

Sixth consultative discussion with CSOs and ALAs on EU regional programming for Sub-Saharan Africa (2021-2027) – AAP 2024

Online meeting
29 January 2024

Executive Summary

In continuation of its commitment to organise regular exchanges with development partners and in the framework of the Policy Forum on Development, INTPA hosted the sixth¹ consultative discussion on the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) regional multi-annual programme (RMIP) with more than 70 global and regional networks and platforms of civil society organisations (CSOs) and associations of local authorities (ALAs) present in Europe and Africa, engaging with more than 30 EU colleagues. This meeting provided an update on RMIP implementation and feedback on the contributions received from the previous meetings; and invited the views of CSOs and ALAs on the Annual Action Plans for 2024 (which are currently in the pipeline). This report recaps the meeting flow and the feedback by thematic session.

In the session on Human Development (including health, gender, culture, youth and skills) participants stressed the importance of social protection and pointed to the need to coordinate the various initiatives to maximize synergies and specifically to address the impact of climate change in women's access to Sexual Health and Reproductive Health (SHRH) services. Ensuring a gender responsive approach, especially in areas such as digital health, was also stressed as fundamental.

In the session on Democracy, governance, peace, migration and forced displacement, participants called for greater linkages to the women, peace and security agenda. Participants emphasized the importance of relying on African-led initiatives, either from the African Union, ECOWAS, other regional institutions, or CSOs based in the region.

In the discussion on Green Transition (including climate change, agri-food, pastoralism, and ocean protection), INTPA explained that it is aiming to catch up with spending targets, raising climate ambition in programmes under preparation, and is addressing issues related to pastoralism, the fight against climate change and deforestation, and supporting supply chains for nutritious foods, food security and agroecology.

The group on Sustainable growth and decent jobs, digital, STI (including trade, circular economy and product safety) discussed how the actions will tackle the issues of informality, women's empowerment, and upskilling.

Discussions in plenary and thematic sessions focused on the important role CSOs and ALAs could play in: design and implementation; including vulnerable groups; building capacity; and developing evidence-based data. Participants were encouraged to directly contact EU Delegations for specific follow up. The adoption of the AAP 2024 is expected in May, with another discussion with CSO and ALS partners planned before the end of the year.

¹ The online meeting built on previous information and consultation sessions organised in March 2021, December 2021, June 2022, April and July 2023 to present the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) regional programming exercise, its mid-term review and Annual Action Plans (AAP) 2022 and 2023.

Full report

I. Plenary

During the plenary session, George Dura, Acting Deputy Head of Unit of Regional and Multi-Country Programs for Africa, DG INTPA, presented how the programming process has evolved and gave feedback on how the EC took forward some of the recommendations expressed during the last consultation. He presented the [main points of SSA regional AAP 2024](#) and answered clarifying questions.

Some of the key clarifications and points raised included:

- The importance of involving CSOs from the early stages of identification and design of actions, particularly in the development of Global Gateway and Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs). INTPA clarified that this is done more action by action and where there are existing avenues for concrete collaboration.
- INTPA invited CSOs to follow up on concrete initiatives at country level with the corresponding EU Delegations. For example, on the support to public health institutions, the EU will engage in a multistakeholder policy dialogue at country level.
- Participants expressed concern regarding possible modifications to the AAP 2024, its funding and the funding allocated to other commitments (such as climate change) due to current political instability or conflicts affecting some regions. INTPA restated its commitment with the RMIP, indicating a strong internal push to deliver and make up for any previous underspending.
- In response to concern about political instability and conflict, notably in the Sahel region, it was clarified that actions are looked at in terms of a case-by-case and country-specific approach.
- Welcoming the focus on women and girls in the area of human development, there was a question about the plans to reach out and involve other vulnerable groups. INTPA explained that the role of CSOs will be important in reaching out to vulnerable groups, notably with the aim of strengthening evidence and data availability, supporting the improvement of local research capacity and in terms of accountability vis à vis SRHR targets.
- In response to the point that local authorities no longer feature prominently in the actions presented, INTPA explained that they engage with a certain number of partners, primarily regional organizations such as the AU and the RECs, and with local government where the action is at a very local level, such as the case for support to public health institutes. This cooperation is something that would be targeted through bilateral programmes that are designed and implemented locally, and via EU delegations, which are closely following up with local government.
- There are 28 actions in this AAP and two top ups (two existing actions that are under previous AAPs on migration).
- The AD on Support to Regional Networks of CSOs in SSA was included in the AAP 23 presentation. This includes a component supporting civil society to become recognized stakeholders in the regional dialogue managed by the East African Community (EAC). It was adopted in December and is going ahead.

