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**ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION**  
**Twenty-Ninth Ordinary Session**  
**3 - 4 July 2017**  
**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Assembly/AU/3(XXIX)**

Original: French



**HARNESSING<sup>THE</sup>**  
**DEMOGRAPHIC**  
**DIVIDEND<sup>THROUGH</sup>**  
**INVESTMENTS<sup>IN</sup>**  
**YOUTH**

**PROGRESS REPORT**  
**OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROADMAP ON THE AU**  
**THEME OF THE YEAR 2017**

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**PROGRESS REPORT  
OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROADMAP ON THE  
AU THEME OF THE YEAR 2017**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Africa has the youngest population in the world with more than 400 million young people aged between the ages of 15 to 35 years. Such a youth bulge calls for an increased investment in economic and social development factors that will improve the development index of African nations toward the realization of the shared vision of a united and prosperous Africa driven by its own citizens.

2. In recent years, the African continent has made significant progress in the area of economic development. However new emerging issues have added up to the toll of challenges and priorities that need urgent actions to sustain and accelerate an optimum level of development. African nations are part of the fastest growing economies in the world but this improved image of the economic landscape of the continent does not necessarily correlate with the improvement of conditions of life of its population especially young people who constitute in number the most important layer of its population.

3. According to the African Economic Outlook Africa achieved impressive economic growth over the past 15 years with the average gross real domestic product (GDP) rising from just above 2% during the 1980-90s to above 5% in 2001-14, even though the years 2015-2016 growth has been more moderate.

4. The economic growth can be sustained if only other factors of development have been adequately prioritized and invested in. It is estimated that 46 per cent of the 1.3 billion increase in Africa's labour force over the period 2015-2063 will be young people aged 15-34, averaging 12.1 million a year.

5. Political unrest and emerging health challenges also affect the economic development of African countries. West African countries have been significantly affected by the Ebola outbreak, which weakened an already fragile health system. The trio of HIV, Malaria and Tuberculosis constitute other major diseases affecting the continent with 25 million people living with HIV and young girls accounting for 75% of new infections among young people aged 15 to 24.

6. The education system in Africa is making significant stride with increased enrolment of young people in the education system. Youth civic engagement in political processes, beyond being an imperative linked to the demographic of the young population in Africa is enshrined in several conventions and continental rights frameworks, including the African Charter on democracy, elections and good governance. Young people's participation in political parties' activities, is still a daunting task for the ones who aspire for political positions and contribute to the construction of their societies. It is within this context that the voices of the youth and particularly young women need to be heard and their views incorporated in policy priorities.

**7.** Youth development policies at continental level have rapidly evolved and is articulated through, among others, the African Youth Charter, Youth Decade Plan of Action, Malabo decision on Youth Empowerment and the AU Agenda 2063.

**8.** The African Youth Charter which constitute the continental development framework for African Youth has a low ratification status with only 38 Member States over 55 who ratified as of today. The ratification of the Charter followed by systematic and periodic reporting on its status of implementation by Member States are critically important to assess its ownership and its implementation across the continent.

**9.** The 24th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments adopted the Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development. Policies developed in the areas of Education, Science and Technology, include the “Africa’s Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) which was published in 2005, the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 (STISA-2024), the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) 2016-2025 and the Continental Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). They define the continental strategic framework for accelerating Africa’s development and growth through an innovation-led, knowledge-based economy.

**10.** As for Governance, the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance which entered into force in February 2012 demonstrates African countries’ determination to promote and strengthen good governance through institutionalizing transparency, accountability and democracy. The African Governance Architecture was established to provide a mandate for putting in place a Pan African Architecture on Governance, as a platform for dialogue between various stakeholders. The scope and structure of AGA are inspired by the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU) that expresses the AU’s determination to ‘promote and protect human and people’s rights, consolidate democratic institutions and culture and ensure good governance and the rule of law’. These are critical policy frameworks that provide a ground for youth development and empowerment across the board.

