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**Assessing the Africa-EU Partnership – Key findings from Evaluations**

*Accompanying the document*

**Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council  
for a renewed impetus of the Africa-EU Partnership**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This review accompanies the Communication "*A renewed impetus for the Africa-EU Partnership*" to the European Parliament and the Council. It reviews the outcomes of evaluations that have been carried out, assessing the impact and progress of the EU-Africa Partnership's objectives, values and principles. It also reviews the extent to which the Partnership has guided the implementation by the EU of the development cooperation activities entrusted to it, in particular for the priorities listed in the joint Africa-EU strategy.

The review shows that the engagement of the EU in Africa has significantly contributed to the eradication of poverty, sustainable development, promotion of peace and security, improved and more equitable access to basic services and the pursuit of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, the picture is mixed as regards respect for 'essential elements' (human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law) by African partners. In addition, no sufficiently convincing and common answers have been provided to critical or global challenges such as migration and mobility, jobs for growing ranks of young people or climate change, which remains one of the most pressing threats to the achievement of sustainable development in the EU and in the world.

There is evidence that the engagement of the EU has enabled progress on African countries' integration into the world economy. Trade flows to and from Africa countries have increased, more of them are members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and they are playing a greater role in international trade negotiations. The conclusion and implementation of economic partnership agreements have been important milestones. However, the results have been unsatisfactory in terms of increasing economic diversification, increasing intra-African trade, increasing added value and reducing dependency on a narrow range of products, and in the redistribution of benefits — leading to growing inequalities.

The evidence points to the Partnership's relevance and effectiveness in contributing to its objectives, in particular poverty reduction, specifically through support for food security, education and growth — the latter especially through support for trade and infrastructure.

However, in these difficult moments, it is crucial for the two continents to firmly reaffirm their commitment for a strengthened Partnership and to decide to make a big jump in its implementation path.

### **1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

This review of the strategic evaluations carried out on behalf of the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) forms part of a joint process with the European External Action Service (EEAS) aimed at renewing the EU-Africa Partnership (set up in 2007 and complemented

by the joint Africa-EU strategy in 2014). The scope of the review covers a selection of thematic and geographical (country and regional) evaluations managed by DG DEVCO.

The specific objective of this assessment is to summarise the evidence related to the achievement of the objectives of the Africa-EU Partnership for development cooperation.

## **2. METHOD**

The review aims to inform the proposal for a renewed impetus of the Africa-EU Partnership by recapitulating and condensing existing assessments. It draws essentially on the findings of two strategic evaluations adopted in 2016, assessing the EU Consensus for Development<sup>1</sup> and the Cotonou Agreement<sup>2</sup>, which integrate the outcomes of existing thematic and geographic evaluations<sup>3</sup>. This review assesses how the Africa-EU development cooperation has progressed. The next section first considers the Partnership from the political point of view and continues with a review of the priorities of the joint Africa-EU strategy (JAES). It is followed by a short conclusion.

## **3. STATE OF PLAY**

### **3.1. Political dialogue, partnership and ownership**

The EU has undertaken political dialogue at ministerial level with a number of regional organisations — underlining the added value of the EU — taking into account their specific remits. When it signed the Cotonou Agreement, the EU laid the foundations for dialogue with the African continent, formalised at the first EU-Africa summit in Cairo in 2000. The African Union emerged in 2002, projecting increased pan-African ambition and endowed with a new institutional framework facilitating dialogue with the rest of the world. Political dialogue with the African Union was subsequently enhanced at various levels, and further confirmed and expanded through the adoption of the joint Africa-EU strategy at the second summit in Lisbon, in 2007. Further summit-level meetings, with very good and high level attendance on both sides, took place in 2010 in Libya and 2014 in Brussels. In addition, the annual meetings of the AU and European Commissions' Colleges (C2C meetings) as well as the EU Political and Security Committee / AU Peace and Security Council meetings bear witness to the dynamism of the EU-Africa Partnership. In a recent internal review<sup>4</sup>, several voices underlined the need for even more political traction at two levels:

(i) at the highest level, based on the Africa and EU shared values, to discuss and agree on a future common and mutually beneficial long term vision for the Partnership and on

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<sup>1</sup> SWD(2016) 387 final of 22 November 2016

<sup>2</sup> SWD(2016) 380 final of 22 November 2016

<sup>3</sup> Listed in annex 1 of document: Review of strategic evaluations managed by DEVCO to assess the European Consensus on Development Final Report October 2016 [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/consensus\\_review\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/consensus_review_full_report.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> JAES review, March 2017.

the identification of key common policies to develop and key policy objectives to achieve together for the next ten years in a win-win partnership;

(ii) at a lower but still political level, to steer and monitor regularly the implementation of the action programmes/roadmaps adopted by the Heads of States, for each specific thematic priority, strengthening synergies between the various existing frameworks and instruments.

