

CSO/LA CONSULTATION

REGIONAL PROGRAMMING IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 2021-27

23rd March 2021

DISCLAIMER: this document provides a preliminary overview of what could be envisaged in the future multiannual indicative programme (MIP) for Sub-Saharan Africa 2021-27, taking into account lessons learnt from ongoing actions, the priorities of the current EU Commission and initial Commission's internal discussions. Its content does not pre-empt the final outcome of the future MIP 2021-27, which will also need to take into account subsequent multiple consultations as part of the overall programming process.

EU regional programming in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is changing shape. A new single instrument, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – NDICI, replaces previous instruments, including the European Development Fund (EDF), for the period 2021-2027. Under this new instrument, there will be a single regional programme for SSA, which will include links to be developed with North Africa.

The future programme, in line with the overall objective in terms of International Partnerships (below), will provide support through actions at national, multi-country, sub-regional, cross-regional and continental level in SSA on the basis of three main principles:

- policy first,
- geographisation and
- subsidiarity.

Only initiatives where there is a clear added value to address an issue from a regional perspective will be supported under this regional programme.

The overall objective of the Directorate General for International Partnerships, contributing to the EU's foreign policy, is to project the EU's values and interests in the world based on the political priorities of the Commission: green deal alliances; alliances for science, technology, innovation and digital; alliances for sustainable growth and jobs; migration partnerships; governance, peace and security, and human development.

All of the above is under the reference framework of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs and with a focus on addressing inequalities, through its multi-dimensional nature, by building inclusive, democratic and sustainable societies.

This note briefly sets out the envisaged components on which basis the preparation of the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) for the SSA is progressing¹:

EFSD+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guarantees to be implemented at national and regional level (starter pack) - Technical assistance
Human Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erasmus + (Separate SSA MIP) - Health - Education; Intra-Africa Mobility scheme, Leadership programme - Culture
Democratic Governance and Peace
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governance, elections etc. - Peace and Security, transnational threats, maritime security
Green and Climate transition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renewable energy and regional interconnectivity - Agri-food system (incl. plant and animal pest, resilience etc) - Biodiversity, environment and wildlife management - Water basis management, oceans and blue economy
Digital and Science, technology and innovation (STI)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital transformation and digital connectivity - Science, technology and innovation
Sustainable Growth and decent jobs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional economic integration, trade and trade facilitation - Strategic corridors (transport infrastructure (road, rail, ports)) - Sustainable finance, investment climate and private sector
Migration and forced displacement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Return and readmission, migration management and legal migration - Forced displacement - Border management
Cooperation facility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building and institutional building AU and REC's - Public diplomacy/cooperation facility - SSA contribution to the cost of running ACP Framework

The Multi-Annual Indicative Programme will be structured according to these components under the understanding that appropriate inter-linkages will be established both in the programming provisions and notably in the identification and formulation that will follow in the coming years.

For instance, actions under the STI component would notably target the areas of green transition and human and animal health. Work under the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) will include actions targeting Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) and Health standards etc. Activities under the heading 'agri-food systems' will have links to ACFTA. In the same way, it is envisaged the RIP would support multi-country/cross-border initiatives where funding from several RIP lines would be combined to realise an integrated and multi-sectoral approach. This could for instance include support to the Horn of Africa Initiative and/or an integrated cross-border programme around the Red Sea; integrated response to instability in G5 Sahel and around Lake Chad; etc.

The Programme would be implemented through a combination of continental, cross-regional, sub-regional, multi-country and national actions.

¹ Internally to the Directorate General (DG) for International Partnerships, the Programming is taken forward in the framework of the Africa Regional Cooperation Team (ARCT) that under the coordination of the 'Regional and Multi-Country programmes' Unit in association with the Managing Director for Africa in the European External Action Service, brings together colleagues from the EU delegations with regional responsibilities, DG International Partnerships thematic and horizontal Units, the whole of the Sub-Saharan Africa directorate, the European External Action Service Managing Director Global with its thematic divisions, NEAR and FPI. The ARCT includes a number of thematic clusters groups. Around 15 ARCT meetings have taken place to date and each meeting has seen the participation of between 50 to 200 colleagues, thus a very large number of colleagues are engaged in the process.