**11.** The African health strategy 2016 – 2030, the Maputo plan of action for the operationalization of the continental framework on Sexual and reproductive health and rights, the catalytic framework on ending AIDS, TB and eliminating malaria by 2030 as well as the African CDC and the African health volunteer corps all adopted in July 2016 are aligned on the need of the African Continent to adopt a proactive approach toward a healthy African population. The African school-feeding day set up on the 1st march of every year is celebrated in the context of health promotion and promotion of a healthy lifestyle that encourage domestic production. Domestic health financing is another area where governments committed to, and this include a commitment to allocate 15% of national budget to the health sector.

**12.** Agenda 2063 recognizes that the future of the continent, in part, rests on the skills, knowledge, talents and commitment of its young people and identifies the failure to harness the Demographic Dividend as a threat to the realization of the its aspirations. The aspirations of the Agenda 2063 “reflect our desire for shared prosperity and well-being, for unity and integration, for a continent of free citizens and

expanded horizons, where the full potential of women and youth are realized, and with freedom from fear, disease and want.”

13. The demographic weight of this youth is indicative of the importance of its needs and rights in education and training, employment and integration in the process of development, needs and rights not sufficiently satisfied and considered by youth as far short of their expectations. It is against this backdrop that the AU declared the year 2017 under the theme harnessing the demographic dividend through investments in youth. The decision on the theme of the year, is in alignment with the decision of AU ministers of finance held in 2013 in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, calling on Member States to consider the Demographic Dividend in all studies and interventions on the development of the continent.

## II. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Decision on the theme of year

14. The African Heads of State and Government in their decision Assembly/AU/Dec. 591(XXVI) of January 2016 declared 2017 as the year of **“Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investment in the Youth”** and called for the development of a comprehensive roadmap with clear deliverables and milestones to guide Member States and Regional Economic Communities on key steps to take towards harnessing the demographic dividend in Africa.

15. It is worth noting that the decision to adopt the AU theme of the year one year earlier as well as its call to develop a road map constitute an innovation. Indeed, the decision requests the Commission in collaboration with partners “Expedite the implementation of a continental initiative on Demographic Dividend for Africa” and “develop a roadmap with key deliverables and milestones”. This decision was based on the realization that in order to achieve sustainable development and meet the aspirations of Agenda 2063 that envisions the “Africa We Want”, Africa must accelerate and increase strategic investments in its young people who constitute the majority of its population.

### 2.2 Understanding the theme of the year

16. The theme of the year 2017 "harnessing the demographic dividend through investment in youth" can be broken down into 4 components that foster better understanding and ownership:

- The first component refers to the notion of "harnessing": it refers to making use of a resource or profit. The profit is the gain resulting from an investment operation. This is the positive result that we hope for our investment;
- The second component refers to the "demographic dividend": the demographic dividend refers to the rate of people of working age who work effectively. It's an economic advantage which occurs when the majority of the active population of a country consists of men and women of working age and who work effectively. If the majority of the active population of a State is composed of men and women of working age but who are affected by

unemployment they may rather constitute a time bomb for the socio-economic development of their countries;

- Investing: is the action to strategically place resources for yields and subsequent gains. We invest to harness the demographic dividend in the future and the investment strategy is defined in the roadmap of the AU, following its 4 pillars;
- Youth: Youth are defined according to the African Youth Charter as the layer of the population aged 15 to 35 years. However, considering the evolving nature of youth, special attention is paid to the layer of the population less than 15 years, because they constitute the young people of tomorrow.

### **2.3 The road map**

**17.** In response to the AU decision, an extensive consultative process involving various experts and ministerial groups of Member States and civil society including young people was undertaken as part of the development of the AU Demographic Dividend Roadmap on the theme of the year 2017. The Roadmap which is guided by AU strategic policy instruments and frameworks including Agenda 2063 is anchored on four thematic pillars:

- *Education and skills development*

**18.** A good education that allows skills acquisition. The Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25) was adopted in January 2016 as a response of the AU to the SDG 4 on education. In addition to pedagogical issues, it addresses important issues such as school feeding which contribute to a better performance of the education system.

