



## DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

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### **More than 70 Regional Infrastructure Projects lined up for Second Phase of Program for Infrastructure Development Program (PIDA)**

The Program for Infrastructure Development Program (PIDA) focal points drawn from African Union Member States, Regional Economic Communities, and continental institutions get together virtually for PIDA Continental Technical Validation Workshop.

The workshop presented the process, outcome, and the draft priority list of projects for the second phase of the PIDA Priority Action Plan (PIDA PAP2) which has entered an active consultation phase in November 2019.

Seventy on (71) regional infrastructure projects in the four PIDA sectors: Energy, Transport, Trans-Boundary Water, and ICT have been prioritized from a long list of over 240 projects proposed by the Member States, Regional economic Communities (RECs), and Specialized Institutions. The balance projects will constitute a reserve list that will serve to replenish the priority list at planned reviews during the 10-year implementation time frame from 2021 to 2030.

Opening the workshop, Mr. Cheikh Bedda, Director for Infrastructure and Energy at the African Union Commission (AUC), highlighted that PIDA PAP 2 has benefitted from the learning experience of PAP1. *“The second phase of PIDA has been guided by strategic directives for a shorter, more operational list of projects which promote an integrated, multi-sectorial corridor approach that is employment-oriented, gender-sensitive, and climate-friendly and that connects urban/industrial hubs with rural areas”*, said the director.

The PIDA task force of infrastructure experts from AUC, African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), and African Development Bank (AfDB) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) was mandated to guide the Member states and RECs to submit projects. Continuous engagement and a consultative and participative approach have led to the ownership of the PIDA process and priority list by the focal points.

According to Mr. Bedda, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic was a major challenge on the PIDA PAP2 process which led to a fully-digitalized process of project submission, selection, screening, and ranking process with active participation and engagement with RECs and MS focal points.

Mr. Oumarou Amadou, Director of Infrastructure and Urban Development at the African Development Bank (AfDB) commended the concerted efforts put in place by key stakeholders to develop PIDA PAP2 despite the unexpected challenges due to the pandemic. *“The AfDB is committed to supporting the implementation of PIDA PAP2”*, he reaffirmed. He recalled that the Bank has availed 7 billion USD for PIDA projects in the past ten years making it the lead financier of the Continent’s infrastructure programs.

Mr. William Lugemwa, Director of Private Sector Development & Finance at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), emphasized the importance of involving the private sector from planning to execution of infrastructure projects for a higher rate of success in PIDA PAP2 implementation. Mr. William further noted that PIDA PAP2 projects align with both agenda 2063 and UN agenda 2030.

Speaking of the Implementation Strategy, Dr. Towela Jere, Head of Economic Integration Division at the Africa Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), said the strategy is designed to provide a high-level overview of how PIDA PAP2 projects would be developed and progressed throughout the project lifecycle from planning to financial close which enhances project bankability and socio-economic development impact.

The workshop highlighted the importance of seamless and timely implementation of infrastructure projects. This will be facilitated by a package of tools developed by PIDA Institutions: Implementation Strategy by AUDA-NEPAD, Financing Strategy by AfDB, and Partnership Engagement Strategy by UNECA.

There was a consensus among participants on the transparency and rigor of the PIDA PAP2 process which was aligned to the approved selection criteria and but also led to the selection of projects which are in the priority list of RECs and the Member States.

Based on the consensus achieved at this PIDA continental workshop, the priority list and process will be presented to the Specialized Technical Committee on Transport Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructure, Energy, and Tourism (STC TTIET) for further validation at the ministerial level. The list along with the strategic documents will be submitted to the Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government in February 2021 for adoption.

#### **Notes to the Editor:**

#### **About the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA)**

The Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) is a continental strategic framework to address infrastructure bottlenecks through cross-border infrastructure development in the areas of transport, energy, information, and communications technology (ICT) and transboundary water management. The African Heads of State and Government adopted PIDA and the Institutional Architecture for Infrastructure Development in Africa (IAIDA), during the 18th ordinary session held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 29th-30th January 2012. In that way, PIDA represents a Pan-African approach that aims to reduce energy generation costs and improve energy access; minimize transport costs, and increase intra-African trade; improve continental connectivity and promote transboundary water management. Accordingly, the first PIDA Priority Action Plan (PIDA-PAP 1), which was set out for implementation up to 2020, embodies 51 cross-border programs decomposed into over 433 individual projects in the sectors of Energy, Transport, ICT, and Transboundary Water Resource. PIDA is expected to enter its second phase of implementation (PIDA PAP2) in 2021, after adoption by the Assembly of the African Union in February.

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