

**AFRICAN UNION-HORN OF AFRICA INITIATIVE (AUHOAI) 5 YEAR PLAN
OF ACTION (2025-2029) AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX**

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ACRONYMS

AUC	African Union
AU-HOAI	African Union-Horn of Africa Initiative
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CoESPU	Center of Excellence for Stability Police Units
EAC	East Africa Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
GCM	Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
KII	Key Informant Interview
IR	Inception Report
MPFA	Migration Policy Framework for Africa
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation
DAC	Development's Development Assistance Committee
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	High Commissioner for Human Rights
RECs	Regional Economic Commissions
ROC	Regional Operational Centre
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SLO	Special Liaison Office
SoM	Smuggling of Migrants
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TiP	Trafficking in Persons
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNEG	United Nations Ethical Guidelines
UNHCR	United Nations Commission on Human Rights
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization

BACKGROUND TO THE 5 YEAR PLAN OF ACTION 2025-2029 AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The African Union-Horn of Africa Initiative (AU-HoAI) was established and launched in 2014 through the Khartoum Declaration¹, the main aim of this initiative is to provide a forum for AU Member States from the Horn of Africa region to exchange information, share experiences and improve cooperation on migration management in the region and jointly adopt measures towards countering human trafficking and smuggling of migrants, as well as irregular migration². Member States of the Initiative include Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Sudan as Core Countries; while Djibouti, Kenya, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Tunisia are also Members. The AU Commission, supported by IOM and UNHCR provided a Secretariat of the Initiative.

The AU-HoAI also fosters closer collaboration between countries in the Horn of Africa which is crucial in effectively combating TiP and SoM networks that often operate transnationally. This collaborative spirit echoes frameworks like the ECOWAS Freetown Roadmap, which establishes a structure for information sharing and joint investigations on TiP across West Africa³. By strengthening the foundation for regional cooperation, the AU-HoAI allows for a more comprehensive response against these crimes.

On their part, the Horn of Africa Member States have also been putting measures in place to deal with the challenges of TiP and SoM at State level. One such effort is legislative and policy reforms on combating irregular migration in their countries, especially TIP and SOM. Countries like Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti have adopted anti-TIP and anti-SOM laws aligning with the Palermo Protocol, a cornerstone international treaty to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children.

Following an evaluation of the AU-HoAI, the need to address some of the gaps and challenges for the initiative to achieve its maximum potential were identified. These include clarity in AU-HoAI's mandate and scope, including its leadership and fundraising strategy. The evaluation identified need for AU Member States in the Horn of Africa region to provide clear leadership and direction on the future of this initiative. There is also need to address level of participation and frequency of the forums of the meeting. Furthermore, elevating the decision-making process to ministerial or even head-of-state involvement would ensure tangible outcomes and stronger member state commitment. By addressing these shortcomings, the AU-HOAI can evolve into a more robust and impactful force in combating TiP and SoM in the Horn of Africa.

This 5-year (2025-2029) strategy and implementation Plan is designed to reinforce the AU-HoAI contribution to countering TiP and SoM in the Horn of Africa from 205 to 2029 by addressing the above areas identified during the evaluation. The five-year strategy will therefore focus on the following areas:

¹ International Organization for Migration (IOM): <https://www.iom.int/african-union-horn-africa-initiative-human-trafficking-and-smuggling-migrants-au-hoai>

² African Union: https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/32824-file-16-04-13_informational_note_on_the_HoA_initiative_final.pdf

³ Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). "New Regional Road Map to Strengthen Counter-Trafficking in West Africa: The Freetown Roadmap". <https://www.iom.int/news/new-regional-road-map-strengthen-counter-trafficking-west-africa>

I. Develop and adopt a clear Terms of Reference to define clarity on structure, modality and leadership of the Initiative

As a start, the AUHoAI secretariat will work closely with Member States to develop a clear Terms of Reference to guide the operational modality of this Initiative. Specific areas of the TOR will include clarity of criteria for membership, level participation, leadership cycle and secretariat roles. The TOR should provide clarity whether this initiative is operational in nature or political including decision making process and procedures.