ENVISAGED COMPONENTS

EFSD +

The Regional MIP would cover funding for the “EFSD+ Starter Pack” that would include priorities for investment identified in the bilateral MIPs and organised by themes, a portion of these funds would be assigned towards pre-identified priority countries and policies but could be re-assigned in case investments do not materialise. This starter pack will be complemented with funds from the National Indicative Programmes based on concrete investment project proposals in the concerned country MIPs. It is still premature to understand which priority areas will be more ready to attract investments that would benefit from the guarantee mechanism. Among the areas expected to draw interest under private sector and sub-sovereign commercial guarantees, we could finance e.g. green economy; sustainable energy; agriculture; access to Finance, in particular MSME with a focus on women, youth; human capital interventions; urban development & infrastructure, digitalisation). For sovereign and sub-sovereign non-commercial guarantees, we could find e.g. Infrastructure (including digital); Sustainable Energy; Health; Water & Sanitation and possible other.

Human Development

Health

Four priority areas have been identified including:

- i) Better pandemic preparedness and health security, including ‘One Health’ and other initiatives to prevent biological risks increased by environmental and climate change, adopting a whole-of-society approach. *There are prospects for a TEI (France and Germany – other MS to be contacted), as well as linkages with the STI agenda.*
- ii) Enabling environment for Sexual Reproductive Health Rights in Africa, building on existing initiatives. While there is need for further examining the regional dimension of this priority, this area would allow addressing the demographic priorities (asked by some MSs), as well as contributing to the gender targets. *Sweden has manifested an interest for a possible TEI.*
- iii) Strengthening Africa-based public health capacity, supporting the enhancement of expertise, knowledge and resources of Public Health Institutions in Africa in order to achieve an acceptable level of evidence-based policies, as well as improve the regional collaboration in the continent. *There are prospects for TEIs, building on existing programmes such as the ECDC and AfCDC partnership, ARISE (African Research Initiative for Scientific Excellence Pilot Programme), SPHIP (Supporting Public Health Institutes programme), as well as linking with the STI agenda.*
- iv) African pharmaceutical systems and local manufacturing capacity, which aims to support capacity building in local manufacturing, as well as the establishment of harmonized regulatory bodies in the region. This priority would involve the private sector (possible use of EFSD+). Work in this area will be a long-term (linked to mapping at target country level) and a gradual approach will be needed, with regional cooperation focus on legislative/regulatory aspects. *There are prospects for TEIs, as well as linkages with the STI agenda.*

The SSA contribution to the recent COVAX Pledge will also have to be covered.

Education

Investing in education and skills development, in particular for women and youth, underpins the five partnerships of the new EU strategy for Africa, becoming crosscutting priorities in the regional programming. Building on ongoing and past experiences, such as Intra-Africa Academic Mobility Scheme or the Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation initiative, at the regional level various actions could be foreseen. The aim would be to complement EU interventions at country level (which is the main channel of support on the sector to strengthen national education systems as well as quality of learning, skills development programmes to support employability, entrepreneurship and income-generation opportunities in particular for youth and women). Support is proposed toward the promotion of north-south and south-south peer-to-peer exchange programmes and approaches relating to (i) Learning innovation and digital platforms in the field of education and skills development; and (ii) Support to regional integration through education and employment actions such as accreditation, certification (and curricula development), skills recognition and mobility.

More specifically the MIP would support:

- (i) Platform on education and skills
- (ii) African Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF)+ Skills Observatory+ exchange programmes
- (i) Higher Education/Mobility (for 10.000 scholarships)
- (ii) Youth talents/leadership programme

These priority interventions will be complemented by the Erasmus+ programme (dedicated MIP)². The Erasmus + actions covering SSA will include capacity building for Higher education and VET institutions, international mobility and virtual exchanges, by targeting soft and professional skills. Focus on leadership programmes (students and researchers, young entrepreneurs and innovators, youth leaders in civil society, in politics, in the media, think tanks, creative industries) is also mentioned as an indicative sector of intervention.