II. Thematic sessions

The plenary session was followed by discussions in sub-groups which covered the specific actions by thematic in the AAP 2024:

1. Human development (including health, gender, culture, youth, and skills)
2. Democracy, Governance, Peace, Migration and forced displacement (including CSOs, local government, illicit financial flows, and maritime security)
3. Green transition (including climate change, agri-food, pastoralism, and ocean protection)
4. Sustainable growth and decent jobs, Digital, science, technology and innovation - STI (including trade, circular economy and product safety)

The following guiding questions on the role of CSOs/ALAs on the ground were suggested for each group:

- What are the CSOs/ALAs views on the relevance of the regional action plans for 2024 considering the priorities of the RMIP?
- What are key areas or focal points that should be taken into account for the formulation of SSA regional initiatives?

Most of the discussion in groups focused on the detail of the specific actions, responding to clarification questions. The detail of the group discussions can be found below, as well as the links to the fast-track of current TEIs under each thematic area.

1. Human development (including health, gender, culture, youth and skills)

The discussion was moderated by Deirdre Lennan, team leader for Human Development, and covered a broad range of topics related to the upcoming initiatives and actions for 2024 in the sectors of health, education and culture. In the health sector, the first Team Europe initiative (TEI) was launched in April 2020 to support the supply and roll out of COVID-19 vaccines. Five additional TEIs², established as part of the Global Gateway health investment package, were presented at the 6th EU AU summit 2022 in Brussels. The right to health and equitable access to health was one of the takeaways from the 2022 EU-AU Summit. Great effort is put on strengthening cooperation between African National Public Health Institutes (NPHIs) and international public health institutes, responding to the call for a new public health order in Africa. The focus will be on areas such as: reducing inequities in addressing the double burden of disease; addressing public health priorities linked to integrated and holistic health systems; sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR); antimicrobial resistance using a one-health approach; and strengthening systems for pandemic preparedness through integrated patient-centred digital solutions. Initiatives will support digital transformation strategies such as enhancing capacity for national strategies' implementation and training professionals from various sectors, including the human-animal-environment interface.

² TEI Manufacturing & access to vaccines, medicines & health technology (MAV+); TEI on sustainable health security using a One Health approach; TEI on support to National Public Health Institutes in SSA; TEI on digital health for health systems strengthening and Universal Health Coverage; TEI for Enabled environment for Sexual and reproductive health and rights in SSA

Actions related to Health:

- Action 62363: Digital Health solutions for pandemic preparedness and health system strengthening in Sub Saharan Africa. Planned amount EUR 25M (Anja Bauer, G4)
- Action 62355: Fighting harmful practices, improving access to and deepening accountability for SRHR services in Africa. Planned amount EUR 40M (Marie Chesnay/Verena Nitschke, A2)
- Action 62357: Support to African Public Health Institutes. Planned amount EUR 50M (Diana Van Daele, A2)
- Action 62356: Fighting antimicrobial resistance and strengthening the One Health workforce in Africa. Planned amount EUR 42,5M (Diana Van Daele, A2)

Actions related to Education:

- Action 62418: Africa-Europe Platform to Exchange on Education Reforms (PEERS). Planned amount 15M (Pietro Romano, A2). Aiming at designing quality inclusive education.