In particular, emphasis should be the Leadership and Secretariat clarity. There is need for clarity in terms of how Member States will be involved in the leadership of the Initiative for ownership purposes. The Commission, supported by IOM and other partners should be well facilitated to provide Secretariat role to this Initiative. This may be through provision of dedicated staff to support the work of the Initiative as it the case of Khartoum Process and other similar mechanism. The following table shows the activities to be implemented in developing and adopting a clear Terms of Reference to define clarity on structure, modality and leadership of the Initiative.

Activity	Description	Deliverable
Stakeholder Consultation Workshop	Organize a workshop with representatives from all member states, including government officials, regional organizations, and civil society. The workshop should discuss the desired structure, operation modality, and leadership of the Initiative	- Workshop report summarizing key discussion points and proposed options for structure, modality, and leadership
Comparative Analysis	Conduct a comparative analysis of successful regional cooperation initiatives in Africa (e.g., IGAD, SADC) to identify best practices in terms of structure, leadership models, and decision-making processes	- Report outlining key learnings and recommendations from the analysis of other initiatives.
Drafting and Refinement	A core team, composed of representatives from member states and relevant experts, drafts the Terms of Reference (ToR) based on workshop outcomes and the comparative analysis report. The draft ToR is then circulated for feedback from member states and stakeholders	- Drafted Terms of Reference document incorporating feedback

Validation Workshop	Organize a validation workshop to present the draft ToR and gather final feedback from member states and stakeholders.	- Finalized Terms of Reference document endorsed by participating member states
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The Horn of Africa Initiative website can be used to share workshop materials, draft documents, and facilitate online feedback. Consideration should be given to translating documents into the working languages of the member states.

II. Develop and adopt a strategic Plan of Action to guide the work of the Initiative

Building on the existing Plan of Action for the Law Enforcement Working Group, the initiative will develop a forward-looking strategic Plan for the Initiative to guide its work and operations. This plan will incorporate key areas of interventions based on the scope and mandate of the Initiative as per the Terms of Reference. The following table shows activities to be implemented to develop and adopt a strategic Plan of Action to guide the work of the Initiative.

Activity	Description	Deliverable
Stakeholder Consultation	Conduct workshops and meetings with member states, regional bodies (IGAD, Intergovernmental Authority on Development), civil society organizations, and private sector representatives	- Identified priorities and challenges - Regional needs assessment
Data Collection and Analysis	Compile existing data on the Horn of Africa, including economic indicators, security threats, and development goals	- Comprehensive regional data report
Thematic Working Groups	Establish working groups on key thematic areas to develop specific action plans	- Drafted thematic action plans
Visioning and Goal Setting	Organize a high-level retreat with AU officials, member state representatives, and regional experts to define the Initiative's vision, mission, and strategic goals.	- Agreed-upon vision, mission, and strategic goals
Action Plan Development	Integrate thematic action plans into a comprehensive Strategic Plan of Action with clear objectives, activities, timelines, responsible parties, and monitoring & evaluation indicators	- Draft Strategic Plan of Action
Validation and Finalization	Circulate the draft Strategic Plan of Action for feedback and revisions from stakeholders.	- Finalized Strategic Plan of Action

The Initiative should ensure broad participation and inclusivity throughout the process.

Online tools and platforms to facilitate virtual participation for geographically dispersed stakeholders can be utilized. A clear communication strategy to keep stakeholders informed and engaged should be established.

III. Establish and operationalize thematic Working Groups for the AU-HOAI

To enhance implementation of the envisaged Strategic Plan, the initiative will establish thematic working groups of the initiative that will involve activities participation of various stakeholders. It should be noted that combating irregular migration needs not only government-wide approach but also a societal wide approach. There is need to involve not only Law Enforcement agencies in this fight, but also other state non-state actors, including media, private sector, among others. The table below shows activities to be implemented to establish and operationalize thematic Working Groups for the AU-HOAI.

Activity	Description	Deliverable
Working Group Formation	Based on stakeholder consultations above, establish thematic working groups with balanced representation from AU member states, regional organizations, civil society, and the private sector. Define the mandate, composition, and leadership for each working group.	Established thematic working groups with clear mandates and leadership
Working Group Capacity Building	Organize capacity-building workshops for working group members on relevant thematic areas, AU-HOAI objectives, and working group operations (e.g., communication protocols, data sharing)	Enhanced knowledge and skills of working group members to effectively contribute to the AU-HOAI.
Development of Work Plans	Facilitate working groups to develop detailed work plans that outline specific activities, deliverables, timelines, and resource requirements for achieving their mandates.	Agreed-upon work plans for each thematic working group.
Communication and Collaboration Strategy	Develop a communication and collaboration strategy to ensure effective information sharing and coordination among working groups, stakeholders, and the AU-HOAI Secretariat. This could include establishing online platforms, regular meetings, and knowledge-sharing mechanisms.	- Clear communication channels and collaboration mechanisms for stakeholders involved in the AU-HOAI.
Launch and Operationalization	Officially launch the thematic working groups with a clear message on their purpose and expected contributions to the AU-HOAI. Provide ongoing support to	Functioning thematic working groups actively

