
- Encouragement to African postal operators to adhere to UPU strategic project on digital transformation.

- Development of programs for developing skills and human capacities.
- Encourage the use of ICT as a strategic lever for development of postal operator and not only software development tool.
- Creation new needs for customers.
- Promotion of an acceptable and accessible e-commerce for all African populations.
- Fighting cybercrime to build confidence.

On financial inclusion

- Support the role of African Posts in financial inclusion and promote their contribution in this area.
- Support the digitization of postal financial services and set up a decashing strategy.
- Taking advantage of the UPU technical assistance mechanism for financial inclusion (FITAF).
- Promotion of simple, innovative products that meet the new customers needs
Contribute to the financial inclusion of youth, women, low-income categories beyond
- the African postal sector in partnership with other international and regional institutions.
- Set up a strategy to improve the account penetration rate, notably through the transformation of African posts into postal banks and ensure internal communication in order to adhere to the idea of transformation.

On social inclusion

- Strengthening of the integration of women into the work environment and value gender differences.
- Encourage the important role of postal sector in social and territorial cohesion through the development of local services, designed to meet the new needs of a society in transition.

Proposed recommendations for the Committee consideration

43. The Honourable Ministers are requested to:

- (i) Take note of the above major findings on postal digitalization;
- (ii) Consider the postal sector as an essential component of digital economy and postal financial services (PFS) as well as part of the financial inclusion ecosystem;
- (iii) Include postal sector Postal digitalization in both national priorities and national digital strategy;
- (iv) Facilitate postal sector access to funding;
- (v) Use the postal sector as a platform to implement governmental policies and deliver government's services to all citizens for digital, financial and social inclusion Use the

postal sector as a platform to implement governmental policies and deliver government's services to all citizens for digital, financial and social inclusion;

(vi) Support the digitization of postal financial services and set up a cashless strategy.

SUB-SECTION II: MASTER PLANS

1. Progress report on the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA).

Background

44. The African Union Heads of State and Government adopted the PIDA programme (Assembly/AU/Decl.2 (XVIII)) in January 2012, as the reference programme for regional and continental infrastructure development in Africa. PIDA fills in gaps and, based on previous lessons, assigns appropriate weight to the value of local ownership, the necessity of both hard and soft interventions, the need for diverse financing and the importance of sound implementation strategies. Underpinned by an extensive consultation and analytical process, PIDA provides an agenda of achievable and affordable priority projects aligned with Africa's long-term goals. Simply put, PIDA will be different from previous regional infrastructure integration initiatives because it is designed to bring about effective investments. This programme also weaves together two plans: the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Infrastructure Master Plan of the African Union (AU) in a single, inter-regional, and overarching framework for infrastructure development for Africa.

45. The Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) aims to facilitate economic and social integration on the African continent through the creation of continental and regional markets. PIDA as a continental initiative will allow countries to meet forecast demand for infrastructure services and boost competitiveness by: (1) Increasing efficiencies; (2) Accelerating economic growth; (3) Facilitating integration in the world economy; (4) Improving living standards; and (5) Unleashing intra-African trade, amongst others.

46. Covering four (4) main sectors including transport, energy, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and trans-boundary water sectors, the implementation of the PIDA programme is prioritised into three (3) main phases including: (1) short-term (2012-2020), medium-term (2021-2030) and long-term (2030-2040).

47. PIDA assumes that the average economic growth rate for African countries will be 6% a year between 2010 and 2040, driven by a surging population, increasing levels of education and technology absorption. This growth implies that, within 30 years, the GDP of African countries will multiply six-fold and the average per capita income will rise above \$10,000 for all countries. This continuing growth and prosperity will swell the demand for infrastructure, already one of the continent's greatest impediments to sustainable development. As a result:

- Power needs will increase six times; Africa will reap savings on electricity production costs of \$30 billion a year, or \$850 billion through to 2040.
- Transport volumes will increase 6–8 times, with a particularly strong increase of up to 14 times for some landlocked countries; Transport efficiency will allow gains of at least \$172 billion in the African Regional Transport Integration Network (ARTIN), with the potential for much larger savings as trade corridors open.

- Water needs will push some river basins-including the Nile, Niger, Orange and Volta basins-to the ecological brink; the necessary water storage infrastructure needed for food production and trade will be realized.
- Information and Communications Technology (ICT) demand will swell by a factor of 20 before 2020 as Africa catches up with broadband.

48. Since the adoption of this initiative, the PIDA implementing partners – the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) – have been concentrating on ensuring the delivery of the short-term priorities and objectives of PIDA referred to as the PIDA Priority Action Plans (PIDA PAP), which comprises 51 programmes and projects. The 51 PIDA PAP programmes and projects have been decomposed into 433 individual projects fiches in order to provide information on the state of maturity of the projects and facilitate discussions with investors.

Status of implementation

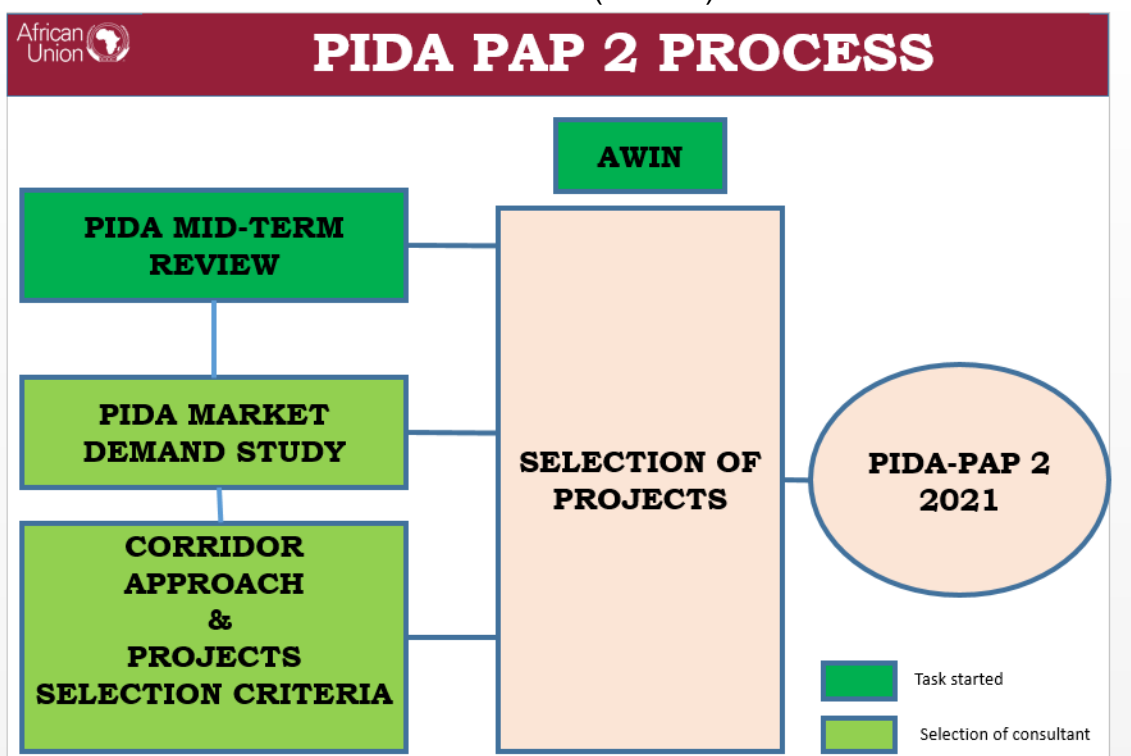
49. Since the adoption of PIDA in 2012, significant progress has been made in the four sectors: establishment of institutional and operational structures, preparation and implementation of projects. In addition, Member States have made considerable progress in ensuring the implementation of PIDA projects. Of the 433 individual projects listed, about 35% (143 projects) are under construction or already operational, 17% are in the process of being structured for procurement, while about 26% are between the design phase and feasibility study phase.

50. Despite significant progress in implementing PIDA PAP, there is still a pressing need to continue working with all relevant stakeholders to ensure accelerated delivery of regional and continental infrastructure. At the first session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructures, Energy and Tourism (CTS-TTIET) held in March 2017 in Lomé, Togo, the Ministers in charge Transport and Energy recommended that the African Union Commission starts consultations for the preparation of the second phase of PIDA (PIDA PAP 2, 2021-2030).