Culture

While culture is deeply anchored in the national level, it has an undeniable cross-border dimension. Creative industries are increasingly reliant on regional/cross-border structures and networks. By building on regional ecosystems, markets and audiences, they can generate economies of scale along the value chain (from production to distribution) and thus fulfil their jobs and sustainable growth potential. The digital transformation reinforces this dynamic by changing dissemination and consumption patterns and offering new opportunities. Cultural heritage also often transgresses national boundaries, connecting ethnic groups/people across countries, ultimately contributing to improve social cohesion and dialogue. The MIP would focus on three priorities:

- (i) Strengthening EU-Africa and intra-Africa cultural cooperation and intercultural dialogue (setting up “Euro-African houses/spaces of culture” to create spaces for people-to-people exchange and co-creation).
- (ii) Building capacity to document, protect, restore African cultural heritage, including capacity to manage museums complementary to the spaces of culture under the first priority, and

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promoting it becoming a vector for cultural tourism, jobs and sustainable growth (developing cross-border cultural heritage protection and promotion in specific geographic areas e.g. North Africa/Sahel and in the Horn of Africa). *Potential TEI through twinning initiatives between EU MS art schools (for restoration and preservation work), universities, research institutions and museums with African counterparts* complementary to the Euro-African spaces of culture.

- (iii) Strengthening creative industries and generate sustainable jobs and growth (skills development and support to job creation in the cultural and creative industries with a focus on new/digital technologies).

Governance and Peace and security

Governance

While it is primarily at national level that good governance will be most effectively addressed, a continental and regional approach is also needed to harmonize progress, deepen synergies, coordination and cooperation among AU Member States and Regional Organizations. In addition, addressing emerging challenges to Human Rights and Democracy through a multi-country approach contributes to tackle regional specificities and allows the EU to support initiatives that would be challenging to implement at national level because of difficulties to establish dialogues with national authorities. The MIP proposes a focus on 4 governance priorities:

- (i) Strengthening continental and regional frameworks for democracy, good governance, the rule of law and Human Rights and supporting transparent and credible elections (establish robust legal frameworks and strategies in line with international standards to prevent and fight against Illicit Financial Flows (IFF) and corruption, enhancing accountability architectures and the transparency of Public Finance Management; support regional CSOs networks specialised in electoral matters).
- (ii) Ensuring youth inclusion and gender equality across all areas of the Africa-EU Partnership; and integrating Women and children rights in initiatives implemented at continental and regional levels (support to the AU-EU Youth Hub, with a focus on young girls and women, implementation of the Maputo Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights)
- (iii) Supporting the engagement and participation of African citizens and in particular improving freedom and access to information, media literacy, and critical thinking education.

Peace and Security

While the sources of instability and insecurity in Africa are mostly linked to local and/or national factors, their dynamics and impacts can rarely be limited to the boundaries of individual states. This is the case for instance of national conflicts that spill over into regional ones, and even more so of cross-border security challenges, such as transnational organised crime, which are inherently regional in nature. From this perspective, the adequate level of the EU response depends not only on the geographic scope of the security challenge or conflict at hand, but also on its nature. The prevention, management or resolution of inter- and intra-state conflict often requires the intervention of a regional organisation acting within the remit of the mandate given by its member states. Challenges that span throughout boundaries, and to which no country alone can offer efficient or sufficient responses, call for collective responses at multi-country, regional and sometimes continental level, guided by robust cooperation-driven strategies. The MIP would focus on 3 peace and security priorities:

- (i) Supporting African regional civilian initiatives to reduce the incidence, duration and intensity of violent conflicts, where appropriate closely coordinated with military initiatives funded under the European Peace Facility.
- (ii) Contributing to the effective prevention and response to transnational security threats across the continent such as fight against terrorism and violent extremism, smuggling and/or trafficking of drugs, anti-money laundry wildlife, minerals, cultural goods and other commodities, small arms and light weapons; maritime and port security and safety of navigation
- (iii) Contributing to stabilization and resilience in cross-border areas and management of conflicts resulting from unsustainable competition for natural resources (farmers-pastoralist, agriculture-mining, human-wildlife conflicts).

Green and climate transition

Energy

Under this cluster, the EU would contribute to enhanced renewable energy production, interconnectivity, energy efficiency, storage, and distribution. Actions will include blending investments supporting key regional energy projects for smart production (hydropower, solar, wind, hydrogen) and regional transmission corridors. The support to energy is instrumental to other major policies as digital, agriculture-irrigation-, environment, transport, health, water...