	working groups as they implement their work plans	contributing to the AU-HOAI
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IV. **Develop and operationalize funding and resource mobilization strategy for the AU-HOAI**

One of the main challenges faced by the initiative is lack of funding. It was clear from the evaluation that AUHOAI is not well funded as compared to other process, including the Khartoum Process. The AUHoAI will develop a sustainable funding model for the AU-HOAI akin to that of the Khartoum Process⁴. This funding should come from Member States, particularly within the AU Budget process to enhance its visibility and relevance. Member States must be ready to fund activities of AU Horn of Africa as compared to the current status where it relies on partners support. This will provide the initiative with predictability in terms of funding which is key to its effectiveness and sustainability. The table below shows activities to be implemented to develop and operationalize funding and resource mobilization strategy for the AU-HOAI.

Activity	Description	Deliverable
Conduct a resource mobilization assessment	This assessment will identify potential sources of funding, including traditional donors, private sector, and innovative financing mechanisms.	A comprehensive understanding of the funding landscape and potential resource partners
Develop a funding strategy document	This document will outline the AU-HOAI's funding needs, target audiences, and fundraising approaches	A clear roadmap for securing resources to support AU-HOAI initiatives
Establish a resource mobilization unit	This unit will be responsible for overseeing fundraising efforts, managing donor relationships, and tracking progress.	A dedicated team to champion resource mobilization for the AU-HOAI
Develop fundraising materials	This includes creating compelling presentations, proposals, and marketing materials to attract potential donors	High-quality communication tools to effectively engage resource partners
Foster partnerships with traditional donors	Engage with bilateral and multilateral donors, foundations, and development agencies to secure funding commitments.	Secured funding from established donor institutions

⁴ The Khartoum Process is funded through the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) which receives funding from the European Commission, which is the executive branch of the EU and more than half of its budget comes from this source. The ICMPD also receives funding from its Member States, the UN, other multilateral institutions, and bilateral donors. The ICMPD's annual budget is about EUR 20 million.

Explore innovative financing mechanism	Investigate alternative funding sources such as impact investing, diaspora bonds, and blended finance	Identification of new and sustainable funding streams
Engage the private sector	Develop partnerships with private companies to leverage their expertise and resources for AU-HOAI programs	Financial and in-kind support from the private sector
Launch awareness campaigns	Raise awareness with RECs, NGOs, Donors etc. about the AU-HOAI's mission and encourage individual contributions.	Increased visibility and potential for crowdfunding
Organize resource mobilization events	Conduct conferences, workshops, and other events to connect with potential donors and build partnerships	Platforms to directly engage with resource partners and secure commitments
Establish a monitoring and evaluation framework	Track the effectiveness of resource mobilization efforts and measure progress towards fundraising goals.	Continuous improvement of fundraising strategies and efficient allocation of resources

V. Develop Strategic partnership with other similar Processes and AU RECs on TIP and SOM Issues

AU-HOAI will work in complementarity with other regions and mechanism, including the Khartoum Process. Deliberate efforts will be made to build partnership with other regions in the continent in the combating TIP and SOM. Regular joint coordination meetings between AUHOAI and other mechanism and regions, including Khartoum Process will be encouraged. This will foster collaboration, sharing of best practices and eliminating duplication, as it is the case with Khartoum Process.

Further, the Initiative will strive to also provide synergy with continental efforts in combating TIP and SOM in the continent. It should be one of the building blocks of continental initiatives and efforts in combating TIP and SOM in the continent. Additionally, with now the establishment of new centers of migration data, training and intelligence sharing on Migration in Mali, Sudan and Morocco, provides another opportunity for collaboration and partnerships. This will be harnessed. The table below shows activities to be implemented to develop Strategic partnership with other similar Processes and AU RECs on TIP and SOM Issues.