Actions related to Culture:

- Action 62424: Creative Africa. Planned amount EUR 15M (Adrian Laschinger/Alice Fracchia, G3). Focussed on strengthening creative industries in the audio-visual sector.
- Action 62354: Strengthening Africa-European Museum Partnerships. Planned amount EUR 15M (Christoph Pelzer, EU DEL to AU/Eleonora Martinello, A2). Aiming to establish networks among museums in Africa and Europe.

Main comments:

- Social Protection was brought up as one of the priorities under the Belgian presidency of the EU and the importance of linking the TEI on Social Protection to ongoing and planned programmes that cover aspects of social protection was stressed.
- The importance of not shying away from sensitive issues like comprehensive sexuality education was highlighted, emphasizing the need to integrate comprehensive sexuality education into the action and ensure a sex and gender-responsive approach.
- A point was made on the challenges of stockouts and shortages of contraceptive tools in partner countries, and a recommendation was made to strengthen the supply chains of contraceptive commodities and build synergies with successful and impactful programmes, such as the UNFPA Supplies Partnership which safeguards important principles such as user choice. Related to this aspect, more synergies should be built between the TEI on SRHR and the TEI MAV+. Participants suggested extending the programme to research and development on new contraceptive methods.
- Overall, there was significant emphasis placed on avoiding duplication of efforts across Team Europe Initiatives (Public Health Institutes, One Health and Digital Health) while ensuring synergies are created where possible, for example with the European Development Country Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and the EU-Africa Innovation Agenda.
- Participants stressed gender disparities in access to technology/digital literacy and called for a gender-responsive approach to digital tools, including those related to health.
- Actions should take into consideration the impact of climate change on access to services, including SRHR.

- The importance of continuing to align priorities with regional economic communities (RECs), to ensure ownership of the actions.
- It will also be important for these actions to leverage additional funding from EU member states, so they can contribute financially, scaling up the total funding to these actions, and amplifying their impact.
- Participants raised concerns about civil society participation throughout the design and implementation stages of these projects and called for ways to include CSO partners in consortiums and reduce barriers to CSO participation, such as considering indirect costs for CSO partners or subgrantees.
- Regarding how CSOs could participate in the African-Europe Platform on Education (PEERS), INTPA explained that the platform is still being developed and that CSOs could potentially be involved in policy forums, roundtables, and other activities.
- On the involvement of CSOs in the design and implementation of both policies and programmes, it would be important to ensure that there is a diversity of CSOs, including organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs).
- These follow-ups and action items demonstrate the importance of ongoing collaboration, coordination, and engagement with CSOs in the implementation of the proposed actions.

INTPA staff also provided detailed updates on the Team Europe Initiatives (TEI) in the region. The following links give access to the TEIs and Joint Programming tracker in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Human Development sector:

- [Digital Health – Africa](#)
- [Manufacturing and Access to Vaccines, Medicines and health technology products in Africa](#)
- [Public Health Capacity – Africa](#)
- [Social and Reproductive Health and Rights \(SRHR\) in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)
- [Social Protection – Africa](#)
- [Sustainable Health Security – Africa](#)
- [Opportunity-driven Skills and VET in Africa \(OP-VET\)](#)

2. Democracy, governance, peace, migration and forced displacement (including CSO, local government, illicit financial flows, and maritime security)

The breakout session on democratic governance, peace and security, migration and force displacement priority for the Sub-Saharan African MIP was led by Jorge Pereiro Piñon, team leader for democratic governance, peace and security, migration and forced displacement at INTPA A2. The session discussed the nine actions of the AAP 2024 with a focus on democracy and governance, peace and security, migration and forced displacement, and provided information about contact persons for each action plan. The Actions were presented by the programme managers in charge.