Increased access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy services will be supported, including for clean cooking as a major driver fighting against deforestation. Policy dialogue, harmonisation and key African administrations' structural reforms will also be supported, promoting the European Energy policy values and interests in Africa through a number of key instruments, including the Africa-EU Green Energy Initiative, the AU Energy Master Plan, regional harmonisations facilitating market integration and trade. *There is a strong potential for TEIs, although it needs to be discussed with relevant stakeholders.* EU interventions would be accompanied by significant investment – blending/guarantees (link with EFSD+).

Resilient agri-food systems and climate change adaptation

Resilient rural economies are an essential part of stability and prosperity. Supporting them require addressing a number of issues at regional level. The proposed focus will be on:

- (i) Strengthening the capacity to anticipate, manage and respond to recurrent shocks (pest threats, food crisis, natural disasters); and
- (ii) Making agri-food systems (regional agri value-chains) truly sustainable, more resilient to climate erratic features, and better performing. The focus is geared towards supporting Africa's green recovery and the integration process of the AfCTA. Circular economy principles are included.

Programmes would support: (1) regional climate services, early warning systems on food insecurity, disaster risk financing, solidarity funds and insurance mechanisms³; (2a) actionable research for

³ Seasonal weather forecasts are best done at the regional level, which then supports national meteorological authorities to downscale and provide context specific climate services. Examples of Regional Climate centres: ACMAD/WMO Regional Climate Centre Niamey, IGAD/WMO Regional Climate Centre, SADC Climate Services Centre/WMO Regional Climate Centre, Tropical Cyclone Advisories (WMO Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre La Réunion operated by MétéoFrance), WMO Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre Dakar (Agence Nationale de l'Aviation Civile et de la Météorologie, Senegal) and Pretoria (South African Weather Service).

agro-ecological transition and rural economic transformation (incl. green processing, reduced harvest losses), value-chain dialogues, enhanced role of farmers organisations, understanding of agri-markets for informed policy dialogues. (2b) SPS - improved plant health, adoption of harmonised food safety standards, reduction of food contamination; (2c) eradication of the 'peste des petits ruminants' (sheep and goat plague) and if relevant other main animal diseases; relevant services for transhumance sector⁴.

These are all issues that require, and will benefit from, coordinated actions among countries, research organisations, development operators, civil society and business, with a facilitating role of regional organisations. Nutrition, women empowerment, digital services will be crucial topics when designing, implementing and communicating. *There are prospects for TEIs⁵: Great Green Wall (light regional programme complementing the mosaic of national programmes); TEI on food reserves, disaster risks and climate services; TEI – Desira for Africa⁶; TEI on SPS; TEI on transhumance/livestock regional value chain.*

Biodiversity, environment and wildlife management

Africa is home to vast natural capital, unique biodiversity and ecosystems such as forests, savannahs and oceans. Biodiversity is not only an environmental issue, it is essential to human life and socioeconomic development, in particular for developing countries and the most vulnerable population groups, which all depend on surrounding ecosystems for a variety of essential services to populations. The proposed focus will be on:

- (i) supporting an African network of cross-border protected areas and corridors, offering opportunities in the green economy to the surrounding populations and to address wildlife trafficking; and
- (ii) increasing African capacity and knowledge to ensure the implementation of post-2020 Global Biodiversity commitments and the monitoring of the biodiversity situation.

Programmes would support: 1) biodiversity through transboundary landscapes; ecological corridors between landscapes; fight against wildlife and forest trafficking and illegal exploitation; regional sustainable and equitable value chains aiming to sustainably use biodiversity; and 2) monitoring of the conservation and development in Key Landscapes for Conservation and Development (KLCDs) through a network of regional observatories; harmonisation of regional/transboundary policies and improve governance; capacity development and knowledge through continental/regional training centres and applied research; effective participation of the partner countries in international and regional processes and commitments.

⁴ These services are those needed by transhumant herders to continue their economic activity in a sustainable and conflict-sensitive manner. They concern animal health, forage and natural resources management; digital services on animal health, price, safe transhumance corridors, forage location; funding to local cross-border initiatives in support to transhumance, High-level multi-country dialogues on transhumance and policy and operational recommendations on transhumance, mediation and natural resources management.