51. The process of the preparation of the second phase of the PIDA PAP process should be very inclusive of all stakeholders namely: Member States of the African Union, the Regional Economic Community (RECs), the African institutions, the civil society, the private sector, the youth and the women, African and non-African development partners. It will go through five (5) main stages which are:

- The mid-term review of the implementation of PIDA PAP;
- Market and demand study;
- The development of an integrated corridor approach;
- Development of project selection criteria for the new phase;
- The selection of PIDA PAP2 priority projects & Screening Process
- PIDA PAP 2 Implementation Strategy
- African Network of Women in Infrastructure (ANWIn)

- an Network of Women in Infrastructure (ANWIn)



52. It is in this context that the Ministers in charge of Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructures, Energy and Tourism, meeting in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt, on 16 and 17 April 2019, during the Second Session of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Transport, Intercontinental and Interregional Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism, requested the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), together with the African Development Bank, to accelerate the development of the second phase of PIDA (PIDA PAP 2), integrating the gender and youth dimensions, which should be submitted to the AU organs for consideration and adoption by January 2021.

53. The African Union Commission has started working on the components of the PIDA PAP 2 and has recruited, with its partners, consulting firms to help in finding key strategic and policy recommendations that will guide the development of regional and continental infrastructure in the next decade.

Conclusion and Way forward

54. The PIDA-PAP 2 process foresees that PIDA Stakeholders (AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, RECs and AU Member States) together with the private sector, development financing institutions, development partners and actors of the civil society, the African Women for Infrastructure network, discuss and agree upon key criteria to select the priority projects for the next phase of PIDA-PAP.

55. This participatory and systematic approach to develop the priority infrastructure framework for the next decade shall ensure that the selected projects have the most optimal development impact (as per Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030, especially with respect to employment creation, climate protection, improvement of living standards) whilst also ensuring their financial and economic viability.

56. Countries will have to mobilize their own public and private domestic resources and attract foreign private investment. To attract private investment there is a need for countries to ensure a competitive market based on clear legislation with enforcement of commercial law and transparency in procurement. Also needed are more competitive markets and banking systems.

57. In addition to bringing in more private sector funds, Africa's leaders must also embrace new and innovative sources of financing, critical to PIDA's success. Innovative thinking is already at work. In recent years, some African institutions have proven nimble in mobilizing finance to take advantage of the improving macro environment, putting important - and in some cases interrelated - funding instruments in place for development.

58. PIDA's value addition should certainly be about improving the quality of life and reinforcing the commitment to a more democratically accountable approach to governance. It should not just be up to the donors to insist on environmental and social impact in infrastructure development, there also needs to be political will and serious commitment by citizens and governments (including parliaments) to use the opportunity for infrastructure financing in ways that enhance sustainability. Success depends on productive partnerships among the stakeholders and between the continent and external partners.

Expected decision from the Committee.

59. **The honourable ministers are requested to:**

- (i) Take note of the PIDA PAP 2 timeline and request Member States to participate to the next bureau meeting of the STC TTIIET which will validate the PIDA PAP 2 studies.

2. Strategy for Unlocking Access to Basic Infrastructure and Services for Rural and Remote Areas.

Background

60. The project on Strategy for Unlocking Access to Basic Infrastructure and Services for Rural and Remote Areas through integrated infrastructure services was endorsed by the AU policy organs through Executive Council Decisions referenced EX.CL/Dec.970(XXXI) and EX.CL/Dec.987(XXXII)Rev.1. The purpose of the strategy synthesized below is to develop a high-level strategic approach for efficiently implementing integrated and sustainable infrastructures and services in rural and remote areas of the Continent.

61. Up until now, most infrastructure projects are targeted either on major corridors or on servicing rural or remote communities, with separated silo sectorial intervention logics. Given that sequential interventions often lead to difficulties when it comes to combining them retrospectively, it is time to seek an innovative approach. Based on a thorough documentary analysis of case studies worldwide, this continental strategy aims at providing rural areas the full package of basic economic infrastructures at once rather than in a sequential manner in order to unbundle their capacities to innovate and contribute to the continental free-trade area and global economy.

62. The strategy is also based on the potentialities of digital economy as a strong economic and social leverage to unlock rural areas and attract private economic actors. Indeed, given the rapid expansion of ICT worldwide and the innovations brought in the span of a few decades, the African continent will need to accelerate the deployment of optic fibre and wireless communication systems in order to fulfil its full social and economic potential.

A Strategic approach

63. Projects deploying basic services (roads, energy, ICT and Water) along main corridors and into remote areas face different challenges and request the use of different technologies. In order to facilitate their combination, the strategy is twofold:

- **Along main corridors**, infrastructure projects need to integrate the provision of all basic services as a package in their programming through a “dig once” policy allowing to expend the access to basic services provided along the main corridors into surrounding rural areas at a marginal cost. Earth work and trenching required for laying fibre optic cables constitute 70 to 80 percent of the total cost while it has been established that laying pipes during road construction, which would later be used for fibre optic cables, could be less than 0.02% of total road construction cost⁴. The same programming should be used regarding on-grid energy projects by adding pipes that could be later lent to internet providers.
- **In rural areas**, innovative technical solutions are available and operable by private structures. However, remote areas are often difficult to reach, generating high capital and operation expenditures, and present a low potential in terms of consumer revenues. Reversing the situation and attracting operators, hence bringing access to basic services to the population is possible through the combination of State support and innovative technologies and business models. ICT-wise, the availability of technologies like point-to-multipoint wireless connectivity, which installation does not impose heavy construction works or high capital expenditures, and on the other hand the possibility to share these infrastructures as well as the Radio Access network (RAN) between Internet Service Providers, it appears to be a viable solution in Africa. Concerning off-grid energy provision, technologies like mini- or micro-grid systems

⁴ World Bank, Rajendra Singh, “Cross-Sector infrastructure sharing”, Réseau Arabe des Régulateurs des Télécoms et des Technologies de l'information, 2014

offers interesting alternatives to costly on-grid infrastructure projects. At varying degrees depending on national contexts, the scheme is for the states to contribute financially to construct the full package of rural economic infrastructures, following the “dig once” policy along the main corridors (rural roads, electrification and ICT coverage), and for the private operators to blend financially the operation, get it constructed, and then operate and maintain these infrastructures on a commercial basis. Infrastructure sharing, mutualization, PPP, servicing integration or Pays-As-You-Go models provide multiple adaptable solutions for private operators to find an economic interest in operating basic services infrastructure in rural areas.

- **Cross cutting aspects: Gender; HIV; Climate resilience**

Figure 1- Policy framework for Unlocking rural and remote areas in Africa

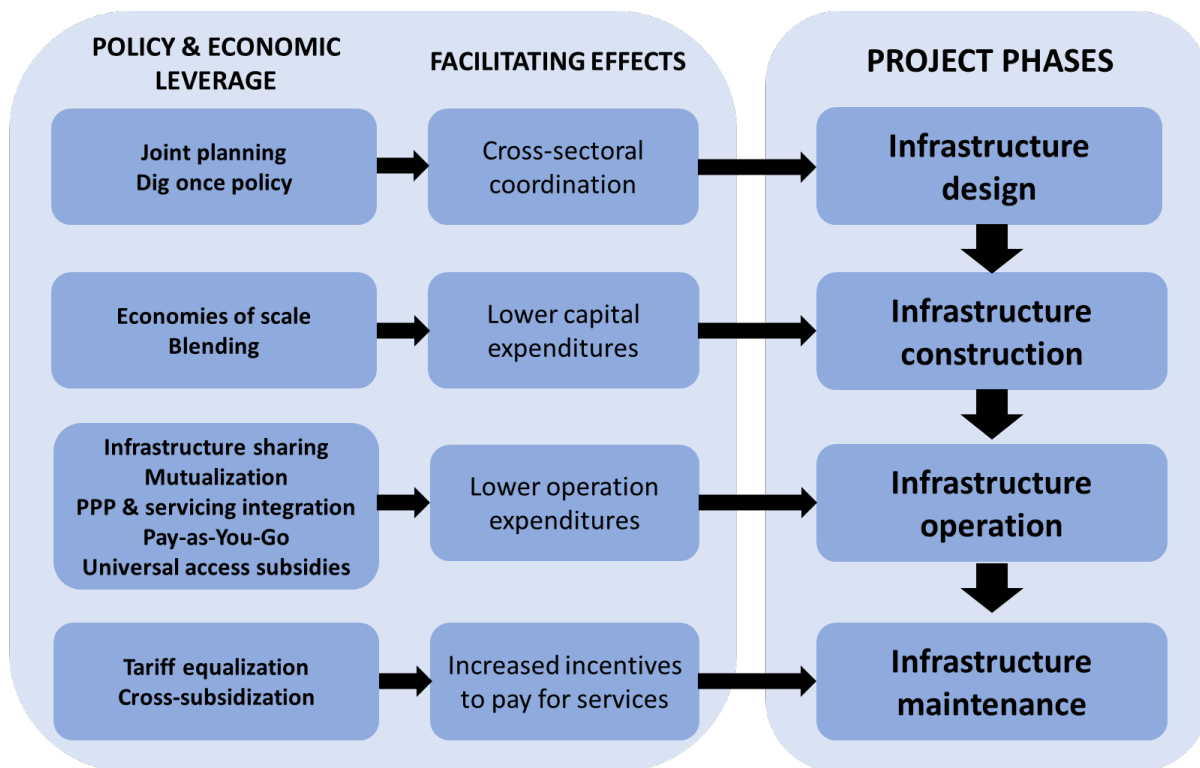


Figure 4 presents the leveraging effects of specific policies and economic mechanisms that should be put together in synergy in order to facilitate the implementation of infrastructure projects. Effective and sustainable construction, operation and maintenance of infrastructures will generate access to basic services for the population, hence participating to unlocking the targeted remote areas. The complete intervention logic will be provided in the up-coming Strategic Note.

