

## JAES Action Plan 2011 – 2013

### Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment

#### I. Overview

The Africa-EU Partnership on Migration, Mobility and Employment aims to provide comprehensive responses to migration and employment challenges, in the interest of all partners, and with a particular focus on creating more and better jobs for Africa, on facilitating mobility and free movement of people in Africa and the EU, on better managing legal migration between the two continents, on addressing the root causes of migration and refugee flows, on the conditions of and access to employment, on the fair treatment of all migrants under applicable international law, on finding concrete solutions to problems posed by irregular migration flows and trafficking of human beings and to ensure that migration and mobility work for development. All these orientations should be addressed in a balanced and comprehensive way. These objectives were already set out in the Action plan 2008-2010 and will continue to steer this Partnership, also in the Action plan 2011-2013.

Following the Lisbon Summit of December 2007 dialogue and cooperation between Africa and the EU on migration, mobility and employment issues have intensified. Yet actual results are uneven and scattered, depending very much on the political interests and institutional capacities of the concerned African and EU States. Both in Africa and in the EU, competences and responsibilities for migration and employment policies are still very much at the national level, with the regional and continental dimensions being recognised, but not yet encompassed.

#### II. Overall objectives

The new Action Plan will further strengthen inter-regional, continental and inter-continental dialogue and cooperation in the area of migration, mobility and employment among countries of origin, transit and destination. In addition, higher education appears as a more visible and integrated part of this partnership. Through this Action Plan Africa and the EU renew their commitment to the implementation of (a) the Declaration of the 2006 Tripoli Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development, (b) the EU-Africa Plan of Action on Trafficking in Human Beings, especially Women and Children, and (c) the 2004 Ouagadougou Declaration and Action Plan on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa.

The new action plan will have two main strands: (1) enhancing dialogue, and (2) identifying and implementing concrete actions, both of them encompassing the inter-regional continental and inter-continental dimension of the partnership.

The major challenge for the period 2011-2013 will be to **further strengthen and enrich the political and policy dialogue** on migration, mobility and employment as well as tertiary education issues between the two continents, whilst encompassing dialogues and cooperation taking place on national and regional levels.

In the area of **migration and mobility** this dialogue will be informed by the Joint Africa-EU Strategy agreed in Lisbon in December 2007<sup>4</sup>, as well as the Declaration of the 2006 Tripoli Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development, the EU-Africa Plan of Action on

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<sup>4</sup> In particular paragraphs 68, 69 and 70.

Trafficking in Human Beings, especially Women and Children, and the 2004 Ouagadougou Declaration and Action Plan on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa.

For the period 2011 – 2013 the agenda for the dialogue between Africa and the EU on these topics will be comprehensive and balanced, taking into account concerns of countries of origin, transit and destination. It will include topics such as

- a. diasporas, remittances, brain drain, migrant rights, social consequences of migration;
- b. regular migration, including circular migration, mobility, visa issues,
- c. illegal migration, trafficking in human beings, smuggling of migrants, readmission and return, and
- d. refugees, asylum and protection

Both parties will deepen their political dialogue on the human rights, including social, economic and cultural rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in this partnership and in other relevant fora. In the framework of this dialogue, both parties will notably exchange views on lessons learnt and best practices on the implementation of existing instruments, such as the 1969 OAU Convention on refugees, the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees and its 1967 Protocol, the 2009 AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, and other relevant human rights instruments as well as international humanitarian law instruments. This dialogue will also address issues related to sex trade, sex tourism and cheap labour. The dialogue on visa issues will look at conditions and procedures for delivery of visa, and facilitating mobility for commercial, professional and study reasons.

In the area of **employment**, the dialogue will focus on strategies and initiatives targeting job creation and sustainable and inclusive growth, acknowledging the role of relevant stakeholders, including social partners and the private sector. Furthermore, the dialogue will focus on the questions related to the implementation of the Ouagadougou Action Plan and the global 'Decent Work Agenda' with special emphasis on the *creation of more, more productive and better jobs* in Africa and the link to *social protection* as well as to the *informal and social economy*.

In direct relation to strategies on employment, mobility and the harnessing of brain drain the parties will extend their dialogue to the area of **higher education**. This dialogue will look, inter alia, at ways of supporting the *mobility of students and scholars* and the realisation of the *African higher education harmonization process*.