Activity	Description	Deliverable
Joint Training and Workshops	Organize joint training workshops with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and similar processes focusing on Trafficking in Persons (TIP) and Smuggling of Migrants (SOM) best practices. Invite	Strengthened capacity of member states to address TIP and SOM through shared knowledge and expertise.

	experts from these organizations to share experiences with AU-HOAI member states.	
Information Sharing Platforms	Establish secure information sharing platforms to facilitate real-time communication and data exchange on TIP and SOM trends, investigations, and prosecutions between AU-HOAI, other AU RECs, and relevant partners.	Improved coordination and collaboration in tackling cross-border TIP and SOM activities.
Joint Operations and Investigations	Develop a framework for conducting joint law enforcement operations and investigations related to TIP and SOM with RECs that have similar initiatives.	Enhanced effectiveness in dismantling trafficking and smuggling networks operating across regional borders.
Harmonization of Legal Frameworks	Collaborate with RECs to harmonize national legislation on TIP and SOM in line with the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Persons and the AU Protocol on Smuggling of Migrants.	Consistency in legal frameworks across the region for stronger deterrence and prosecution of TIP and SOM crimes.
Advocacy and Resource Mobilization	Partner with RECs and similar processes to jointly advocate for increased political will and resource allocation from member states and international partners for combating TIP and SOM in the Horn of Africa.	Greater resources for effective implementation of anti-TIP and anti-SOM initiatives.
Exchange Programs and Secondments	Facilitate exchange programs and secondments of law enforcement and judicial officials between AU-HOAI member states and RECs to promote cross-learning and build regional expertise in TIP and SOM	Stronger regional networks of TIP and SOM specialists
Joint Research and Policy Development	Collaborate with RECs on conducting joint research on TIP and SOM trends and challenges specific to the Horn of Africa. Develop joint policy recommendations based on research findings to guide national and regional responses	Evidence-based policy making for a more comprehensive approach to TIP and SOM in the region.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX FOR THE AU-HOAI 5-YEAR PLAN OF ACTION

This framework outlines key indicators and data collection methods to monitor and evaluate progress towards achieving the objectives of the above AU-HOAI implementation matrix. The success of the African Union's Horn of Africa Initiative (AU-HOAI) hinges on its ability to effectively monitor and evaluate progress. This framework establishes key indicators and data collection methods to assess how well the initiative is meeting its objectives outlined in the 5-year implementation matrix.

For each objective, the framework identifies relevant indicators. For instance, developing a clear Terms of Reference (TOR) will be measured by the number of stakeholder consultations conducted and the comprehensiveness of the finalized document. Similarly, the strategic plan's success will be gauged by the completion of a needs assessment, the existence of a measurable plan, and demonstrable progress towards achieving its goals.

Data collection methods will vary depending on the indicator. Stakeholder consultations for the TOR might be documented through meeting reports and participant lists. The strategic plan's effectiveness can be evaluated through monitoring and evaluation reports and reviews by independent experts. Regular progress reports based on the collected data will be crucial for informing decision-making and making adjustments as needed. Stakeholder feedback mechanisms will capture their perspectives on the initiative's progress, ensuring a more inclusive approach. The M&E framework itself will be a living document, reviewed and updated periodically to reflect evolving needs and priorities. By implementing this robust M&E framework, AU-HOAI gains a clear picture of its progress, identifies areas for improvement, and ultimately ensures the initiative achieves its intended positive impact on the Horn of Africa region. The table below shows the implementation matrix for the AU-HOAI 5-year plan of action.

ANNEX 1: IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX FOR THE AU-HOAI 5-YEAR PLAN OF ACTION

