

## **Partners pool resources to support the One million by 2021 initiative.**

**27 April 2019 - Addis Ababa, Ethiopia:** To drive the successful realization of the African Union Commission initiative on youth empowerment and inclusion in the continental development agenda, partners have committed resources towards the “One million by 2021 initiative.”

In a pledging ceremony held during the three-day Pan-African Youth Forum at the African Union Headquarters, development partners, the private sector, institutions of higher learning and the civil societies, pledged millions of dollars and offered opportunities aimed at benefiting millions of African youth across the continent, in the key areas of Employment, Entrepreneurship, Education and Engagement (4E’s).

The following pledges were made;

- Open Society Foundation pledged USD 1 million.
- Trace TV pledged USD 50 Million to set up online learning platform to educate young people across the continent.
- Facebook offered to train 40,000 small and medium sized enterprises (SME's) across the various African countries on digital marketing skills.
- The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) pledged USD 500 million targeted at 6 million young Africans by 2021.
- German Government committed to increase to 40 million Euros, and an additional 1.5 million Euro, for technical assistance to youth programs.
- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) committed to deploy 200 African Youth to the support the AU activities through the African union Volunteer corps program.
- Afrexim Bank offered training in the banking sector and to further provide employment opportunities by offering internships that are integrating to the initiative. In Addition to the existing post-graduate degree program, the bank will offer start-up capital to entrepreneurs.

- The International Labour Organization (ILO) committed to organize the first global youth employment forum in Africa to be hosted in Nigeria. ILO will also increase internships for young women and men.

Other partners also expressed interest to support the initiative that will go into the 4E's. These are General Electric, Vmware, USAID, Aga Khan, Commonwealth Secretariat, Aliko Dangote Foundation, Jobs4Africa Foundation, Coca Cola, Ethiopian Airlines, DFID and Save the Children.

African Union Commission Chairperson H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat expressed his gratitude to the partners for pooling their resources towards the "One million by 2021 initiative", noting that the support reaffirmed the commitment by the African Union to improve capacities through education and skills, and improving environments that support employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for its youth.

"Financing is key to the work ahead of us. Your technical expertise and experience are equally vital to achieve our goal. I thank you for answering the African Union's call. The way ahead is still long as we all know the challenges youth are facing in the continent. We applaud you for taking this bold step to get involved in the one million by 2021 initiative, H.E. Faki stated. He added, "we are not looking to offload any of our responsibilities to other stakeholders, but we are merely cognizant that our Union is not capable of achieving results through monopolizing the issues at hand."

Echoing similar sentiments, Prof. Sarah Anyang Agbor, AUC Commissioner for Human Resources Science and Technology stated, "this is the moment we have all been waiting for. A time to recognize partners who have heard the call and said they want to walk hand-in-hand alongside the African Union Commission to bring to life the "One million by 2021 initiative". Organized under the theme 'Africa Unite for Youth: Bridging the gap and reaching African Youth, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pan-African Forum brought together over 500 young people from across the continent in a deliberate move to initiative builds up on the progress Africa is making on youth engagement.

Twelve pathways have been identified as drivers for the 4Es that will facilitate the expansion of opportunities in skills development; models for teacher development, mobilizing and catalyzing capital growth for youth-led start-ups; nurture start-ups; skills transfer hubs; internships and apprenticeships; digital skills; job centers; digital skills; leadership programs and exchange programmes .

Read more - <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20190422/1-million-2021-african-union-commission-chairperson-rallies-support-new-youth>

**Note to the editor:**

AGENDA 2063 is Africa's blueprint and master plan for transforming Africa into the global powerhouse of the future. It is the continent's strategic framework that aims to deliver on its goal for inclusive and sustainable development and is a concrete manifestation of the pan-African drive for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity pursued under Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance. Learn more <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>

The Youth Division is the division responsible for Africa's Youth Agenda at the African Union Commission. The division is in charge of addressing issues concerning: Youth policy development, Legal frameworks for Youth development, Programmatic frameworks such as the: African Youth Decade Plan of Action (2009–2018) the African Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (2019-2023), Youth capacity building and enhancing employability skills through the African Union Youth Volunteers Corps (AU-YVC), Partnership building and resource mobilization as well as Promoting Youth participation through activities such as organizing Youth Forums and Celebrating the Africa Youth Day.