Actions related to peace and security:

- Action 61964: African Mechanism for Early Response (AMER). EUR 20 M (Charlotte Gaudion). The African mechanism for early response is the continuation of a previous EU programme implemented by the African Union and the regional economic communities such as ECOWAS and SADC. The programme supports early mediation, conflict prevention, response to early crisis action of either the African Union or the regional economic communities. Within this budget, 5 million is dedicated to civil society organizations to encourage initiatives from African civil society organizations in mediation, conflict prevention and peace building.
- Action 62316: Zones frontalières pacifiques et résilientes III (Peaceful and resilient borderlands III). Planned amount EUR 37.5 M (Chiara Raffaele). This uses the same approach as in other areas – target the cross-border area between Burkina Faso, Togo and Benin and the borders of the Central African Republic - Cameroun, Chad and possibly Sudan. The goal is to prevent and mitigate the impact of conflicts on populations living in borderlands via two main components: 1. support cross border dynamics, in particular of the management of cross border resources that can be natural resources, transhumance, local security and social cohesion; and 2. to improve access to local services in these borderland areas, as well as cross border trade services and also local value chains productivity.
- Action 62346: EU Support to ECOWAS in Peace, Security and Governance. Planned amount EUR 13 M (Charlotte Gaudion). This is the continuation of current support with ECOWAS in peace, security and governance within four components: conflict prevention, early warning, mediation and support on election and the prevention of electoral violence. What is new is the support to ECOWAS for backing safe and secure democratic transitions in the region.
- Action 62333: Multidimensional Security and Stabilisation Programme in West and Central Africa (SECSTA). Planned amount EUR 30 M (Giulia Nicoloso and Nina Krotov Sand). This is a multi-dimensional security and stabilization programme to fight violent extremism, terrorism and transnational organized crime in Africa. In Central Africa, the action will focus on enhancing knowledge and capacity to produce data for policy purposes on transnational organized crime and illicit markets, including their connection to conflict and violent extremism. One approach involves the establishment of a regional civil society observatory on transnational organized crime and illicit markets in Central Africa, which will be supervised by a consortium of NGOs and think tanks including the African Institute for Security Studies and Global Initiative for National and Organized Crime. The countries covered by these actions include Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, DRC and Sudan, and it has a budget of €5.8 million. In Western Africa the action will focus on preventing the spill over of the Sahel crisis to coastal states. In the Benin-Nigeria border the EU will fund local CSOs already active in the region to prevent conflict and fight violent extremism at community level. Other components include strengthening the criminal justice chain, training internal security forces on demining and dismantling of IEDs, and improve border management in Ghana and neighbouring countries. All components will be managed by four different EUDs: Ghana, Benin, Nigeria in West Africa and Central African Republic in Central Africa.

Actions related to migration and forced displacement. Under this priority, the EC aims to work on migration management, forced displacement and a flexible mechanism for migration.

- Action 62324: Valoriser les potentiels des diasporas via la coopération Sud-Sud : Entrepreneuriat et création d'emplois [Harnessing the potential of diasporas through South-South cooperation: entrepreneurship and job creation]. Planned amount EUR 5 M (Debora Guidetti). This action aims to harness the potential of diasporas for socioeconomic development in the six target countries - Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Senegal, Indonesia - all of whom are part of the Rabat process and share the potential for mutual learning on migration and development. This will be done through support for Southern institutional cooperation for diaspora engagement and via initiatives to accompany diasporas by specialized public and private structures, including CSOs and local authorities. The delegation in Ivory Coast will coordinate the implementation of this action and the work will be conducted via indirect management through GIZ and co-financed by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation. The action targets migration and gender, supporting the Gender Action Plan III. This action is complementary to another (5M EUR) action, covering the same countries, to be considered by DG NEAR in the course of 2024 and focusing on student mobility and vocational integration of recent graduates.
- Action ACT nr. 62668 (Top-up) Migrant Protection, Return and Reintegration Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa (MPRR- SSA). Planned amount EUR 80 M (Isabelle de Ruyt). This is a top up to the migrant protection, assistance to voluntary return, and reintegration programme. Voluntary return from Sub-Saharan African countries of transit towards countries of origin includes the return as such, the post arrival assistance, psychosocial support, health, et cetera, and then the migrants' reintegration in countries of origin. This reintegration is both from those who have voluntarily returned from transit countries in sub Saharan Africa, and those who have voluntarily returned from North African countries.
- Action 62381: Regional Responses to Climate Displacements (RE2CLID). Planned amount EUR 100 M (Vittorio Capici). This programme looks at how climate change and environmental degradation and other stressors relate to each other and tries to build a response. The action targets specific areas across two geographic windows - the Lake Tanganyika Basin as well as the southern African region, Malawi, Mozambique, Madagascar and the Indian Ocean countries. The programme targets displacement-affected communities as a whole via three components: 1. disaster risk reduction; 2. natural resources governance and how it can be improved to include displacement affected communities; and 3. resilience and self-reliance of displacement-affected communities in environmentally fragile areas. Refugees and displaced persons are often missing from national plans, so this action tries to strengthen what is already there, identify gaps and intervene. IOM is a main partner and EUDs involved can be contacted directly by CSOs.
- Action 62322: Protection, assistance and durable solutions for populations displaced by conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa. Planned amount EUR 90 M (Caterina Torchiaro). This action is divided among four different displacement situations: 1. population displaced from Democratic Republic of Congo; refugees in neighbouring countries of Tanzania, Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda, as well as internally displaced populations; 2. Central African Republic refugees in Chad, DRC as well, with the possibility of including potential voluntary return; 3. Coastal countries - northern parts of Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Togo and Ghana (refugees as well as IDPs); and 4. internal displacement in Nigeria. This action will be implemented mainly via NGOs working in the area and by UNHCR.