- *Health and well-being*

**19.** A Health that is the expression of a well-being and therefore offers a healthy body, to a mind that is healthy and empowered with a good education. The continental strategy for science technology and innovation (STISA 2024) made this issue its priority number 2.

- *Employment and entrepreneurship*

**20.** What would be the use of a good education if it does not encompass a real coherent national, regional and continental human resource development policy to allow fulfillment through remunerative and rewarding employment. Continental strategy for Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) adopted in June 2014 calls for a paradigm shift on the position of skills development and encouragement of young people to become job creators more than simple job seekers.

- *Rights, governance and empowerment of youth*

**21.** How can we talk about empowerment of youth in an environment that does not allow any chance of fulfilment despite acquired qualifications? The continental

strategy for science technology and innovation (STISA 2024) made this issue its priority number

**22.** Under each pillar, key actions have been suggested that would facilitate strategic investments needed to move countries closer to harnessing the demographic dividend and towards sustainable development. Furthermore, the roadmap elaborates a number of key actions that would enable implementation within and across countries. It also has a matrix of key activities outlining key milestones to be implemented throughout the year.

**23.** The STC on Youth, Culture and Sports reviewed the AU roadmap on the theme of the year 2017 and recommended its endorsement by the relevant bodies during the summit. The roadmap was endorsed by the AU Executive Council in July, 2016 through decision EX.CL/Dec. 921(XXIX).

#### **2.4 Launch of the theme of the year**

**24.** The theme of the year was officially launched at the 28th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly on 30 January, 2017.

**25.** The Chairperson of the Union delivered a keynote address in which he highlighted the necessity of urgent and strategic investments in young people as the sine qua non to Africa's sustainable development.

**26.** Young people from all over Africa played an important role in the launch of the theme and handed over presented copies of the AU Demographic Dividend Roadmap to Heads of State and Government.

**27.** The logo for the theme of the year, selected from a competitive logo competition of African youth was inaugurated. The winning logo was developed by a 22 year old Zimbabwean youth named Quentine Nyoni.

#### **2.5 The Leader of the theme of the year**

**28.** H.E. Mr. Idriss Déby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad, was appointed by the Chairperson of the African Union, H.E. Prof. Alpha Condé, President of Guinea, as the Leader of the theme of the 2017 theme of the year "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth".

**29.** The overall mandate of the Leader is to oversee the implementation of the Demographic Dividend Roadmap and its accompanying matrix of activities and to report to the Heads of State and Government Assembly.

#### **Guidance note from H.E Alpha Conde, Chairperson of the African Union to H.E Idriss Deby Itnao President of the Republic of Chad**

##### **Purpose:**

Implement and monitor the implementation of the African Union theme of the year 2017: "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth"

**Content of the mission:**

- A. Implementation of the roadmap with the joint action plan adopted at the July 2016 Summit in Kigali;
- B. Implementation and monitoring in AU Member States Invite AU member states to:
  - Extension and ownership at the national level of the AU Roadmap;
  - Alignment of national youth programs with the AU roadmap;
  - The involvement of national youth;
  - Development of national implementation and monitoring mechanisms;
  - Presentation of progress reports.
- C. Continental-level monitoring mechanism
  - Ensuring the Organization at the level of the AU Commission
- D. Involvement of partners
  - Organisations/Association working for youth;
  - Private sector;
  - United Nations bodies;
  - European Union.
- E. Involvement of African Youth
  - Involvement of African youth through the organization of an African youth forum in the form of an intergenerational dialogue which recommendation will be taken into account in the report presented at the July 2017 summit;
  - Consideration of continental or regional youth organizations such as PYU(Pan African Youth Union).

**III. IMPLEMENTATION OF AU ROADMAP ON THE THEME OF THE YEAR 2017**

**30.** The AU Roadmap outlines several key actions that Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and others need to take towards harnessing the demographic dividend in Africa. These include activities and initiatives at the continental, sub-regional and national levels.



### **3.1 Coordination mechanism**

#### **a) Technical Steering Committee**

**31.** To ensure effectiveness in coordinating the commemoration of the theme and implementation of the Roadmap at the continental level, AUC and its partners collaborated to form a Technical Steering Committee. The Technical Steering Committee is chaired by AUC's Human Resources, Science and Technology (HRST) with the active participation of other departments within the Commission.