OBJECTIVE	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5
Develop & Adopt Terms of Reference (TOR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish core drafting Committee with AU & regional representatives. Conduct stakeholder consultations. Finalize and adopt clear TOR outlining structure, modality, and leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate TOR to all AU member states and relevant stakeholders. Conduct training workshops on TOR for key actors. 	Monitor implementation of TOR and identify areas for improvement.	Review and update TOR based on lessons learned and progress.	Ensure continued implementation of a clear and effective TOR
Develop & Adopt Strategic Plan of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct needs assessment across the Horn of Africa region. Develop a comprehensive strategic plan aligned with AU-HOAI objectives. Secure stakeholder buy-in and finalize the plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch and officially rollout the strategic plan. Develop clear indicators and monitoring & evaluation framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement key activities outlined in the plan. Conduct annual reviews to assess progress against indicators 	Refine and adjust the plan based on progress, challenges, and emerging needs	Ensure successful completion of planned activities by the end of year 5
Establish & Operationalize Working Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify thematic areas crucial for AU-HOAI (e.g., security, peacebuilding, development). Establish thematic working groups with regional & AU experts. Develop clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equip working groups with necessary resources and technical support. Facilitate regular meetings and collaboration amongst 	Working groups deliver initial outputs and recommendations on their respective themes.	Working groups refine strategies and deepen collaboration for greater impact.	Working groups act as key knowledge hubs and advisors to the AU-HOAI.

	mandates and operational guidelines for each group.	working groups.			
Develop & Operationalize Funding & Resource Mobilization Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a resource mapping exercise to identify potential funding sources (internal AU, donors, private sector). • Develop a comprehensive funding strategy with clear targets and fundraising mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure initial funding to kickstart priority activities outlined in the strategic plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement fundraising activities as per the strategy. • Continuously monitor resource mobilization efforts and make adjustments as needed. 	Diversify funding sources to ensure long-term sustainability of the AU-HOAI.	Secure adequate and predictable resources to support the initiative's goals beyond year 5.
Develop Strategic Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify relevant regional processes (e.g., IGAD) and AU RECs (Regional Economic Communities) with overlapping focus. • Establish communication channels and explore areas of collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop joint initiatives and programs with partners to maximize impact. • Facilitate knowledge sharing and exchange of best practices. 	Strengthen existing partnerships and explore new collaborations with other relevant actors.	Ensure effective coordination and joint action with partners for tackling critical issues.	Maintain a robust network of strategic partnerships for ongoing support and collaboration.

ANNEX 11: M&E FRAMEWORK FOR AU-HOAI IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

This framework outlines key indicators and data collection methods to monitor and evaluate progress towards achieving the objectives of the AU-HOAI implementation matrix. Data collection methods can be adapted based on resource availability (e.g., surveys, interviews, document reviews). Regular progress reports should be prepared to inform decision-making and course correction as needed. Stakeholder feedback mechanisms should be established to capture their perspectives on the initiative's progress. The M&E framework should be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect evolving needs and priorities. By implementing this M&E framework, AU-HOAI can effectively track progress, identify areas for improvement and ensure the initiative achieves its intended outcomes.

Objective	Indicator	Data collection method	Baseline (Year 0)	Target (Year 5)
Develop & Adopt Terms of Reference (TOR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of stakeholder consultations conducted. Clarity and comprehensiveness of the finalized TOR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting reports, participant lists. Review by independent experts. 	No consultations, no TOR	All stakeholders consulted, clear and effective TOR in place.
Develop & Adopt Strategic Plan of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of needs assessment report. Existence of a clear and measurable strategic plan. Progress towards achieving plan objectives (measured through specific indicators). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs assessment report. Availability of strategic plan document. Monitoring & evaluation reports 	No needs assessment, no plan.	Completed needs assessment, well-defined plan with measurable objectives. Significant progress made on objectives.
Establish & Operationalize Working Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of established working groups with clear mandates. Frequency and effectiveness of working group meetings. Quality of outputs and recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of working groups established, documented mandates. Meeting minutes, attendance records. Review of working group outputs 	Law enforcement working group established.	Established working groups with clear mandates meeting regularly and producing valuable outputs.

	from working groups.			
Develop & Operationalize Funding & Resource Mobilization Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of resources secured through different funding sources. • Efficiency and effectiveness of fundraising activities. • Sustainability of resource mobilization efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial reports on secured funding. • Analysis of fundraising efforts. • Assessment of funding diversification 	Funding from Member States contributions, no new funding secured, no strategy	Secured resources meet funding needs, efficient fundraising mechanisms, diversified funding base
Develop Strategic Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of established partnerships with relevant actors. - Level of collaboration and joint action with partners. - Impact of partnerships on achieving AU-HOAI objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership agreements, communication records. • Joint initiatives/programs implemented. • Evaluation of partnership effectiveness. 	Partners-International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)	Strong network of partnerships with active collaboration and measurable impact on AU-HOAI goals.