64. The main benefits expected from this approach are:

- Cost effectiveness: Integration of labour and goods markets, thus providing new economic opportunities to inhabitants;
- Socio-economic impacts: Strengthened social inclusion; Contribution to the growth of local economies through the development of local industry; Development of local industry; Advantage of advancements in ICT in provision of e-services; Provision of

sufficient, reliable and affordable energy; and, possibilities to consult the prices of products in national/international markets;

- Accelerated integration of the continent: Access to ICT applications encourages borderless international cooperation; Improvement on transport and ICT sectors will increase accessibility and mobility.

65. From this starting point, many implementing modalities can be envisaged and many challenges can be anticipated considering the scope of the innovation sought and the wide diversity of contexts and policy frameworks across Africa.

66. Based on the above, the proposed two pilot projects should illustrate the two approaches: i) one “dig once” project applied to a corridor to be developed by a PAP1 project about to start or already started, and ii) one integrated project applied to a rural area in the neighbourhood of the same corridor. The dig once project would be implemented relatively soon, leaving the time required to prepare the integrated pilot project. The integrated approach require to set in place the multi-sector coordination, the financial scheme (blending public and private resources, universal access subsidies, guaranties), the contractual frameworks with and between private operators, the negotiation with private operators of the management model (cross-subsidization, tariff equalization) and finally the construction phase.

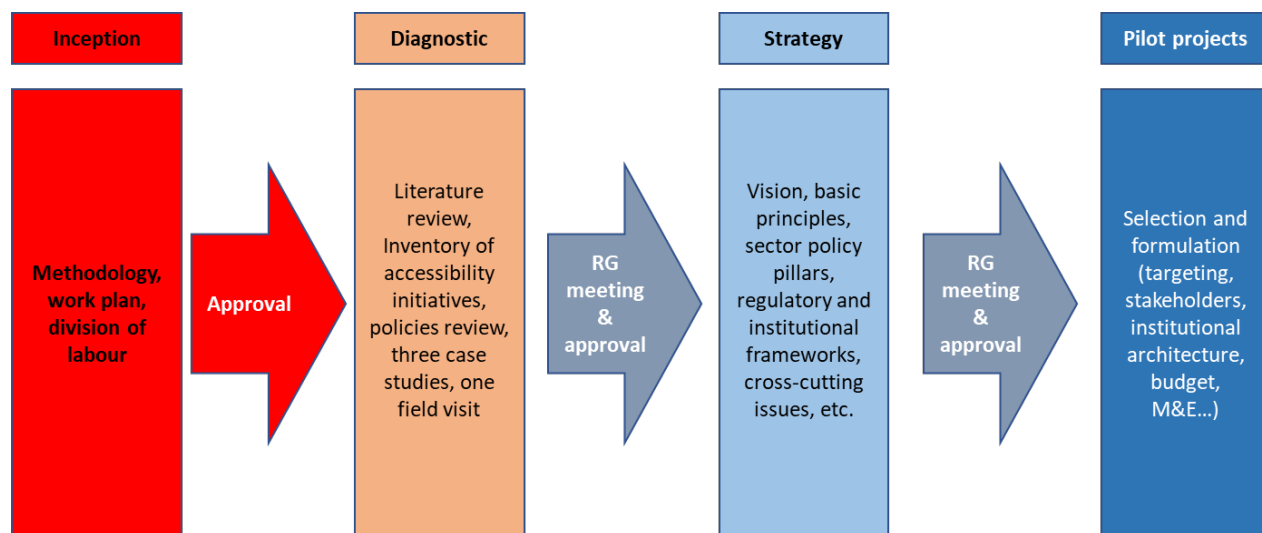
67. In order to permit some degree of contextualization of the identification fiches, it is recommendable to know on which project/region the pilot projects will be implemented.

Objectives



















68. The objectives of the Consultant’s assignment are twofold:

- Develop an integrated strategy for the sustainable development of access to priority infrastructure for rural and remote communities;
- Elaborate two integrated pilot projects for rural and remote communities’ access to basic infrastructure, around selected regional linear infrastructure projects underway or implemented under PIDA.





69. The progress to-date is presented below.



70. The overall work plan is the following:

Activity		Implementation																	
		Month	Feb 19			Mar 19				Apr 19					May 19				Jun 19
		Week	11/2	18/2	25/2	4/3	11/3	18/3	25/3	1/4	8/4	15/4	22/4	29/4	6/5	13/5	20/5	27/5	3/6
Phase 1: Inception Phase/Desk Phase	Place of performance																		
Kick-off meeting	Addis																		
Initial document/data collection and definition of methods of analysis	home based																		
Submit and adjust the Inception Report	home based																		
Phase 2: Diagnostic																			
Collection and compilation of documentation	home based																		
Interviews (in Addis and videoconferences)	Addis/home																		
Physical visit of the selected project	to be defined																		
Submit and present diagnostic Report	Addis																		
Phase 3: Strategy development																			
Formulation of the strategy	home based																		
Submission of Draft Final Report	home based																		
Presentation to the Reference Group	Addis																		
Integration of stakeholder comments	home based																		
Submit Final Strategy Report	home based																		
Phase 4: Programme of two pilot projects																			
Formulation of the selection criteria, identification of projects	home based																		
Submission of option Report	home based																		
Development of two pilot projects	home based																		
Presentation to the Reference Group	Addis																		
Integration of stakeholder comments	home based																		
Submit Final Program Report	home based																		
Support for dissemination workshop (indicative schedule)																			
Organisation of the final PPT presentation	home based																		
Presentation at the workshop (tentative schedule)	Addis																		

Legend

-  Deliverables
-  Meeting
-  Activity (field based)
-  Activity (home-based)

Expected decision from the Committee.

71. The honourable ministers are requested to:

- (i) Take note of the progress made;
- (ii) Provide guidance on the way forward;
- (iii) Request the AU Commission to (a) accelerate the formulation strategy and pilot projects and (b) develop guidelines on legislation on drones, in an integrated approach "essential services - mobility – aviation".

SUB-SECTION III: INTERNET ISSUES

1. Report on African Internet Governance Forum (AfIGF).

72. The Africa Internet Governance Forum (Af-IGF) was launched in 2011 and held its inaugural meeting in Cairo in September 2012. The 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th Af-IGFs were held in Nairobi, Abuja, Addis Ababa, Durban, Sharm El-Sheikh and Khartoum respectively.

73. Regional and sub-regional IGFs are the building blocks of the Af-IGF. Currently all the 5 AU geographical regions have IGFs but not all member states have national IGFs. In line with the CITMC-4 Khartoum Declaration, the AUC and NEPAD Agency have been working to encourage RECs *'to support the establishment of national IGF to create dialogue between all stakeholders on ICT for development issues and facilitate the countries' participation in the regional and African IGF processes as well as in the global IGF'* .

74. The African Union Commission as a Secretariat of the African IGF is planning the 8th AfIGF 2019 that will take place from 10 to 12 September 2019 in N'Djamena, Chad.

75. The African Union Commission is implementing a large scale capacity building initiative on IG to enable African stakeholders to actively participate in the Global IG debates. National, regional and continental capacity building workshops are being organized, including training of regional and national trainers that was conducted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and attended by about 70 African experts. The aim of the train the trainers program is to create a core group of national and regional trainers who will be PRIDA ambassadors at the national and regional levels.

