The African Union Commission (AUC) launched the first of five regional consultation workshops for the project selection process of the second phase of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), also known as PIDA PAP 2. This three-day workshop, running from 25th – 27th February 2020, aims to provide Member States and RECs with the training and tools to prioritize gender inclusive, environment friendly, and spatially connected infrastructure projects that will create jobs and economic opportunities for the African people. The PIDA, identified as a key strategic framework for the development of regional infrastructure by Agenda 2063, has developed the integrated corridor approach framework as part of the Priority Action Plan 2 (PAP2) which captures specific goals of
addressing youth employment and education, strengthening gender inclusive socioeconomic development, environmentally sustainable communities and economies, and regional connectivity through world class infrastructure linking people, markets, and facilitating trade, as outlined by Agenda 2063 Aspirations 1, 2, and 6.

The first regional consultation workshop was launched in Libreville, Gabon for Central African Member States and RECs and will make its way across Africa - to Abuja, Nigeria for the training of West African participants, Gaborone, Botswana for Southern African participants, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for East African participants and a location yet to be announced for North African participants. Mr. Guichard Tsangou, on behalf of the Secretary General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), highlighted "the strategic framework 2025 of Central Africa Region, emphasized the critical role of infrastructure to connect countries, facilitate trade within the region and support sustainable development. It is within this context that ECCAS welcomes PIDA PAP2 and the integrated corridor approach and expresses its willingness to work with the African Union to select projects that respond to the needs of the region."

The capacity building workshop is designed to provide administrative support and educate Member States and RECs on the project identification, consolidation and selection processes so that the projects selected reflect the integrated corridor approach and work towards a more prosperous Africa. Member States will first propose projects to their RECs, who will take the projects’ key information and fill out online forms provided for the screening process. The forms are expected to be complete and submitted to Task Force members a couple of months after the workshops take place so that the Task Force members are able to analyze, score and prioritize the proposed projects according to the eligibility and project selection criteria.

Ultimately, 58 projects are expected to be selected – 10 projects per the Northern African, West African, Central African, East African and Southern African regions, and an additional 8 projects for each of the islands. As Ms. Souhila Amazouz, Senior policy Officer at the AUC and a member of the PIDA-PAP 2 Task Force explained, “Agenda 2063 highlights the need to strengthen efforts and multiply initiatives for developing inclusive and integrated infrastructure to support the social and economic transformation of the continent. This capacity building workshop on the selection process of projects to be included in PIDA phase 2 (2021-2030) and the work that we will undertake this year to select the 10 projects for each region is part of the long term vision of the ‘African Union for better integration, progress and collective prosperity.” The sectoral requirement is expected to be filled as at least one project in each region is to be part of the transport, energy, ICT and trans-boundary water resources sectors. Once the project selection process is complete and the PIDA PAP2 project pipeline is developed, it will be submitted to the African Heads of State and Government for adoption during the AU Summit in January 2021.

About PIDA PAP

The Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), an African Union Commission (AUC) initiative, in partnership with the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), aims to accelerate infrastructure development across the continent.

PIDA as a strategic framework will run through 2040 in order to develop continental (cross-border) infrastructure (Energy, Transport, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Trans-boundary Water Resources). PIDA’s main purpose is to strengthen the consensus and ownership of large cross-border infrastructure projects that integrate energy, transportation, and water development on a continental scale.

The PIDA Priority Action Plan (PIDA-PAP 1), which extends to 2020, comprises 51 programmes and projects divided into 433 projects covering transport, energy, information
and communication technology (ICT) and trans-boundary water sectors. PIDA will allow countries to meet forecast demand for infrastructure services and boost competitiveness by: (i) Increasing efficiencies; (ii) Accelerating growth; (iii) Facilitating integration in the world economy; (iv) Improving living standards and; (v) Unleashing intra-African trade.

While it is difficult to accurately project the capital cost of PIDA’s long-term implementation through 2040 (currently estimated at more than $360 billion), the overall capital cost of delivering the PAP from 2012 through 2020 is expected to be nearly US$68 billion, or about $7.5 billion annually for the next nine years. Energy and transport projects and programmes represent around 95% of the total cost, demonstrating the critical need for transformative investments in these sectors to support African trade, promote growth and create jobs. Investment needs for ICT and water represent lower percentages.

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