⁵ Some of these TEIs can be merged e.g. Desira with GGW or/and with SPS.

⁶ DeSIRA is an ongoing programme linked to the EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture. DeSIRA + for Africa would build on this and focus on Africa to support innovation through partnerships and research at regional and multi-country level focusing on the agri-food transition on a large scale, in line with EU Green Deal policy, including the "Farm to fork" and "Biodiversity" strategies. This would involve supporting innovation for sustainable agricultural and food systems (productive, inclusive, climate - and biodiversity-sensitive), strengthening research capacities and governance mechanisms to improve agricultural innovation systems in the countries concerned, and provide knowledge. DeSIRA works very closely with EUMS and there is a strong potential for strategic TEI.

Circular economy activities are mainstreamed. *Potential TEI (i.e. where EUMS already work together or have shown interest in doing so): NaturAfrica, covering several regions (NaturAfrica tackles biodiversity loss through restoring and protecting a network of protected areas and high value ecosystems whilst creating decent incomes and jobs in green sectors for local populations).*

Water and Oceans

These issues are vital for life, health, food, biodiversity, climate and societal resilience. Population growth and global climate change is putting increasing pressure on these already limited resources and causing more frequent natural disasters, social unrest, conflict and displacement/migration. As oceans and water resources are cross-sectoral and trans-boundary (shared by several countries), it needs to be addressed at regional level or sea/river-basin level adopting integrated territorial approaches. The proposed focus will be on

- (i) supporting water/oceans governance by enhancing the regional coordination and cooperation in terms of policies, strategies, monitoring, control, surveillance, research and data sharing for a sustainable management and use of the resources;
- (ii) supporting innovative regional and multi-country approaches to promote a sustainable, circular, inclusive and equitable blue economy, integrated water resource management and integrated coastal zone management (around sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, circular economy, planning tools, environmental assessment, payment ecosystem services, pollution monitoring, nature-based solutions, water renewable energy, irrigation etc.);
- (iii) supporting the restoration and conservation of ocean, wetlands and inland water ecosystems based on effectively managed regional networks and on initiatives promoting nature-based solutions.

EU interventions would be accompanied in parallel by significant investment – blending/guarantees (link with EFSD+). Work in this area would link to other clusters (e.g. agriculture, energy). Circular economy activities are mainstreamed. Important also to ensure coordination and complementarity with the SFPAs and IUU fishing dialogues. Potential TEIs (TBC) : Sustainable Blue economy in East Africa coast/Indian Ocean – Nile Basin Initiative for a sustainable use and management of water resources. Possible regional programmes: PESCAO on sustainable blue economy in West Africa; EEOFISH (Eastern Africa, Indian Ocean, South Africa).

Digital and Science, Technology and Innovation

Digital

This priority area will support interventions that will help EU stakeholders build an “alliance for science, technology, innovation and digital” with their African counterparts. The MIP proposed focus will be on:

- (i) Promote the development of regional/continental digital governance mechanisms and harmonised legal and regulatory frameworks;
- (ii) Enhance equitable access to affordable, secure and quality digital infrastructures;
- (iii) Contribute to enhance a more scientific knowledge-based and innovation-led society in Africa
- (iv) Support Africa cross-sectorial development by making effective use of Science, Technology and Innovation and data driven services as enablers of development

- (v) Promote effective STI governance in Africa by supporting Africa – EU STI policy dialogue; promoting institutional frameworks; continental and regional partnerships and networking

The digital sector has a significant transformative potential that can enhance service delivery and foster economic growth, jobs creation and innovation. While the development of digital ecosystems will take place at national level, support for regional and continental will be required to support efforts on interventions that support and consolidate an enabling and interoperable environment in which digital services can flourish and be accessible across borders. This would be done by tackling the harmonisation of legal/regulatory frameworks and by supporting the development of integrated and interconnected digital infrastructure (connectivity, data centres, etc). The use of blending and guarantees is proposed for the implementation of investments in digital connectivity and infrastructures, partnering with and leveraging funds from European, Africa, international financial institutions as well as private sector investors.

STI

With regards to science, technology and innovation (STI), the regional and continental levels are particularly adequate to mutualise resources and facilitate knowledge-sharing. In this sector, support will support the uptake of data and scientific evidence in policy and decision-making processes, notably in some well identified areas (green transition and health). This will require increasing STI capacities in the partner countries where it may imply the development and upgrade of research infrastructures.