Expected decision from the Committee

76. The Ministers are invited to:

- (i) Encourage Member States, that have not yet done so, to accelerate the establishment of their national IGFs;
- (ii) Encourage Member States to commit technical and financial resources to support national and regional IGF;
- (iii) Encourage Member States to support the Organization of the African IGF as the continental multi-stakeholder vehicle for Africans to reach common positions on IG matters;
- (iv) To set up and promote an African Union Academia on Internet Governance at national and regional levels to build capacity in IG especially among youth;
- (v) Request the AU Commission to commit annual budget for the organization and support of the Annual African IGF and Internet Governance Academia

2. Cybersecurity

77. The importance of the Internet and Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs) as effective tools for achieving socio-economic growth is widely recognized by governments, financial institutions, and development partners. As the continent increasingly rely on digital infrastructure to perform its essential functions such as the delivery of e-services, issues related to cybersecurity are emerging hence the need for African countries to urgently address them in order to enable their citizens to take advantage of the new opportunities offered by ICTs.

78. In this framework, the AUC developed the AU Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection (the Malabo Convention), which was adopted by the AU 23rd Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held in Malabo in June 2014. Since the adoption of the Malabo Convention, the AUC has been organizing Cybersecurity capacity building workshops, in collaboration with our key partners, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States, to promote Cybersecurity culture and build trust and confidence in the use of ICTs by and for the African citizens, provide guidance on cybersecurity policy and strengthening Cyber Capacities of Member States on:

- Cybercrime prevention,
- Online Privacy and personal data protection,
- Preparation of Cyber-Strategy and Cyber-Legislation; and
- Setting up incident response mechanisms such as CERTs/ CIRTs
- Besides, the AUC, in cooperation with Internet Society, developed Guidelines on “Security of Internet infrastructure in Africa” and “Personal Data Protection for Africa” (Annex 3). The AUC published in 2016, in cooperation with Symantec and US State Department, a report on Cybersecurity and Cybercrime trends in Africa.

79. Sensing the need for sound and consensus based advice on emerging issues pertaining to Cybersecurity, the AUC has undertaken steps to create an African Cybersecurity Experts’ Group, composed of 10 – 15 members representing African regions, whose sole mission is to advise the AUC on Cybersecurity matters.

80. Another important step taken by the AUC in close collaboration with the European Union is the launching of the “Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA)”. Building capacity of African Internet stakeholder groups in all 55 AU Member States on Internet Governance and Cybersecurity/ Cyber-resilience matters is one of the critical tracks of PRIDA. It is anticipated that IG training courses will be administered at national, regional and continental levels. Online training materials will be made available to ensure the capacity building effort reaches as many African Internet communities and policy makers as possible.

81. Five years after its adoption by the Heads of State, the Malabo convention has been signed by 14 countries and ratified only Five (Senegal, Namibia, Mauritius, Guinea and Ghana). In addition there is a low rate of Cyber policy, Cyber strategy and cyber legislation adopted in the continent. This makes the Cybersecurity in the continent very challenging especially with regard to Cybercrime and Personal Data Protection.

Expected decision from the Committee

82. The Ministers are invited to:

- (i) Request the AU Commission and the AU Member States to provide all necessary resources to speed up the ratification of the AU the Malabo Convention
- (ii) Urge AU Member states to take stock of the provisions of the Malabo Convention, the Budapest convention and the Guidelines on Internet Infrastructure Security in order to promote a safer African Cyberspace.
- (iii) Direct the AU Commission to:
 - a. Facilitate adoption of National Cyber-security strategies;
 - b. Facilitate the adoption of national Cybersecurity legislations by AU Member States;

SUB-SECTION IV: AU AGENDA 2063 PROJECTS AND SPECIFIC INITIATIVES

1. Pan African e-Network (PAeN)

83. The Pan African e-Network project is a joint undertaking by the Government of India and the AUC and whose main objective is to help with capacity building by imparting quality education, as well as medical tele-expertise and consultations to AU Member States by some of the best Indian academic and medical institutions. As of March 2017, the Network was installed in 48 AU member states with the following achievements:

- 22,000 students obtained degrees in various undergraduate and graduate disciplines;
- 770 annual Tele-medicine consultations were carried out;
- 6,700 Continuous Medical Education (CME) sessions were held for nurses and Doctors

84. In July 2017, the Government of India discontinued all the services provided through the network and handed the Infrastructure back over to the Commission, which, then, placed the network hub located in Dakar's suburban area, under the custody of the Government of Senegal. Meanwhile, Senegal continues to generously cover the electricity and water fees while a solution is being sought with a view to resuming the activities of this project.

85. The department prepared reports on the sustainability of the Network, which were presented by the Chairperson to the PRC and the Executive Council. A letter from the Chairperson was sent to the members of the Assembly requesting Member States to support the sustainability of the Network.

86. At its second meeting, the Specialized Technical Committee on Communication and Information Communication Technology, which was held in Addis Ababa from 20 to 24 November 2017, the honourable Ministers requested the Commission, among others, to:

- Explore appropriate financial resources for the continuation of operation of the PAeN as an AU Agenda 2063 flagship project;
- Recommend to AU Policy Organs to allocate adequate financial resources to continue the operationalization of the Pan African e-Network, which is an Agenda 2063 flagship project.

87. All these decisions have been endorsed by the Executive Council. To recall, the sustainability study findings estimated that PAeN's total operating expenditure ((OPEX) amounts to US\$4,221, 440 per annum.

Expected decision from the Committee

88. The Honourable Ministers are invited to:

- (i) Urge Member States to support the sustainability of the network. In this regard, we wish to request this esteemed body to ensure that adequate funding for the network sustainability is being set aside in 2020 budget cycle and beyond, which is estimated at an annual rate of \$90K per each member state;

- (ii) Review, for approval, the draft proposals made by the Assembly of Users meeting held in December 2018 and the bureau of the STC-CICT-2 on the use of the Infrastructure for satellite based services, such as tele-education and new services, among others, including the Pan African Mass Education TV for Talent and Content Development;
- (iii) Request the commission to transfer the common asset of the network under the management of the Regional Satellite Communication organization- RASCOM

2. Cybersecurity

89. Digital Transformation is the catalyst that will allow the African continent to leapfrog into the 21st century and will accelerate actions toward achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Aspirations of the African Union Agenda 2063. With this goal in mind, the Executive Council of the African Union endorsed in 2018 “the AU Declaration on Internet Governance and development of the Digital Economy” and adopted “Cybersecurity as a Flagship project of the African Union Agenda 2063”.

90. Cybersecurity and cybercrimes concerns are evolving and there is an urgent demand to ensure that citizens, governments and businesses on the continent are protected to stimulate and build trust in the use of ICT applications and services.

- (i) By virtue of this, it is by no coincidence that the African Governments have prioritized Digital transformation with the aim of tapping to unlocked potential of the youthful continent. The African Union Commission (AUC) is presently embarking upon a multi sectorial approach to draft a comprehensive Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa that underpins mainstreaming digitalization in the African development policy and integrating digital technology in the delivery of public services.
- (ii) With this goal in mind, the Executive Council of the African Union endorsed in 2018 “the AU Declaration on Internet Governance and development of the Digital Economy” and adopted “Cybersecurity as a Flagship project of the African Union Agenda 2063”.

Expected decision from the Committee

91. The Ministers are invited to:

- (iv) Request the AU Commission to dedicate appropriate resources for the implementation of a comprehensive Cybersecurity programs related to this critical flagship project including assistance to AU Member states to adopt cyber strategies and Cyber legislations and to establish CIRT/CERT ⁵

⁵ Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs) and or Computer Emergency Response Team (CERTs)

(v) Direct the AU Commission to:

- a. Enable member states establish national Cybersecurity governance Agencies;
- b. To conduct Capacity building for policy makers/legislators, law enforcement technical and business communities;
- c. To establish a framework and mechanism for regional cooperation and mutual assistance

SECTION III: INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Background

92. The Directorate of Information & Communication (DIC) developed a Communication & Advocacy Strategy (CAS) for the period 2018 -2023 that identifies and prioritises the key activities to be implemented to ensure that the AU delivers on its mandate and is seen as a “People Centred Organisation and the only truly pan-African organisation working to ensure inclusive and sustainable growth for the African continent and its citizens. The communication activities of the CAS 2018-2023 is benchmarked on the AU MTP 2018-2023 and reflect the priorities of the AUC as relates to ensuring the activities promoted, popularised and disseminated to its key stakeholders especially African Citizens on the continent and in the diaspora are focused on the key programmes to be implemented under Agenda 2063.