Dialogue on all these topics will in particular focus on the question of how to enhance coherence and synergies between migration, mobility, employment, education policies and *development/poverty reduction strategies*.

It is envisaged that the dialogue process will yield ideas for further concrete actions that may be added to the Action Plan in the coming years.

### III. Specific initiatives and activities

The second strand of the Action Plan 2011 – 2013 consists of a number of **concrete actions**. Some of these were already initiated or launched under the Action Plan 2008-2010 and are reaching their implementation stage under the next Action Plan. Several of the employment related initiatives that have been identified and discussed at the June 2010 AUC-EC Workshop on Employment, Social Protection and Decent Work in Dakar will inform the relevant employment initiatives of this Action Plan.

At the moment the following initiatives are envisaged for the Action Plan 2011-2013<sup>5</sup>:

1: **Facilitation of the dialogue**. To organise and facilitate the Africa – EU dialogue a €3 million support project has been launched in 2010. The project will engage in the organisation of *workshops and meetings, information exchange and capacity building*. The project is implemented by a consortium of three organisations (ICMPD, IDEP, FIIAPP), under the responsibility of a Steering Committee led by AUC and EC, and a consultative role of the Joint Expert Group (JEG).

2: **African Remittances Institute**. The preparatory phase project (technical and consultative) designed to facilitate a structured and deepened reflection on all aspects of the prospective establishment of the African Remittances Institute (ARI) was launched in 2010, involving the World Bank in association with AUC and EC, as well as IOM and AfDB. The Steering Committee that has been established is led by the AUC Preparatory activities will encompass, consultations research, capacity building and networking. It is envisaged that the Institute, once established, will facilitate better, more effective and safer remittances' transfer system, which will fully take into account the specificities of African countries.

3: **Human Trafficking Initiative**. The AUC, in partnership with the EC, will assist RECs in developing and implementing *regional action plans* to strengthen protection, prevention and prosecution of trafficking in human beings, in line with the Ouagadougou Action Plan and AU.COMMIT, that cover countries of origin, transit and destination. Furthermore a *monitoring and evaluation tool* will be designed and implemented at regional level to enable measurement of implementation and impact as well as to assist in the *identification of best practices* for the African Continent.

4: **Diaspora Outreach Initiative**. The Partners will establish an Africa–EU Diaspora cooperation framework, with the objective of engaging the Diaspora in the development of Africa and to build capacity and transfer skills, knowledge and technologies from the Diaspora to the African continent. This cooperation framework will be built on the AU Diaspora Initiative, and create synergies between the following three existing programmes: (a) Global Mapping of Africa Diasporas (AUC – WB), (b) Capacity building for Diaspora ministries in Africa (NL/DE), (c) EU-wide networks of African Diaspora organisations working in the field of development.

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<sup>5</sup> For each initiative a fiche has been prepared, indicating the objectives, activities, funding and actors involved.

Priority actions that will be developed are: (1) Mapping of African Diaspora organisations in the EU, (2) Programmes addressing specific sectoral needs, such as a Diaspora Health Network, (3) AU regional network on African diasporas in Europe.

5: ***Observatory on Migration***. The ACP Observatory on Migration will create a network of researchers and research centres to provide policy makers, civil society and the public at large with reliable and harmonised data on migration. In order to achieve this objective it may establish links with other relevant observatories. It will run a website, and publish research studies and papers. It will furthermore function as an exchange platform for migration research papers and expertise. The Observatory initiative will be launched in October 2010. This initiative could serve as a starting point to develop future activities covering all the African continent.

6: ***Decent Work Initiative***. AUC and EC will jointly launch a project with the objective of extending social protection coverage in particular in the informal economy. The two Commissions will organize an event to allow the exchange of experiences between relevant experts and other key stakeholders including governments, private sector, social partners, civil society and international organisations. Furthermore, the AU Programme on Upgrading the Informal Economy and the Productivity Agenda for Africa will continue to provide support to a multi-level dialogue and policy development on the informal economy (mainstreaming of the informal economy, empowerment and social dialogue, productivity improvement, knowledge and data base management, etc). This dialogue may also involve Asian and Latin American countries.