- Action ACT 60666 (Top-up): Flexible Mechanism for Migration and Forced Displacement. Planned amount EUR 100 M (Isabelle de Ruyt). These are funds available to support the outcomes of migration dialogue between the European Union and African states. In addition, the flexible mechanism supports countries adopting policies on forced displacement which are in line with the Global Compact on Refugees, to incentivize these policies. Actions for around 110,000,000 of 200 million euros are initially committed.

Main comments:

- The group discussed the role of local actors in implementing these programmes, especially CSOs. The participants emphasized the importance of capacity building for local actors, protection needs of conflict-affected populations, integrating programming that includes resilience, addressing food insecurity issues and considering LGBTQI+ rights while working towards peaceful communities/states. There was reference to the use of the inclusive and universalist language of the Maputo Protocol in cases where LGBTQI+ rights cannot be explicitly addressed.
- Clarify the feasibility of the planned actions in the Sahel region, considering the ongoing political and security challenges. This requires further dialogue and coordination with international and local actors to ensure safe and effective implementation.
- Explore the potential for collaboration and coordination between different organizations and actors in the implementation of the actions. This includes engaging with local authorities, civil society organizations, and media to ensure their active involvement and contribution. Assess the possibility of issuing calls for proposals to open opportunities for broader participation, especially from local actors. This can help ensure that a diverse range of organizations and stakeholders are involved in the implementation of the actions. Ways of working with national associations of local authorities were discussed in reference to Mali, Niger, Chad, Mauritania, Ivory Coast, Togo and Benin.
- Pay attention to the inclusion of transitional justice in relevant actions. While there are specific actions focused on transitional justice, efforts should be made to integrate transitional justice considerations into other actions, particularly those related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
- Take into account the perspectives and recommendations shared by Concord's membership. They welcomed the development of a youth for peace agenda for youth, women and persons living with disabilities and noted that peace building and conflict prevention efforts must take due note of emerging issues such as climate change, migration and displacement. As well, colleagues at Save the Children referred to the normative guidance and jurisprudence that treat children associated with armed groups and armed forces as victims primarily for any crimes against international law.
- Consider the need for capacity enhancement and support for local actors, including local civil society organizations and local authorities. This could include providing training, resources, and support to strengthen their capacity to respond to conflict, provide assistance to affected populations, and contribute to peacebuilding efforts.
- Explore the integration of resilience-building activities into actions related to the Central African Republic refugee crisis. This can help address the root causes of displacement and support the economic development and welfare of both the returnees and the broader affected population.