**32.** This technical body leads the continental agenda on the demographic dividend and aims to strengthen coordination of Demographic Dividend activities on the continent, facilitate and integrate planning, monitoring and reporting on stakeholders' progress towards the realization of the 2017 theme, sustain an effective model of resource engagement toward positive youth development agenda, and strengthen youth contribution in advocacy initiatives at regional and continental level.

#### **b) Continental work plan**

**33.** To ensure harmonization and synergy of the activities on the theme of the year on a continental level, an integrated Demographic Dividend workplan identifying the activities of all partners on the theme of the year was developed in line with the pillars of the demographic dividend.

**34.** This enables synchronization between partners and avoids duplication of activities and the existence of parallel processes. It also provides linkages among partners to strengthen the work being done and to optimize outcomes.

#### **c) AUC Youth Development Mainstreaming Framework**

**35.** To commemorate the 2016 Africa Youth Day, on 1st November 2016, the then AUC Chairperson, H.E Dr Nkosazane Dlamini Zuma launched the AUC Youth Mainstreaming guideline to pave a way for effective engagement of youth in the work of the Commission.

**36.** The AUC Youth Mainstreaming guideline was designed to assist the African Union Commission (AUC) mainstream youth development in its work across departments. It is part of the mandate to implement the Youth Decade Plan of Action (2009-2018) of the African Youth Charter (AYC). This is in addition to mainstreaming the participation of youth and women in all activities of the commission being one of the key priorities of the AUC Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017. To date, an AUC wide task team has been established, and an orientation workshop held. The main objective of the workshop was to build capacity of participants on youth development mainstreaming and the demographic dividend agenda.

**37.** AUC is currently in the pilot phase of youth development mainstreaming. Implementation and reporting tools were proposed to ensure effective reporting, monitoring and evaluation of the progress made in the organization periodically. The next steps after a successful pilot of mainstreaming youth development in the AUC will be cascading of the strategy in RECs and member countries.

### 3.2 Continental and regional interventions

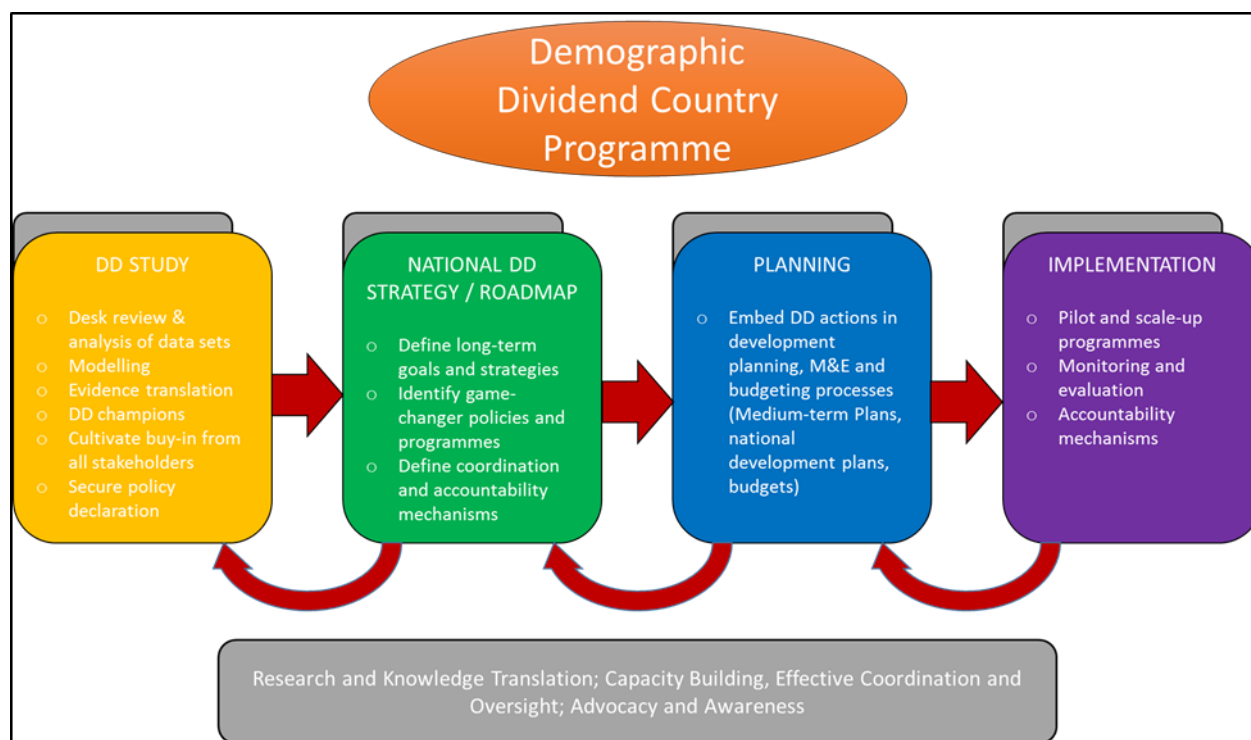
38. The following activities are being implemented:

a) **Evidence and knowledge generation**

- One of the key actions recommended by the Roadmap is the development of demographic dividend profiles at the national level to shed light on decision-making and planning and to define country-specific responses.;
- A Demographic Dividend Atlas is being developed with country profiles. As of May 1, 2017, 34 countries had completed demographic dividend profiles that provide a clearer indication of high impact areas requiring strategic investments to exploit the demographic dividend. Some eight other countries are currently finalizing their profiles;
- The African Union Commission will work with partners to develop country-specific demographic dividend profiles. These profiles will assess the position of each AU Member State in relation to the demographic dividend and identify investment opportunities. They should be integrated into the internal planning of the Member States. This statistical work has not yet been carried out and the full participation of African countries is eagerly awaited;
- Briefing notes and demographic dividend documents were produced as input to advocacy and policy;
- A gender score card on the theme of the year is being developed to highlight disparities in investment in boys and girls and to highlight the importance of gender Dividend.

b) **Framework for the implementation of the theme of 2017 at the national level**

The figure below proposes a four-step approach:



*Country program for the development of the demographic dividend*

### Demographic Dividend analysis

- Document review and analysis of data sets
- Modeling
- Translation of data
- Demographic Dividend Leaders
- Obtain the participation of all stakeholders
- Have a policy statement

### National Strategy/roadmap on Demographic Dividend

- Define long-term goals and strategies
- Identify policies and programs for change
- Define mechanisms for coordination and accountability

### Planning

- Integrate actions on the demographic dividend into development planning processes, monitoring and evaluation and budgeting (medium-term plans, national development plans, budgets)

### Implementation

- Pilot and intensification programs
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Mechanisms for accountability

c) **Mobilizing key decision makers on the continent**

**Special Technical Committees**

The roadmap requires the Specialized Technical Committees (STCs) to contemplate their sector contribution to the theme of the year. In this regard, all STCs held so far have focused on various aspects of the demographic dividend.

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Health, Population, and Drug Control (STC-HPDC-2), 20-24 March, 2017, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;**

The second AU Specialized Technical Committee on Health, Population and Drug Control (STC-HPDC2) was held at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa from 20-24 March, 2017 under the theme “Youth, Health and Development: Overcoming the Challenges towards Harnessing the Demographic Dividend”. UNFPA supported five young people from the five sub-regions of Africa to participate in the STC and to lead a plenary during the experts’ meeting on theme of the STC. They highlighted the high priority that must be placed on investing in health systems and services, including through access to comprehensive sexuality education, sexual and reproductive health commodities, among others.

The STC highlighted issues pertaining to the attainment of positive socioeconomic change through investments in the health, safety and social wellbeing of the African youth.

- **The 2nd STC on Social Development, Labour and Employment (STC-SDLE-2)**

The second STC on Social Development, Labour and Employment was held in Algiers, Algeria from 24-28 April, 2017 under the theme “Investment in Employment and Social Security for Harnessing the Demographic Dividend”. It was a very well-attended meeting with over 46 member states, representatives from RECs, UN Agencies, AU organs, IGOs and NGOs.