7: ***Labour market governance and capacity building***. This initiative aims at strengthening the institutional capacity of the labour market institutions in Africa, so that they can play effectively their role in the social and economic development in the continent. The initiative will target public employment services and labour administrations. It will aim to harmonise and coordinate labour market information systems (also in connection to the network of Employment and TVET<sup>6</sup> Observatories currently implemented in African countries). Support will be provided at national, regional and continental level. The initiative furthermore aims at the mapping of skills required and available at national, regional and continental level, identifying the gaps and working for the improvement of employment opportunities and employability.

8: ***Regional and sub-regional fora on employment, labour, social protection and labour migration***. In cooperation with RECs, fora will be strengthened to allow organizing consultations on thematic policies of common concern, and to contribute to enhancing the functioning of the labour market, supporting the harmonization processes of the labour and social protection frameworks at regional levels. Furthermore, partners will establish a platform for social dialogue between the African Union and the European Union including an effective representation of all stakeholders, including non-state actors such as representatives of civil society, the private sector, trade unions and parliamentarians, with a particular focus on the informal economy.

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TVET: Technical and Vocational Education and Training

9: **Access to finance and guarantees.** The European Union and Africa will intensify their cooperation in the area of job creation, building on the 2004 Ouagadougou Declaration and Action Plan on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa. Special attention is devoted to improve the access to financial services for the poorest and underserved, through support of the microfinance sector and through enhancing the small- and medium-sized enterprises' (SMEs) access to long term finance.

One such initiative is the progressive development of the African Guarantee Fund (AGF) supported by the African Development Bank (AfDB), Denmark, and Spain. Access to finance and guarantee will be developed taking into account existing guarantee schemes, including at regional level and in close cooperation with other donors as well as with the European Investment Bank (EIB). The potential for co-guaranteeing SME-portfolios in Africa will be systemically explored.

10: **Nyerere Programme.** This programme was initiated by the AUC in 2005. Its aim is to contribute to high level African human resource development and retention; while supporting intra-African academic mobility, and thereby mitigate the effects of brain drain. This enhanced scholarship programme will be launched in November 2010. Under the scheme, African students, scholars and academic staff will receive scholarships for master and PhD level studies and to allow exchange of academics and university administrative staff. Overall, it is expected that over the five consecutive rounds of selection more than 2000 participants will benefit from the scheme.

11: **Pan-African University.** The Pan-African University is a project by the African Union, aiming to exemplify excellence, relevance and global competitiveness of African higher education and research. It is a network of African higher education and research institutions, with thematic hubs in each of the five geographic regions of Africa (Eastern, Western, Central, Southern and Northern Africa). It is expected that the first four thematic institutes will be launched in 2011.

12: **African Higher Education Harmonisation and Tuning.** This initiative aims to review the state of implementation of mutual recognition of higher education certificates and qualifications in Africa. It will involve assessment of the potential of using the European approach of 'Tuning'<sup>7</sup>. The initiative includes the implementation of the African Quality Rating Mechanism, the popularisation of the revised Arusha convention, and the development of a roadmap for the harmonisation of higher education in Africa. A pilot phase on the potential of using this tuning approach is expected to begin in 2011.

The above initiatives may be further developed and strengthened during the course of implementation of this Action Plan. Other initiatives might be jointly identified and agreed throughout the period of validity of the Action Plan if specific needs are identified by the partners.

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"Tuning" is a methodology which allows universities to understand and fine-tune curricula and make them comparable on a transnational basis. It focuses on a specific subject area's generic competences or transferable skills, subject specific competences, learning outcomes, credits, approaches to learning, teaching and assessment, quality assurance and employability.

As for the *financing* of these initiatives the Partnership will continue to rely on resources available in the EU, the AU as well as in African and EU States. Partners agree to make efforts to increase the *visibility, transparency and accessibility of these resources*, including through enhanced coordination in the framework of this MME Partnership. The two Commissions will conclude the examination of the feasibility of setting up a fund as provided for in the outcome document of the Tripoli Ministerial Conference on Migration and Development of November 2006.

The joint experts group will monitor the implementation of this action plan and will evaluate the progress made.