- Ensure the protection needs of affected populations are adequately addressed in the actions. This includes considering measures to enhance protection, raise awareness of human rights and international humanitarian law, and address food insecurity and other critical needs.

INTPA staff also provided detailed updates on the Team Europe Initiatives (TEI) in the region. The following links give access to the TEIs and Joint Programming tracker in Sub-Saharan Africa in the democratic governance, peace and security, migration and force displacement sector:

- [Central Mediterranean migration route](#)
- [Peace and Security in the Great Lakes region – Africa](#)
- [Western Mediterranean migration route](#)

3. Green transition (including climate change, agri-food, pastoralism and ocean protection)

The breakout session on the green transition priority for the Sub-Saharan African MIP was led by Claudia Boldrini, team leader for the Green Transition priority at INTPA A2. The session discussed the eight actions of the AAP 2024 with a focus on climate change, sustainable energy, agri-food systems, and ocean, and provided information about contact persons for each action plan (all from INTPA A2, unless otherwise specified).

Climate change related actions (Gauthier Schefer, INTPA F2):

- Action 62349: Regreening Africa Phase II. Planned Amount EUR 15 M, to restore land degradation, is a follow up from Phase I, where close to a million hectares were restored in eight countries. This new phase aims to: 1. reach additional 200 households; 2. document practices (research element) and advocate for scaling up those practices at national level; and 3. strengthen value chains around tree-based products and support the creation of SMEs in rural communities.
- Action 62394: Covenant of Mayors in Sub-Saharan Africa Phase IV. Planned amount EUR 20 M, to support mayors in developing climate adaptation, energy access and clean mobility projects in their cities. Until now it has focussed mainly on climate finance, and in this phase will do more on climate adaptation and investment, while promoting knowledge sharing and exchange.
- Action 62381: Regional Responses to Climate Displacements (re2clid). Planned amount EUR 100 M (financed half from green transition and half from migration), which tackles disaster forecast, risk management programme (natural resources management and governance) and communities' resilience, focusing on forcibly displaced populations and host communities in the lake Tanganyika Basin and the southern Africa Indian Ocean region.

Sustainable energy related actions (Claudia Boldrini, covering for Josephine Sylva Mendy):

- Action 62362: Continental energy programme in Africa. Planned amount EUR 15 M, a large technical assistance programme supporting continental institutions to harmonize policy, legal and regulatory frameworks; to facilitate the establishment of a continental electricity market, to increase renewable energy generation capacity across regions; to advance regulations and strategies in the area of energy efficiency; and to support policy dialogue in this sector. It is in line with the collaboration with the ongoing Africa Union Commission for Planning and Regulations since 2015, now becoming a fully-fledged programme. This is in line with the Global Gateway initiative and part of the Team Europe Initiative on Africa, the EU Green Energy.

Agri-food systems related actions to strengthen food crisis management systems and supporting farmer organizations in creating linkages between farmers and agribusinesses within agricultural value chains (Gianpietro de Cao):

- Action 62319: Projet de renforcement et d'innovation des systèmes d'information en matière de Sécurité alimentaire et nutritionnelle pour mieux prévenir et gérer les crises alimentaires et les systèmes alimentaires dans les contextes complexes et multidimensionnels au Sahel et en Afrique de l'Ouest (PRISISAN) [Strengthening and Innovation of Food and Nutrition Security Information Systems Project to Better Prevent and Manage Food Crises and Food Systems in Complex and Multidimensional Contexts in the Sahel and West Africa]. Planned amount EUR 10 M, focused on West African countries plus Cameroon, with two objectives: 1. strengthening the food and nutrition crisis management prevention system; and 2. improving the quality, transparency, accountability and efficiency of the mechanism and tools at national level, integrated in FAO's IPC system.
- Action 62323: Farmers' Organisations for Africa (FO4A), connecting farmers with agribusiness and Agricultural Value Chain support. Planned amount EUR 30 M, to promote inclusive, sustainable and climate resilience agricultural value chain through policy support, technical assistance and empowerment of key actors linking agribusiness to African farmers. It has two pillars: 1. EUR 20 M to support technically and economically the regional and continental farmers' organizations (the PanAfrican Farmers Organisation PAFO/EAFF, PROPAC, ROPPA and SACAU) in their provision of services to farmers organisations at the national level; and 2. EUR 10 M to complement ongoing initiative on key value chains, notably cocoa and cashew value chains, for example supporting Cafe Cacao in Ivory coast, the Cocoa Board in Ghana and the African Cashew Alliance.