93. The CAS 2018-2023 prioritises three Strategic Pillars for Communication
- i. Building the AU Brand Identity and Promoting Agenda 2063
 - ii. Increasing the Visibility of the AU organisation through Advocacy & Public Relations
 - iii. Building sustainable Human Resource Capacity & Competency in Communication

Status of Implementation

94. The status of implementation is as follows:

1. Building the AU brand and promotion of Agenda 2063

Building the AU Brand Identity and Promoting Agenda 2063: The DIC has undertaken several key initiatives around building a stronger AU Brand Identity. These include:

- ii. The development of the 1st ever Brand Identity Style and Communication Guide for the AU which serves as the reference point for all communication and visibility material for the AU and its organs to ensure uniformity in expression of the AU brand and creating one strong AU brand.
- iii. The DIC has commenced the process of developing the 1st ever African Union Communications Policy & Procedures Manual which will provide guidelines on the management and administration of communication within the African Union including on issues related to media engagement, branding, spokespersons, social media policy, website policy, publications policy, use and protection of AU audio visual material through granting of rights, copyright protection and trademarking as well as guideline for communication for elections coverage and crisis communication
- iv. The DIC produced and disseminated the AU Anthem in Swahili, Arabic, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish to promote the unity and solidarity between African countries and the peoples of Africa and the spirit of renewed Pan-Africanism championed by the African Union.
- v. DIC has continued to promote Agenda 2063 on both traditional media and digital platforms and has produced in 2018, 4 documentary films on flagship projects – African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Silencing the

Guns by 2020, African Commodities Strategy and Grand Inga Dam and the Programme for Infrastructure development in Africa (PIDA). DIC intends to continue in this endeavour and in 2019 is undertaking to produce films on the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) and the African Passport & Free Movement of Persons

- vi. DIC partnered with several airline networks (Kenya Airways, Ethiopian Airlines, Egypt Air, South African Airways) to include in their inflight publications advertorials promoting Agenda 2063 thereby reaching an African and global audience
- vii. To promote youth engagement with Agenda 2063, DIC is undertaking in 2019 to produce animated videos that will inform and educate Africa's youth and wider audiences on What is Agenda 2063, the Flagship Projects, the Aspirations of Agenda 2063, the Goals of Agenda 2063 as well as the National Development Priorities. In addition, DIC is working with media partners to support the promotion of the 1 Million by 2021 Youth initiative launched in 2019.

2. African book of records

- i. DIC continued to work on the African Book of Records which was adopted as one of the tools to promote Agenda 2063 specifically Aspiration 5 which seeks to enhance the strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics of Africa. In 2018 in Harare Zimbabwe
- ii. Improving Corporate Visibility, Advocacy & Public Relations: DIC has continued to focus its engagement with African media to promote visibility for the AU
- iii. DIC has improved its use of digital platforms to communicate the work of the AU using both social media and websites and in addition launched a new more interactive and robust African Union website in 2019. DIC has also undertaken to develop mobile applications for Agenda 2063 as well as an AU Procurement app to promote visibility of AU tender and procurement opportunities to a wider continental audience.
- iv. DIC has supported the advocacy initiatives to ratify the AU treaties including publication and dissemination of print and digital versions to media to inform on status of ratifications by member states. DIC is also working with the AUC Office of Legal Counsel to develop an online interactive platform that will provide detailed information about the AU treaties to the public.

3. AU Studio Project

DIC has continued with its endeavours to set up a modern Audio-Visual Studio that will support development of news and other content that will enhance the visibility of the activities of the AU. The architectural design has been completed as part of the FOCAC project however delays in actual commencement of work has impacted delivery. DIC has received offers from the Republic of South Africa to support the launch of the AU studio b 2020.

4. AU Media Awards

- i. Creation and Launch of a Pan-African network of Agenda 2063 journalists (in collaboration with AU Development Agency -NEPAD)
- ii. DIC has improved engagement and collaboration with the African Union of Broadcasting (formerly Union of African National Radio and Television URTNA, which was a specialised institution of the African Union, like PANA) using their networks to disseminate news about AU programmes and activities
- iii. MOU signed with Africa 24 TV Network, the only African owned news channel and broadcasting in over 25 countries in Africa and in Europe and North America through broadcast partners
- iv. In line with the decision from the STC-CICT 2017 for the AU to recognise the contributions of journalists towards the achievement of Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 and institutionalise the Pan-African Media Awards on Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment and the contributions of journalists who give attention to development issues towards the achievement of Agenda 2063 and institutionalise the Pan-African Media Awards on Promoting Agenda 2063. DIC has undertaken the following
 - a. Partnership with African Women in Media (AWiM) to promote Agenda 2063. In 2019 during the AWiM Conference, 5 journalists awarded in the areas of :- African Continental Free Trade Area; Silencing the Guns by 2020; African Passport and Free Movement of People; Free Trade & Migration; Women and Free Trade
 - b. Consultations held in different media forums to define the award categories that will constitute the AU Continental Awards to be instituted and to be presented to ministers during the STC-CICT in 2019

5. Human Resource Capacity & Competency in Communication

Building sustainable Human Resource Capacity & Competency in Communication: DIC instituted in 2017 the 1st annual communications training workshop that brings together communication officers from AUC and Organs to undertake training in a collegiate environment with subject matter experts to enhance the skills and knowledge. DIC has also undertaken to provide communication training for AUC leadership such as commissioners as relates to media engagement

Opportunities and constraints

95. Opportunities and constraints to be noted are as follows:

- The main constraint is the budget allocated for publicity and advertisement in view to promote the AU's activities is very limited. Whereas DIC is often asked to work with Member States and national Broadcasters, the reality remains that with the growth of private owned media which has disaggregated the media landscape, the use of only national broadcasting platforms limits the ability of the AU to reach wider audiences especially in more media competitive markets. Reliance on free publicity, press releases is limiting if the AU also

produces content such as films and advertorials but has no budget to extend reach to private media as is the case with other comparable public sector institutions and even member states.

- DIC staffing is constrained with a staff of only 7 Professional Communication staff servicing the needs of the entire organisation. Communication is also hampered by recruitment within departments of communication staff or placement by d partners with no recourse or association with DIC creating a disassociated communications body with no alignment or accountability towards achieving corporate communication objectives

Proposed recommendations

96. The Ministers are requested to:

- (i) Commend the DIC on the work it has done to build the Brand Identity of the AU and implement processes and procedures to professionalize communication within the organization and request the AU Commission to ensure the Brand & Communication Style Guide and the Communication Policies and Procedures are instituted within the organization.
- (ii) Request the AU Commission to dedicate realistic and appropriate resources (human, material and financial) to capacitate the DIC to enable it to better and effectively communicate to various stakeholders and audiences on different media platforms in a strategic and consistent manner
- (iii) Encourage National Broadcasters to support dissemination of content produced by the AU such as documentary films including supporting the editing of produced films into national and local languages to reach the widest audiences
- (iv) Further commend the DIC for its continued engagement with African media and request the AU Commission to support the DIC to implement and launch the AU Media Awards within the period 2020-2021 including providing the necessary support to ensure its effective implementation
- (v) Commend the Republic of South Africa for its offer to assist the AUC to hasten the launch of the AU Studio and encourage the AU Commission to support DIC and the Member State to ensure a fully functional studio is launched in 2020

PART II: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM AU SPECIALIZED INSTITUTIONS AND PARTNERS

African Telecommunications Union (ATU)

Background

97. ATU has initiated a number of projects following the approval of the Strategic Plan 2019-2022 by the 5th Session of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries held in Nairobi, Kenya in August, 2018. Through this strategic plan, ATU aspires for a strengthened organisation capable of delivering value to its membership, by undertaking programmes that fully meet its statutory objectives. One of the key success factors is the enhanced membership and AU support as well as goodwill from partners to ensure ATU has adequate resources to deliver on its mandate. Currently, ATU has a membership of 48 Member States and 43 Associate Members and efforts are ongoing to recruit other non-member countries.

Issues

1. The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)

98. Emerging ICT technologies are key for the development of the continent and have a huge potential to bridge the digital divide. Africa needs to develop strategies that help countries to champion and implement those technologies and to create an African digital industry and market to satisfy the needs of our continent and make innovation an engine for the sustainable development in Africa.

99. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries (CPL-18) held in August 2018 in Nairobi established a 4IR Committee to develop a draft strategy framework for Africa on the 4IR. The first meeting of the committee was convened in Nairobi in March 2019 and one of the recommended action plans is to engage with the AUC and other stakeholders on the implementation of these recommendations including harmonization of legal and regulatory frameworks in key areas including review of cyber security convention.

100. A questionnaire on the same was developed and circulated to all the African countries and the results are being analysed to assist with the development of the draft Strategy.

2. Optimization of the GE84 (FM Broadcasting) Plan for Africa project

101. FM Radio remains a key ICT service in Africa delivering immerse social-economic value across Africa. Indeed “Radio [is] still king of media industry” (Business Kenya Today). Yet, in many countries, new and expansion of the FM radio is being hindered by

lack of available FM frequencies. While some countries have commenced national programmes and initiatives to optimise their FM plans, it is essential and better if the Plan optimization is undertaken in a coordinated continental-wide approach. Doing so would be borrowing from the success of the optimisation of the GE06 (the DTT Plan) which was done on a coordinated continental approach and resulted in the Second Digital Dividend spectrum (the 700MHz band IMT spectrum).