It will also involve support to research continental and regional networking and collaboration between African and European stakeholders, in particular through the use of common tools (earth observation space programmes) and around strong principles such as open science. Finally, such interventions are expected to feed into Africa-EU policy dialogue, to encourage research and innovation partnerships in complementarity with other existing programmes (Horizon Europe, EU Joint Research Centre, Marie Curie, Erasmus+) and to reinforce EU science diplomacy.

Sustainable Growth and decent jobs

Regional economic integration, trade and trade facilitation

The support to economic integration processes can have a significant impact only if properly prioritized and implemented at continental/regional level (negotiations, lobbying, monitoring, communication, etc.), as well as at national level (when there is a convergent interest of the EU and the partner country/region on a specific theme). Up until now, EU support has essentially been channelled to the AUC and the RECs, which is clearly insufficient for a transformative impact.

For this focal area, the intention is to create a dedicated envelope, with a system of ‘allocations’ by country/region to be coordinated by DG for International Partnerships at headquarters to ensure the overall coherence. Therefore, actions in the frame of this focal area will be implemented at continental, regional and, mostly, at national level, applying the principle of subsidiarity but under a single and coordinated umbrella. Having such approach will avoid dispersed actions by individual delegations on different themes, which would limit the effective impact of EU action in Africa.

An important element of economic integration is the development of infrastructures and regional transport connectivity. It is envisaged to allocate a significant financial envelope for investments along priority regional economic corridors. This allocation should be planned at SSA regional level in order to ensure flexibility in its utilisation, even if the projects’ implementation will happen at country level. The blending will be the preferred modality for the implementation of these investments,

partnering with and leveraging funds from European, Africa, international financial institutions as well as private sector investors.

The MIP proposed focus will be on:

- Actions to increase sustainable intra-African trade and mobility, making trade cheaper and faster; and strengthen Africa- Europe trade including:
 - (i) Improve capacity of the national, regional and continental actors to effectively manage and implement the existing economic agreements (AfCFTA, regional measures, EPAs) in coherence with the continental economic integration process;
 - (ii) Improve trade facilitation and Customs administration across African countries at continental, regional and cross-border level;
 - (iii) Reinforce sustainable infrastructure for land, air, and maritime transport. Integrated, green, smart, multi-modal strategic corridors will developed and strengthened;
 - (iv) Promote and strengthen sustainable, smart and safe mobility as well as land, air and maritime regulatory frameworks: Continental and regional regulations and measures will be strengthened and implemented across Africa at all levels. A multi-country approach will be promoted via the strategic corridors approach.
 - (v) Reduce non-tariff barriers (SPS and TBT standards, via value chains as preferred approach): support will be provided to contribute to the harmonisation of international, continental and regional norms and their application at national level;
 - (vi) Facilitate liberalisation of trade in services and digital trade;
 - (vii) Harmonise accompanying trade related policies (competition, investment, IPR) in order to strengthen the continent's business environment and foster investment;
 - (viii) Improve the availability of trade statistics to monitor intra- and extra-African trade: monitoring at continental and regional level, collection of data mainly at national level.

- Actions to support Africa moving closer towards a Common Market and an Economic Union including:
 - (i) Achieve progress in the free movement of capital;
 - (ii) Achieve progress in free movement of labour: support will be provided to the transposition of continental and regional protocols at national level in line with international standards (ILO);
 - (iii) Advance processes of monetary and fiscal integration in the economically more integrated regions.

Private sector

In relation to supporting private sector development and the investment climate, a three-pronged approach is proposed targeting the macro-, mezzo- and micro-level. This would include:

- (i) Actions for effective macro-economic reforms and policies leading to sustainable growth and decent job creation. Support will be provided for putting in place enabling conditions for sustainable economies such as macro-economic reforms and policies, through the provision of expertise on debt sustainability, fiscal balance, monetary policy, trade policy public investment, revenue mobilisation and employment policies, as well as the support to dialogue with regional and continental institutions. Possible areas for support includes:

AFRITACs, ECOWAS single currency framework, establishing a regional green bonds scheme, regional social dialogue, regional youth employment policies, regional economic expertise and statistics, regional labour markets for high-skilled professionals (i.e. engineers, doctors, IT specialists, etc.).