Ocean conservation related actions, designed to enhance ocean governance and promote sustainable blue economy practices while conserving marine ecosystems. Both programmes have a holistic approach based on 3 pillars: 1) ocean governance, focused on international treaties, such as the High Sea Treaty; 2) sustainable blue economy; and 3) restoration and conservation of coastal areas. The programmes do not cover restoration and conservation of coastal areas (Carole Rigaud):

- Action 62338: Océan Durable et Économie Bleue en Afrique centrale (ODEBAC). Planned amount EUR 42 M, led by the EUD in RDC.
- Action 62339: Sustainable Western Indian Ocean Programme (SWIOP). Planned amount EUR 58 M, led by the EUD in Tanzania.

Main comments:

- Given the announced cuts to the NDICI Global Europe and concern about how this affects the EU's commitments and pledges on climate and biodiversity, EC INTPA restated its commitment not only to maintain and spend the budget set for the Sub-Saharan Africa Regional MIP on the Green Transition priority, but also to globally increase the ambition in terms of spending target to counterbalance some shortages of bilateral envelopes. In this area, the Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience – Africa TEI provides regional and national support in four pillars: collection of risk and disasters data; disaster governance and

early warning systems; adaptation finance (including accessing the Global Climate Fund); and preparedness for residual risks.

- Regarding how other organizations (that are not implementing partners) can tap into the opportunities provided by the programmes and participate in relevant activities, the recommendation is to reach out to the EU Delegations in country.
- INTPA clarified that it considers every smallholder as a businessperson subject to receive capacity support and access to finance for long term planning and potential scale up.
- In response to the points made on the need to support local food systems and the promotion of nutrition-sensitive value chains, including the promotion of nutritious indigenous food and food plants, INTPA clarified that this is addressed in the programme via context-specific interventions designed at country level. Nutrition is a priority for the EC and the support to farmers organisations involves the team working on nutrition, including a component on nutritional education.
- Participants expressed concerns about representation of coastal communities and recommended that the interests and needs of coastal communities are adequately considered in the programmes. It was felt that too much emphasis is put on the high seas' treaty, while other relevant frameworks such as the global biodiversity framework should be addressed.

INTPA staff also provided detailed updates on the Team Europe Initiatives (TEI) in the region. The following links give access to the TEIs and Joint Programming tracker in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Green Transition sector:

- [Africa – EU Green Energy Initiative](#)
- [Climate Change Adaptation & Resilience – Africa](#)
- [Transboundary Water Management in Africa](#)

4. Sustainable growth and decent jobs, digital, STI (including trade, circular economy and product safety)

The session was moderated by Fabio Di Stefano, team leader in charge of Economic Integration and Trade covering also transport, digital and STI (Science, Technology and Innovation), and it was a lively open dialogue with the few participants in the session.

Actions related to Digital and STI:

- Action 62053: Africa Connect 4. Planned amount EUR 40M (passed in SSC 2023 moved to 2024; Angelica Sartori Conte). This will be the 4th phase of the project, which aims to boost research and education access to digital technologies while also promoting scientific collaboration. It will emphasize digital learning and women's leadership in the African regional Research and Education Network (REN) ecosystems along with green innovation, supporting connectivity, data infrastructure and services.
- Action 62104: Safe Digital Boost for Africa (SDBA). Planned amount EUR 100 M (Cristina Donateo and Alexandru Antonescu). This project will strengthen regulatory cooperation policy, including e-governance and cybersecurity, whilst improving technical capabilities of the public sector. It has a regional component with the African Union, and a series of decentralised components by clusters of countries in the different economic regions.