102. ATU with the assistance of the ITU will from January 2020 to December 2021 embark on a coordinated and African-wide modification of the frequency plan of the Geneva 1984 (the FM sound broadcasting frequency plan) in order to achieve optimum number of usable frequencies.

3. African representation in international events

103. It is noted that there is lack of coordination and representation of Africa in the international ICT organizations, other than ITU, which deliberate ICT and Internet public policy. The concern is that a number of decisions are taken in many foras where African representation is uncoordinated hence the need for more coordination to address key issues with one single voice. ATU is currently undertaking a scoping study on this matter and hopes to have the output of the study submitted to the STC once ready.

104. Possible solution: (i) there is need for AUC to share the outcomes of the meetings of its various ICT organs and also other fora where it participates. (ii) From the outcome of the scoping study, there might need to set up a national as well as continental coordination mechanisms, both coordinated by or with active participation of ICT Ministers, so Africa speaks with one voice in international fora.

4. African Candidatures for major positions in ICT Organizations/ITU

105. After the results of the ITU PP-18 elections in 2018 Africa lost all key positions in ITU management for lack of coordination and consensus among African countries. There is need to consider the issue at AU level to find a new mechanism where Africa, after regional consensus (like the other regions do), submits a single candidate for each position to ensure his/her success and be fully supported by the region and its allies.

Possible solution: There is need to activate the technical process of the African Candidatures Committee at the AU level with reference to international ICT positions and harmonize the interests of the region.

5. Relationship with the AUC

106. There is a greater need for synergy to ensure that in the implementation of the ATU Strategic Plan, ATU's activities are aligned to the AUC activities in this area with for example; setting up a coordination and collaboration framework between AUC and ATU to deliver expected outcomes on programmes; and, to convene annual activities on common areas.

107. The implementation of ATU strategic plan is constrained by the limited resources at its disposal. Therefore, AUC is requested to support in some small but appreciable way the Union financially, like it is already supporting the budget for other sister specialized institution, to ensure full implementation of their activities.

108. That would create a nexus that cultivates a lot of goodwill and collaboration in the implementation of programmes.

6. ATU Day – 7th December 2019

109. So much is taking place in the sphere of Emergency Communications by non-African stakeholders – mainly UN based (ITU, FAO and WMO) and private sector groups (ESOA, GSMA). There is need for Africa to step up activities in this area. A possible way is to have it as an Agenda through the STC which could then discuss the roles of various stakeholders and agree on the need to convene a stakeholders meeting.

110. Notwithstanding the above, the one area where AUC/ATU could help is bringing awareness on urgent need for ET implementation in Africa, and to recommend Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) as a great starting point as well as the implementation of the ITU guidelines of ET in general.

111. This year, ATU Administrative Council at its meeting held in Lusaka, Zambia in May 2019 approved the theme: “Emergency Communications for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management” The theme was set against the backdrop of the recent devastation caused by Cyclone Idai that hit Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. The theme is consistent with the ATU statutory objectives and the current strategic plan. The African Telecommunications Day falls on 7th December of every year and is aimed at commemorating the establishment of the Union in 1977.

112. The Union therefore plans to have a two days workshop in one of the affected countries to commemorate ATU day under the chosen theme so as to raise awareness and the profile of Emergency Telecommunications particularly in the face of climate change.

7. Preparatory process for WRC-19 and WTSA-20 meetings

113. World Radiocommunications Conferences (WRC-19) is of profound significance to Africa and the World, with WRCs providing an unparalleled, authoritative platform to improve the global principle framework for management of the Radio Spectrum and satellite orbital resource and RAs being responsible for the structure, programme and approval of Radiocommunication studies including technical preparatory studies for WRCs. ATU has so far organized 3 African Preparatory Meetings (APMs), and also convened three Working Groups Meetings, which has given the African region preliminary common positions on about 87% of the issues for WRC-19.

114. Similarly ATU has initiated the preparatory process for the World Telecommunications Standardization Assembly (WTSA-20) and has so far organized one meeting that identified key regional issues in relation to the Assembly agenda in order to synergize African positions to the Assembly. The first meeting also established two

Working Groups (i) Group 1 on Working Methods and (ii) Group 2 on Work Program and Organization.

115. The second preparatory meeting is expected to be held in Kampala Uganda from 7-11 October 2019 and Member States are expected to identify champions for the issues identified in the two working groups.

116. We call on the African Union Commission to support this preparatory process and urging countries on the importance to make contributions on key identified issues.

3. Proposed recommendations for Ministers' consideration

117. The honourable Ministers are invited to approve/endorse:

- (i) the implementation of the 4IR recommendations including harmonization of legal and regulatory frameworks in key areas including review of cyber security convention;
- (ii) Optimization of the GE84 (FM Broadcasting) Plan for Africa project;
- (iii) the setting up of a coordination mechanism between ATU and AUC to share the outcomes of the meetings of its various ICT organs and also other fora where it participates so that Africa speaks with one voice in international arena;
- (iv) activation of the technical process of the African Candidatures Committee at the AU level with reference to international ICT positions and harmonize the interests of the region;
- (v) to contribute content and participate at the two day forum planned for 5-6 December 2019 to create awareness and profile of Emergency Telecommunications;
- (vi) to recall Ministers on the necessity to countries make contributions on key identified issues;
- (vii) support ATU financially to implement its activities.

Pan African Postal Union (PAPU)

118. In implementing the 2017 Addis Ababa Declaration the Pan African Postal Union (PAPU) focused in collaboration with the AU Commission on the coordination of the implementation of the project on Electrification and Connectivity of Post Offices in rural areas, Financial Inclusion of the low-income population and e-Commerce development in Africa which is as follows:

1. Implementation of Project on Electrification and Connectivity of Post Offices

119. Many African countries face significant gaps in their infrastructure, which prevent them from fully reaching their development potential. This situation is even more acute in rural areas, where natural market forces have been unable to address the many existing challenges. However, in Africa and indeed throughout the world, there is a physical network which can provide concrete answers to rural population's needs in the field of communications, access to financial services and government services, logistics etc. That network is the postal network which is present in most rural areas of Africa. The proposed project plans to use post offices as catalyzers for the socio-economic development of rural communities.

Problem statement

120. In general, Africa is characterized by the following scenario:

- Financial exclusion- more than 86% do not have formal bank accounts;
- High cost of remittances- Africa is the region to which it is most expensive to send money For example, in Q1 2017, the average cost of sending £120 from the UK to Africa was 9.4% of the send amount, significantly higher than the global average for sending money at 7.5%;
- Wide digital and communications divide;
- Limited access to government services especially in the rural areas;
- Lack of economic opportunities e.g. limited access to credit facilities, little information on external markets etc particularly for rural inhabitants.

121. Given the above scenario and considering that unlike banks, for example, post offices (about 30,000 outlets in Africa) tend to be located in large economic centres and have a strong presence in rural areas. These outlets indeed apart from traditional mail services offer a wide range of other products such as: financial services, including savings and remittances, communication services or logistics.

122. Therefore the project would use this infrastructure which is present throughout in rural areas and bring it up to speed in terms of connectivity and using it as a catalyzer for socio economic development

Participating countries

123. Thirteen (13) countries, namely, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda were identified to participate in pilot project.

Project update

124. The following countries: Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda have shown remarkable progress in the implementation of the project.

125. The update per country is as follows:

Kenya

In Kenya five (5) Post offices were identified in the pilot phase. However, only two (2) have been electrified as the other three (3) were closed.

The Government included the Electrification and Connectivity Project in the national Development Plans in line with Declaration N0. AU STC-CIT-1CP

The services offered in the post offices as a result of this include money transfer and agency banking services.

Kenya's growth strategy is to deploy connectivity to the offices with power but have no internet connectivity.

Kenya is implementing the project by internally generated funds particularly office preparation as well as from the National budget for the delivery of government services via Huduma Centres spread across the country as well as connecting to the national grid for power supply.

Malawi

The following five post offices were identified as gene pigs: Bilira, Chikweu, Chituka, Mwansambo and Phalula. However, using the ECP model, Malawi Posts Corporation (MPC) in collaboration with the Government of Malawi (GoM) is now also implementing one stop concept under the banner "Mlambe Centre".

Malawi is implementing the Rural Electrification project (MAREP) through which all the five pilot offices are connected to its grid. Funding for the MAREP is from the National Budget.

However, funding for connectivity in terms of service offering is done by the MPC annual Budget.