The STC concluded with very concrete decisions at the ministerial level and these will feed into the continental drive towards harnessing the demographic dividend and into the 29th Session of the AU Assembly to be held in July 2017 in Addis Ababa.

The STC has committed to:

- take appropriate measures for the preparation of national and regional ownership documents on the five-year priority program for the implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Development Inclusive, establish or strengthen an intersectoral monitoring mechanism, appoint national focal points by 30 September 2017; And submit a first biennial national monitoring report to the AUC in 2018;

- Integrate the Roadmap on Demographic Dividend into national policy frameworks on employment and entrepreneurship and report on its implementation using a specific evaluation, monitoring and follow-up mechanism.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> STC on Education, Science, Technology and Innovation**

It should be noted that the STC - ESTI (Education, Science, Technology and Innovation) is scheduled for October 2017. The STC will discuss, among other things, the study on the teachers' body, the study on school feeding and the proposals for the decade of education.

**d) High level commemorative events**

- **High-Level Ministerial Lunch on Family Planning:** A high-level ministerial working lunch was hosted by UNFPA in the margins of the STC-HPDC 2 under the theme "Family Planning: A Critical Investment for Demographic Dividend and AU Agenda 2063". The event was attended by over 200 participants including the leadership of the AUC, AU Ministers in charge of Health, Population and Drug Control, Development partners, the Diplomatic Community, youth representatives and other relevant stakeholders. It highlighted the need to ensure increased funding for family planning in Africa as a key element in the drive towards harnessing the demographic dividend in Africa.
- **18th Session of the Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa):** The 18th Session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa) was held in Dakar, Senegal with the theme "UN System Support to Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through investments in Youth."
- **Working session on the 2017 AU Roadmap on "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments In Youth":** These messages addressed the need to implement the demographic dividend roadmap beyond 2017, to mobilize technical and financial resources, in particular by the Ministers of Finance, and to expand successful initiatives such as the Sahel Women's Empowerment and demographic dividend (SWEDD). A Forum of African Parliamentarians on Population and Development was also organized to sensitize African legislators on the integration of Demographic Dividend issues into national bills.

### **3.3 National interventions**

**39. National launch of the theme of the year:** - the roadmap mandates launches of the theme of the year at country level through multi-stakeholder engagement. The national launches and consultations are to guide and facilitate the preparation of National Demographic Dividend Roadmaps.

**40.** So far, Burundi, Congo (Republic of), Guinea and Sierra Leone have launched the theme at country level.

### 3.4 Interventions of the Commission of the African Union

#### a) Activities related to the conceptualization and popularization of the theme of the year

- A conceptualization of theme of the year 2017 and its linkage with the Agenda 2063 has been prepared to clarify the contribution of the theme of the year to the implementation of the African common vision;
- The transversal nature of the theme of the year has been highlighted through the involvement of the departments of the AUC. An African youth forum was held May 19, 2017 at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York by the permanent mission of the African Union to the United Nations. At this forum there were youth of the Diaspora, the PYU, representatives of the USA, representatives of institutions such as UNFPA, UNESCO and UNDP, etc. experienced leaders. The objectives of the forum were to create and foster international engagement around the theme of the African Union for the year 2017; launch internship for young professionals at the permanent missions of the African Union; Hold a successful intergenerational debate and allow African youth from different backgrounds to contribute to the discourse on the development of their continent. The forum welcomed the effort of the New York Office, including H.E. the Ambassador for the internship opportunity for young Africans within the permanent mission, embassies and the United Nations, which will allow young people of the Diaspora to improve on their professional experience. Inspired by these internship programs, the AUC will ensure that the youth of the diaspora also benefit from the program of the AUC youth volunteer corps.