- Action 62566: Africa-Europe Digital Innovation Bridge (AEDIB 2.0). Planned amount EUR 35 M (Georgiana Macovei, F5). This programme strengthens digital transformation and addresses the green transition in one action. It has 3 pillars: 1. enabling environment for digital entrepreneurship and innovation; 2. connecting digital ecosystems, both within Africa and also with Europe; and 3. accessing finance, to promote access to finance for very innovative and scalable businesses. It is implemented through hubs (D4D Hub), where CSOs and other groups are present, and the role of the private sector is key.
- Action 62321: Support to geological science and technology (PanAfGeo). Planned amount EUR 30 M (Catherine Ghyoot). This is the 3rd phase of the programme, which supports sustainable management of geological resources while promoting partnerships concerning raw materials value chains, with gender sensitive approaches. It has three components: 1. institutional partnerships on geoscience at continental, regional and national level; 2. improving effectiveness of the Organization of African Geological Service in terms of geoscientific information and support to policy making and planning processes; and 3. promoting economic partnerships on raw materials value change, including gender and human rights sensitive approach.

Actions related to economic integration:

- Action 62332: Team Europe Initiative – Technical Assistance Facility (TEI-TAF) to the African Continental Economic Integration (AfCTA). Planned amount EUR 14 M (Sonia Lopez Villar). The facility will support the capacities of the AfCTA Secretariat to negotiate and steer the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement and Area), the capacities African Union member states, and the capacities of the private sector to benefit from the trade agreement. The facility will also support the integration of transversal areas such as gender equality and green aspects in the AfCTA negotiations and implementation, and it will support CSO participation in this process (in advocacy, research and impact analysis, awareness raising campaigns and the participation of vulnerable groups).
- Action 62425: Africa - Aviation Partnership Project. Planned amount EUR 10 M; indirect management by EASA (Georgios Grapsas). This project supports the development of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM), focusing on improving aviation safety, regulatory infrastructure, and the introduction of sustainable technologies.
- Action 62329: Regional programme “IYBA Invest.” Planned amount EUR 13 M (Larisa Paula Boldea). This programme will support young entrepreneurs in the region, particularly those having passed incubation phase, around three pillars: 1. de-risking investment challenges to attract investors; 2. capacity building & training; and 3. creating conditions for future investments for private sector.

Main comments:

- Regarding the implementation modalities and how civil society organizations (CSOs) can participate in the actions presented, INPTA acknowledged that opportunities are limited, since implementation is mainly through indirect management with a pre-identified organization. However, CSOs can participate directly and indirectly via the implementing partners; in some cases, subcontracting may be an option. The projects will be largely managed at country level through the EUDs.

- The actions encourage multistakeholder dialogue. For example, in the digital and STI sector, the advisory group within D4D Hub is an appropriate platform for CSOs to actively contribute to the thinking and definition of future programmes and initiatives in this field in Africa. In the PanAfGeo, the African association of Women in Geoscience will be involved.
- Detailed explanation was given about how the actions will provide skills training aligned with the needs of the job market, which will contribute to job creation, especially for youth. For example, in the support to e-commerce platforms, the IYBA programme is directly targeting business initiatives from young entrepreneurs, with specific training on skills.
- A question remained about how the actions plan to address informality.

The following links give access to the TEIs and Joint Programming tracker in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Sustainable growth and Jobs sector:

- [Digital for Development \(D4D\) for Digital Economy and Society in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)
- [Investing in Young Businesses in Africa \(IYBA\)](#)
- [Support to the African Continental Free Trade Area](#)
- [To support Africa in Combating Illicit Financial Flows and Transnational Organized Crime](#)

III. Closing remarks

The adoption of the AAP 2024 is expected in May, barring any delays. While no major changes are expected from what INTPA has shared, small modifications can be made, and participants were invited to submit written inputs until February 12th. A follow up consultation is planned for the end of this year on AAP 2025 to maintain engagement and collaboration among stakeholders, and to ensure effective implementation and improvement of the EU regional program