At the Mlambe Centres, the following products and services are offered:

- All postal services including money transfer services;
- Tax collection on behalf of Malawi Revenue Authority (MRA);
- Driving license renewal;
- Passports application and renewal;
- Birth and death registration etc

Tanzania

The pilot project for Tanzania covers five post offices as follows: Mwanga, Monduli, Karatu, Mahenge and Muheza. The solutions comprise solar energy for electrification, at least 512 kbps link using optical fibre cables with a 3G backup for connectivity and an IT solution.

Uganda

The project is progressing under the name ICT Public Access Facilities Project. A memorandum of understanding was signed between the operator and the regulator for funding of the four (4) pilot offices, namely, Kitgum, Moroto, Mubende and Kasese. The funding is up to the tune of the equivalence of USD160,000 and will go a long way in procuring solar panels, hardware, photocopying and scanning machines, furniture, carrying out civil works, as well as improvement of the ambience of the offices.

As a growth strategy, Uganda is in the process of identifying ten (10) more post offices within the framework of ECP.

The project is being co-funded by the Uganda post regular budget and the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC).

Expected decisions from the Committee

126. The honourable ministers are requested to:

- (i) Take note of progress made in implementing the project;
- (ii) Request the PAPU Secretariat to assess the impact of the project in pilot countries.

2. e-com@Africa project

127. Ecom@Africa is a project that has been developed by the Universal Postal Union to facilitate postal organizations in Africa to participate in the growing electronic commerce.

128. Africa was chosen as the starting point for this initiative because it is currently the weakest link in global electronic trade chain. Once the project is developed in Africa, it will be replicated in other parts of the world, especially in the other continents.

Problem Statement

129. Both the UPU Doha (2013–2016) and Istanbul (2017–2020) world postal strategies identified and recognized the importance of e-commerce to the development of postal services. Moreover, it was noted that citizens and enterprises were excluded from e-commerce, especially small and medium enterprises. Young people and women were also marginalized and lacked affordable access to e-commerce platforms, payment and delivery opportunities, especially for cross-border e-commerce.

130. The above negative state of the business environment existed and yet there was no emphasis on the use of the post for ecommerce purpose hitherto. In this regard, the aforementioned Congresses resolved that the Union member countries, particularly through their designated operators (DOs), must contribute to the development of e-commerce through their pervasive network and multi-dimensional services as a key facilitator of e-commerce aiming at establishing an integrated, inclusive and innovative e-commerce ecosystem provided by DOs through e-commerce (online) platforms using the postal network and products for cross-border logistics, deliveries, returns and payments.

131. Ecom@Africa promotes openness in that it encourages public-private partnerships and positions the designated operator as an important infrastructure partner for implementing the African Union Agenda 2063 and UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the related Sustainable Development Goals. E-commerce inclusion, especially for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), would support national objectives for inclusive development and job creation due to increased exports and imports (trade flows) resulting from the activities of MSMEs in global e-commerce.

Competitive edge of the Post

132. Postal organizations are among the best suited outfits for e-commerce business. With UPU membership, the designated operators of various countries enjoy the following advantages:

- a) **Common global rules** – Under the UPU, all designated operators are covered by the various treaties of the Union that harmonizes operational and technical standards for transmission of all postal items to all parts of the world
- b) **Cross-border exchange and transit** – The UPU has working relationships with customs unions, airline bodies and cross-border security organizations to ensure that there are uniform standards for postal items from across the globe and that these standards are accepted by the facilitating bodies in each and every member country;
- c) **Fair trade and settlement regime** – All designated postal organizations are governed by a uniform rates settlement agreement that guarantees not only acceptance of items from one postal organization to the other but all ensures the agreed rates are applicable in all the transactions;

d) Guarantee to Universal Postal Services - As provided for in UPU treaties, all designated postal operators are obligated to offer universal postal services. This means that through the postal system items will be delivered to all parts of the world under the established standards and without additional costs or special arrangements

Benefits to postal organizations

133. Through the implementation of Ecom@Africa project, the Africa postal organizations are expected to benefit from enhanced postal capacity. This improvement will make the organizations operationally ready for the e-commerce business. The areas of improvement include supply chain logistics, payment system, information technology and marketing.

Expected impact

134. For the postal organizations, Ecom@Africa will give them a new and enhanced service portfolio with very high potential for growth and profitability. This will be key for sustainability of the organizations that will be guaranteed by improved operational efficiency.

135. The project will also have positive benefits for the participating countries' economies as it will give outlet for virtue trade to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. This trade inclusion will in effect increase employment opportunities, particularly to youth and women that will in turn contribute to poverty reduction and revenue growth and increased intra-African Trade as one of the objectives of the African Continental Free Area (AfCFTA).

136. Above all, the project will address inclusion in many aspects of the economy, including reduction of trade barriers for smaller players.

Countries already looped into the initiative

137. So far through UPU's outreach, the following countries have already been addressed:

- **Those that have signed implementation agreement** – Tunisia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia
- **Those negotiating** – South Africa and Kenya
- **Those already implementing** – Tunisia, Côte d'Ivoire, South Africa, Ethiopia
- **Those with expression of interest** – Morocco, Cameroon, Ghana, Djibouti and Tanzania

Expected decision from Ministers

138. **The honorable Ministers are invited to:**

- (i) Take note of progress made;

- (ii) Encourage Member State to join the project and implement it based on the following key steps:
- Set up a national project team and appoint a lead institution to manage and oversee the implementation of the initiative, including the drafting of the implementation plan in consultation with the UPU International Bureau and PAPU;
 - Ensure appropriate policy and regulatory alignment of Ecom@Africa with national e-commerce development and postal strategies;
 - Provide all the necessary resources (including any necessary procurement initiatives) to ensure the successful implementation of the initiative. In this regard, the government of the Union member country will pay in advance all expenses to be incurred by the UPU International Bureau and/ or PAPU in the implementation of the project, including administrative and operational services;
 - Provide incentives to simplify procedures and make e-commerce more accessible to populations and MSMEs;
 - Provide targeted communication campaigns and appropriate incentive programmes to encourage MSMEs and e-commerce stakeholders to participate in Ecom@Africa;
 - Ensure the collaborative participation of the key stakeholders in Ecom@Africa throughout the project phases.
- (iii) Invite the AU Commission to work towards seeking synergy between Ecom@Africa and similar existing projects;
- (iv) Call upon the PAPU Secretariat to report on the impact of the project in pilot countries.

Report of the AU-EU Digital Economy Task Force (DETF) (Annex 4)

Background

139. Home to the youngest population in the world, Africa is progressing rapidly in digital adoption. Over the past ten years, the continent has recorded the highest growth globally in Internet access, moving from 2.1% in 2005 to 24.4% in 2018⁶. The progress is not only visible in Internet connectivity but also in mobile-cellular telephone subscriptions and in households with a computer, and the trend is affecting the economy as a whole. GSMA reported that the “mobile economy” accounted for 6.7% of the overall GDP in Africa in 2016, representing US\$ 153 billion. This is forecasted to reach 7.6% (US\$ 214 billion) of the overall African GDP by 2020. Technology-related productivity gains in crucial sectors (i.e. financial services, education, health, retail, agriculture, and government) in Africa are predicted to reach between US\$ 148bn and US\$ 318bn by 2025.⁷

140. The digital economy in Africa provides not only opportunities for increased job creation and data for actionable insights, but also the basis for recognizing human rights, accelerating access to quality basic services, improving transparency and accountability of governments, and enhancing democracy. eServices can improve all areas of public and basic service delivery. eHealth can increase access and the quality of care through telemedicine and hospital information management systems; eEducation and eLearning can support the establishment of collective digital educational resources, and virtual reality can increase access of youths in remote areas to quality VET; smallholder agriculture can benefit from market information and early warning systems, and governance can be improved through the use of digital civic registries, civic tech, etc.

141. Africa has the opportunity to harness the digital economy as a driver of sustainable and inclusive growth and innovation to achieve the sustainable development goals through ICTs—but if it fails to harness these opportunities, its economies risk isolation, stagnation and an increasing digital divide. With adequate investment in connectivity, suitable reforms, support to policy dialogue and technical assistance; Africa may be able to accelerate growth models, allowing the digital economy to influence all sectors of the economy and society. The result may be newfound inclusiveness, sustainability, growth and poverty reduction.

142. Africa’s leadership has a stated ambition to create a Single Digital market in the continent. African governments have committed to accelerate sustainable socio-economic development on the continent by adopting the African Union Agenda 2063 and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), while substantial harmonisation work is taking place at the level of the majority of RECs. In addition, initiatives such as the Smart Africa Alliance⁸ are bringing new additional African-made solutions in boosting the digital economy in the continent.

⁶ [ITU World Telecommunication / ICT Indicators database](#). Website.