- (ii) Support for the development of an investment climate conducive to private sector development and investments. The approach will focus on investment facilitation and the investment climate. It will be important to improve key regional business climate indexes, look into investment regulations and engage with all relevant European and African business organisations/associations through dialogues and exchanges. Our engagement and support will be rooted in a strong commitment to reinforce EU values, the respect of social and environmental standards and business and human rights principles. Possible areas for support include the harmonisation of regional labour and environmental standards, strengthening public-private dialogues at regional level, support to the improvement of regional business indexes, strengthening networks of regional business associations and Africa-EU business-to-business platforms.
- (iii) Promotion of enhanced Business capacities of MSMEs and develop a robust Private Sector. Support will be provided to MSMEs and entrepreneurs. The regional programme will define areas of intervention at regional level to identify bottlenecks and improve investment readiness, access to finance and business services for ventures. Such financial and non-financial support can boost business creation, growth and jobs. This will also be achieved through support to innovation networks engaged in business incubation and business acceleration and link them to European networks. Possible areas for support TA for the investment readiness of MSMEs, strengthening the regional productivity, diversification and competitiveness of companies, support to business innovation networks (regional networks of business incubation and acceleration).

Migration and forced displacement

Further to the political agreement reached between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on NDICI in December 2020 and to complement actions implemented at national level, the Commission will establish a comprehensive regional programme for Sub-Saharan Africa, the “SSA Regional Migration Support Programme (RMSP)”. Given the transboundary nature of migration and forced displacement, the RMSP will facilitate a coordinated and comprehensive approach. It will allow for maximizing synergies, economies of scale in the delivery, and ensure the necessary flexibility in line with the EU’s commitments.

The RMSP will include two main components: (a) country interventions; and (b) multi-country and regional actions. Country specific-actions funded by the RMSP will allow to complement actions under the national MIP and offer to selected countries an incentive to go beyond what their country MIP offers, in line with a flexible incentive approach. In parallel, continental, regional, sub-regional and multi-country actions will allow for a better whole-of-route approach, and to address migration and forced displacement challenges shared by several countries in a more efficient manner.

The MIP will focus on the following priorities:

- (i) Contribute to strengthening migration policy, governance, and management in Sub-Saharan Africa. This will include (1) providing protection, assisted voluntary return from

destination/transit countries in Africa and sustainable reintegration support to returnees and host communities. (2) Financing regional research and data gathering. (3) Promoting political dialogues and continued high-level engagement on issues of common concern in the field of migration. (4) Supporting improved migration policies, governance, and management capacities within Africa. (5) Supporting legal migration and mobility within and outside of Africa; and (6) Facilitating diaspora engagement for development and on remittances to reduce their costs and increase their productive use.

- (ii) Addressing protection and long-term needs and supporting durable solutions for displaced populations and host communities including education, health and livelihoods.
- (iii) Establishing a flexible financing mechanism to encourage relevant origin, transit, destination and/or host countries of the region to better address their migration and/or forced displacement challenges.

At this stage one TEI targeting the Atlantic Route is under development with Spain.

Cooperation facility

Capacity building programmes for regional organisation will be included under the thematic areas of the MIP. In addition, the Cooperation Facility will provide institutional support to African regional organisations that the EU identifies as key partners. This may include not only actions aimed at strengthening core administrative and financial systems, but also actions developing capacities in cross cutting areas such as gender mainstreaming, improving cooperation with non-state actors, or strengthening linkages between continental and regional Institutions and funding for the strengthening of platforms for political and policy dialogue.

The Cooperation Facility will also include support for project preparation, monitoring and auditing.

Dialogue Facility

Two dimensions:

- (i) a public diplomacy facility allowing for the launch of outreach activities in view of the preparation of summits and other high level events, the capacity to conduct opinion surveys to understand the perception of the EU in Africa and adapt our outreach and communication strategies accordingly,
- (ii) the launch of studies and the organisation of workshops to underpin the political and policy dialogue with RECs, the AU and other regional institutions beyond what is required in view of the project identification and formulation.

Finally, under this heading support will be provided for the running of the post-Cotonou Institutional Framework.