#### b) Studies commissioned by the Summit of the African Union

- Assembly.Dec.XXX (XXIII): Study on the training and the living conditions of of teachers: a study was sponsored by the AUC to evaluate training and living conditions of teacher in order to generate evidence relating to improving the situation of teachers and in turn the conditions of education of students.
- Assembly.Dec.589 (XXVI): The Study on school feeding based on local Production (ASPL) in AU member states, whose validation workshop was held in Nairobi from 29 to 31 May, will follow its course through decision making bodies including the STC, then the Executive Council until its adoption by the Summit of Heads of States and Government of January 2018. Already a working group for the implementation of the CESA was set up and will meet the 1st March of each year as part of the celebration of the school feeding day

- Following the recommendations of the STC on social development, labour and employment, the Commission of the African Union will undertake a study to document the experiences of Member States and produce a compendium of best practices on public-private partnership (PPP); and help Member States to develop PPP projects, including through concrete initiatives with Jobs for Africa Foundation (Foundation for employment in Africa) in the field of the adequacy of skills, the transformation of agriculture, ICT, entrepreneurship, social dialogue, etc.

**c) Continental strategies**

- It is essentially the CAADP, the continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25), the African strategy of Science Technology and Innovation (STISA 2024), the continental strategy for Technical Vocational Education Training, (CS TVET) whose relationship to the 4 pillars of the theme of the year 2017 roadmap was stressed.

**d) Youth development programs**

- Development programs targeting young people that demonstrate the AU's effort to take into account issues affecting youth have been strengthened as part of the implementation of the theme of the year.
- The AUC volunteers program: the AUC volunteers program double (by 100 youth in 2017) its deployment capabilities in order to support the creation job opportunities for young people through the 5 regions of the African Union.
- The AU young professionals program: the program is being set up by the AUC in order to create a generation of young professionals equipped to be the torch of African development door.
- Pan African University: it has 5 institutes across Africa that offer Masters and PhD scholarships to African students. The Pan-African University provides a quality education that meets international standards. It cultivates the African talent and expertise to avoid the brain drain out of the continent.
- AGYI: African-German youth initiative is a program of Exchange in its pilot phase in South Africa, in Benin and Tanzania targeting young people in Africa and Europe especially Germany. It is initiated to promote fruitful and productive exchange between young Africans and their peers of the Germany.
- SIFA, skills Initiative for Africa: the commission set up the initiative of skills development for Africa which is an initiative that will

revolutionize skills development programs in Africa through technical and vocational training of high level and quality.

### **3.5 Perspective beyond the year 2017**

**41.** In accordance with the decision Assembly / AU/Dec. 591 (XXVI) , the road map, with accompanying matrix, was to formulate activities to be undertaken during 2017 and beyond.

**42.** In this framework, the Government of Burkina Faso in relation to the provisions of the Agenda 2063, proposes that the period from 2018 to 2027 be declared 'Decade of TVET for young African'. This is also provided in the Agenda 2063 with a simple difference in period.

### **3.6 Youth led interventions**

**43.** According to the memorandum between the AU and the PYU, the PYU is responsible to report on the activities of young people of the continent. (The Commission is yet to receive the report of the PYU, we think that it will be featured directly at a forum where youth will directly speak)

## **IV. CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DD ROAD MAP**

### **4.1 At continental level**

**44.** The impetus given by African Heads of States and Governments for increased investment in youth development interventions needs to be taken up by all stakeholders at the regional and continental levels so that the African demographic dividend initiative has significant impacts on human development of the continent:

- The lack of communication on continental interventions continental slow the AUC's coordination efforts;
- The African countries are at different levels of the demographic model and as such it is important that discussions on the demographic dividend takes account of these different realities;
- Ownership and domestication of the roadmap at the regional level is still low.

### **4.2 At the national level**

- At national level, the AUC and his Department in charge of youth are not systematically associated with the demographic dividend program when such programs are launched, this does not allow a follow-up and adequate reporting of continental interventions;
- The domestication of the roadmap by its integration into programs and policies of youth is still low;



- The launch of the theme of the year and the development of national strategies to harnessing of the demographic dividend are not effective.

## **V. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**45.** It must be emphasized that harnessing the demographic dividend goes beyond 2017. Although progress has been made in implementing the theme of the year through activities which directly impact youth under the pillars of the Demographic Dividend, there is still much to be done in line with the key deliverables identified in the roadmap on continental, regional and national levels.