⁷ Manyika, J. et al. (2013) [Lions go digital: The Internet’s transformative potential in Africa](#). McKinsey Global Institute. Website.

⁸ [Smart Africa Alliance overview](#). Website.

143. In the European Union, the Digital Single Market is creating a space of competitiveness and innovation and a common market for more than 500 million people. It is based on a comprehensive set of policies, programmes and regulations designed to remove national barriers, promote connectivity, digital skills, research, innovation and entrepreneurship. It includes measures to support digital trade and eCommerce and the interoperability of eGovernment services. At the same time, it addresses the challenges of the protection of citizen's rights, including their right to privacy.

144. The aim of both Africa and the EU is to cooperate in order to better connect the two markets and acceleration of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals based on a digital partnership based on a shared vision and common principles. This has been recognized during the 2017 AU-EU Summit through the Declaration where AU and EU leaders committed to “seize the opportunities of technological development and the digital economy, notably by exchanging on measurable ICT policy, legal and regulatory frameworks including cyber-security and biometrics, by supporting investments in digital infrastructure, and mainstreaming digitalization as an enabler to increase efficiency and effectiveness of interventions in all sectors”.

145. In this regard, the 2nd Ordinary Session of the AU Specialized Technical Committee on Communication and ICT reaffirmed and underscored the essential role of digitalization agenda and the greatest opportunity it offers to Africa to drive the fundamental changes in the 21st century. Moreover the 30th Assembly of the AU committed to ensure legal and regulatory environments that will enable growth of Africa's Digital economy through innovative applications and services, making the Internet central to Africa's development agenda.

146. Likewise, in his State of the Union speech in September 2018,⁹ EU Commission President Juncker proposed a new Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs, seeking to drive forward intercontinental cooperation on an equal footing.

147. The alliance's long-term aim is to create a comprehensive continent-to-continent free trade agreement between Africa and the EU, building on the AfCFTA. Among the specific actions triggered by the Alliance, four thematic task forces were set up on digital solutions, energy, transport and agriculture.

148. In line with the above, both AU Commission and European Commission set up in December 2018 a Digital Economy Task Force (DETF) to guide the EU and AU when prioritising actions for cooperation. The Task Force aim is to provide a platform of partnership for the private sector, donors, international organisations, financial institutions and civil society based on a shared understanding of how an already evolving African

⁹ European Commission (2018) [State of the Union 2018: Towards a new 'Africa - Europe Alliance' to deepen economic relations and boost investment and jobs and Communication on a new Africa – Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs](#). 12.9.2018 COM (2018) 643.

digital transformation can achieve cross-border integration, accelerate sustainable development and bring benefits to all citizens.

149. As result, the EU-AU DETF has worked in developing a shared vision, a set of common agreed principles and a list of policy recommendations and actions focusing on four main objectives.

A shared vision

150. The parties of the DETF share a long-term vision of an inclusive digital economy and society in which every citizen—notably women and young people—has the opportunity to participate in the digital world. Due attention is given to the challenges of job displacement, disinformation, protection of both privacy and human rights. A more harmonised set of policies, rules and legislation at the regional and continental level lead to increased investment, while workers and consumers' rights are protected. eGovernment services are interoperable and accessible regardless of the country of origin; digital entrepreneurs are able to set up businesses with ease at low administrative costs and data. Digital goods, services and physical products associated with intra-African digital trade circulate freely across borders.

A multi stakeholder partnership based on common principles

151. Achieving the above vision requires concerted political support, the involvement of governments and the mobilisation of the private sector, civil society, academia and international organisations that have a clear interest in creating prosperity on the continent. Such a partnership must be grounded on common principles:

1. African leadership
2. Human-centred approach
3. Digital-by-default services
4. Build on the existing institutional framework
5. Free flow of data
6. Mutual benefit between Africa and Europe
7. A transparent, predictable and stable regulatory environment
8. Political leadership based on respect for democracy and human rights
9. Improved stakeholder coordination
10. Climate sustainability
11. Inclusive and sustainable development

Recommendations

152. The major recommendations are as follows:

1. Accelerating the achievement of universal access to affordable broadband

- (i) Boost investment in telecom infrastructure from the local access to networks to an interconnected continent and developing financial instruments that are tailored for

the investment specificity of each infrastructure project through partnerships between investors, government, financial institutions and international donors.

- (ii) Promote a favourable regulatory environment for competitive and harmonised regional markets in the field of connectivity.
- (iii) Connect rural Africa through new business models and partnerships.
- (iv) Promote measures that increase affordability of broadband and technology to citizens and protect them from cyber threats.

2. Guaranteeing essential skills for all, in education and Vocational Education and Training (VET), to enable citizens to thrive in the digital age.

- (i) Work towards developing partnerships through a multi-stakeholder African Alliance for Digital Skills and Jobs, which involves African and European partners, to engage in policy dialogue and raise awareness among policymakers to develop digital-by-default policies and to harmonise efforts at the continental, regional and national level, based on a thorough assessment of market opportunities.
- (ii) Mainstream digital skills and responsible online behaviour among all citizens to enable them to be active and successful participants in the digital society and raise awareness of risks in terms of digital rights, online safety and security.
- (iii) Promote digital and transversal skills in schools and other educational institutions, by reviewing education curricula in accordance with the evolving needs and trends in the digital economy and society.
- (iv) Facilitate digital skills development across all sectors of the economy that use technology with a specific focus on governments, administrations, service providers and civil society through the provision of digital and transversal skills to those entering or already engaged in the labour market, including ICT professionals and digital entrepreneurs.

3. Improving the business environment and facilitating access to finance and business support services to boost digitally enabled entrepreneurship.

- (i) Establish and strengthen partnerships between African and European partners, as well as among African regional actors, to harmonise efforts related to digital entrepreneurship at the continental, regional and national level.
- (ii) Adapt the local regulatory framework to the Digital Economy at all levels throughout the value chain, to ensure flexibility and ease of doing business to digital enterprises of all sizes, MSMEs, start-ups and social enterprises.
- (iii) Contribute to the creation of an enabling ecosystem that addresses all interrelated barriers and needs and improve advisory services to stimulate digital entrepreneurship for digital enterprises, including MSMEs, start-ups and social enterprises.
- (iv) Facilitate access to finance and funding mechanisms for digital enterprises of all sizes, MSMEs, start-ups and social enterprises, at all levels.

4. Accelerating the adoption of eServices and the further Accelerating the adoption of eServices and the further

- (i) Make a priority in deploying the essential enabling building blocks of eGovernance services like eID, digitalising and interconnecting public registries, cashless government and open data for innovation; with the goal of enabling the Digital Economy while assuring more inclusive societies, where access to basic rights and services is ensured.
- (ii) Integrate the provision of eServices, developed by both the public and private sector, with adequate legal acts and regulation at all levels, ensuring that data needed to provide eServices for the community is openly available while fully respecting data protection rights.
- (iii) Encourage intra-African integration in digital trade to achieve wider participation by enterprises in national, regional and international e-commerce, especially cross-border, as an enabler for unprecedented market opportunities for all.
- (iv) Encourage action towards achieving interoperability and provide even further benefits to citizens and businesses, building on success stories in the African continent on the development and uptake of digital financial services.

Way forward

153. The way forward includes dissemination of the Report and the development of a roadmap for the implementation of the policy recommendations.

Expected decisions from the Committee

154. **The honorable ministers are requested to:**

- (i) Take note of the DETF Report and commend both AU Commission and European Commission for progress made in implementing the 2017 AU-EU Summit Declaration;
- (ii) Invite the AU Commission to disseminate the Report to all Member States and include the key findings and policy recommendations in the Comprehensive Digital Strategy for Africa;
- (iii) Request Member States and Stakeholders to provide inputs and guidance for the way forward notably the development of a roadmap for implementation.

PART III: CCICT GOVERNANCE, COORDINATION, POPULARIZATION AND PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL FORA

Participation in International Fora

155. The Committee took note of the holding meetings during the 2019-2021 period and recommended massive participation from AU Member States and Africa speaking with one voice:

- World Radiocommunication Conference 2019 (WRC-19) from 28 October to 22 November 2019, Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt;
- 3rd Extraordinary Congress to take place from 24 to 25 September 2019 at the International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG) in Geneva, Switzerland, on Postal Terminal Dues.
- 27th UPU Ordinary Congress to be held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire on August 2020.
- Global Internet Governance Forum from 25 to 29 November 2019 in Berlin, Germany.

ANNEXES

1. Action Plan for the implementation of the STC-2 Declaration
2. Comprehensive Digital transformation strategy (DTS) for Africa
3. Personal Data Protection Guidelines for Africa
4. Report of the AU-EU Digital Economy Task Force (DETF)