**46.** Across all levels, advocacy campaigns must be conducted to raise awareness and increase understanding of the Demographic Dividend to generate ownership and to ensure successful implementation

### **5.1 Continental Level**

- Establishment of a multisectoral Demographic Dividend observatory to enhance coordination, monitoring and reporting on progress in the implementation of Demographic Dividend priorities;
- Strengthen activities around knowledge management and research. Work with academia, research institutes and think tanks to generate needed evidence on youth development under each pillar towards harnessing the Demographic Dividend through the provision of technical support to member states;
- Strengthen the capacity of the AUC through the establishment of a Demographic Dividend secretariat to monitor Demographic Dividend progress beyond 2017;
- Establish the Youth Fund as a continental measure of supporting the implementation of the Demographic Dividend agenda, to create financial opportunities for entrepreneurship among the African youth;
- Ensure global partnership by encouraging the UN system and its key agencies such as the UNFPA to work with relevant stakeholders;
- AU STCs, RECs and other continental meetings must continue to focus on and identify their sector contribution to implementing the theme of the year, as well as harmonizing their continental policies to the Demographic Dividend agenda.

### **5.2 National Level**

- Domestication of the Demographic Dividend agenda must be prioritized in response to the directive of the roadmap. The African Union proposes the AU Demographic Dividend Domestication Framework, a four-step

process for countries to implement the roadmap, for the standardization of the domestication process;

- Member States must accelerate efforts towards the full implementation of the AU Roadmap on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend in 2017 and beyond, including country launches with clear commitments, creation of demographic dividend profiles and the development of country-specific roadmaps that feed into national development plans;
- To sustain momentum and build on the important gains of 2017 and ensure countries systematically work towards harnessing the demographic dividend, there is the need for a high level committee to oversee the implementation of the Demographic Dividend Roadmap. In this regard, AU Member States will provide periodic updates to the secretariat of the high level committee who will produce annual reports on the status of implementation of the roadmap;
- As already called for previously by AU Heads of State and Government, key partners need to work closely with AUC in the implementation of the continental initiative on the demographic dividend to ensure the gains made in 2017 are systematically taken forward as part of the continent's overall development efforts;
- Resources must be availed, both technically and financially, to support the coordination of the DD Roadmap implementation at the continental level. This will help ensure a strong secretariat that has the required resources needed to lead the implementation and provide the needed support to regional economic communities and member states as needed.

## **VI. CALL FOR ACTION**

### **6.1 Coordination Mechanisms within the African Union to Regional Economic Communities, and Member States**

**47.** Given that the demographic dividend is about integrated development involving a wide range of sectors as defined in the four AUC pillars, it is pertinent to have a strong coordination capacity and mechanisms to ensure that all concerned stakeholders have the opportunity to understand, own and drive the demographic dividend agenda. The coordination and integration of efforts should start at the African Union Commission itself where the HRST should be strengthened to effectively play the overall coordination role and be able to mobilize commitment and participation of the other relevant departments within the Union.

### **6.2 Looking beyond 2017**

**48.** While the immediate interest is to develop a work plan to galvanize prioritization and action on the demographic dividend agenda during 2017, it is important that the work-plan should adopt a long-term perspective to highlight the fact that the demographic dividend agenda cannot be accomplished in one year. In

this regard, the work plan should lay out a general framework to be used to sustain interest and action on the agenda over the next five years, with the provision to review progress and refine the strategies every five years.

### **6.3 Concurrent focus on Youth of Today and Youth of Tomorrow**

**49.** It is important to note that while the youth as defined by the AU are those between the ages of 15 and 35, the strategy in making these investments has to focus on two levels: (i) youth between 15 and 35 years of age; and (ii) young people, who are children below 15 years of age. Critical aspects of developing human capital that are required for future success are dependent in making investments in children's education and health that would otherwise be too late if these were delayed until they become youth.

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2017-07-04

# Progress Report of the Implementation of the Roadmap on the AU Theme of the Year 2017

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