The concept of **ownership** has evolved since the 2005 Consensus was drafted and has shifted from a focus primarily on governments to one on democratic ownership by different stakeholders, in particular civil society, the private sector and legislative and oversight bodies. Therefore, in the EU and Member States it is often linked to respect for human rights, the fight against corruption, accountability and good governance. For Africa, ownership is now widely expressed in the capacity of the continent to design a common long term strategy – the Agenda 2063. Europe should respond with a comprehensive plan to be partner of African vision for a change of the continent.

The commitment to **partnership** is less uniformly applied. A recent review confirmed this particularly at the level of Member States (AU and EU), including the weak link between the JAES and the national and regional cooperation strategies developed under EU cooperation instruments, but also bilateral (MS) cooperation strategies.

The EU institutions and Member States have been active in formulating policies and adopting strategies to enhance **civil society's role** in development cooperation in partner countries, including engagement in 'structured dialogue' with civil society organisations and local authorities in partner countries and in Europe. Building on these shared commitments, the EU and Member States have played an important role resulting in growing global relevance of gender equality and civil society in international negotiations (e.g. the Busan partnership for Effective Development Cooperation<sup>5</sup>, the Financing for Development Agenda, and the Sustainable Development Goals).

However, the view of civil society organisations, but also of other consulted stakeholders (social and economic actors, including youth representatives) is that the fulfilment of the 2007 ambition is far lagging behind in terms of their participation in the implementation of the JAES and in engaging in political dialogue under the Partnership.

To strengthen both partnership and civil society participation, the 2014 EU-Africa Summit held in Brussels set up the Joint Annual Forum. Its objective is to assess implementation of the actions set out in the roadmap for the joint strategy and to '[...] gather all the actors of the EU-Africa Partnership'. However, the forum is not yet operational.

### **3.2. Peace and security**

Civil war has exacted a heavy toll in the ACP countries since 1996, with little prospect of improvement in the medium-term. Apart from the devastating direct effects in the

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<sup>5</sup> [http://effectivecooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/OUTCOME\\_DOCUMENT\\_-\\_FINAL\\_EN.pdf](http://effectivecooperation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/OUTCOME_DOCUMENT_-_FINAL_EN.pdf).

countries concerned, these conflicts also have a ‘domino effect’ in that their repercussions (particularly the loss of business confidence) are felt throughout the region. Despite this bleak outlook, in some countries with a minimum of social stability, economic growth is still generating an increase in income per capita. Peace and security became a strategic area for Africa-EU relations from 2000 onwards, as peacebuilding and conflict prevention and resolution became an objective of the Cotonou Agreement. In that context and more particularly following the first Africa-EU Summit in Cairo in April that year and as the common security and defence policy (CSDP) of the EU (allowing EU crisis management or stabilisation missions) was gaining ground, the foreign and security policy of the EU began increasingly to focus on Africa. Under the 10th and 11th European Development Funds (EDFs), an increasing number of national indicative programmes have peace and security as a specific priority sector<sup>6</sup>.

This is particularly evident in Africa, where most situations of conflict and fragility happen and where the EU and its Member States have the most evident geostrategic interests. It is in this context that the African Peace Facility (APF)<sup>7</sup> was set up in 2003, to provide the necessary means to support the African Union to engage in genuine African peace support operations. The provision related to peace, conflict and fragility in the Cotonou Agreement (Article 11) and the fact that the EDF is outside the budget of the Union has made it possible to support African efforts in a comprehensive and integrated manner. In particular, it has allowed the provision of support to operations with military or defence implications that would have been much more complex and uncertain to cover under Article 41(2) of the Treaty on the EU. The African Union became a full partner in the ACP-EU relationship in 2010, when its leading role in peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution and in tackling new or expanding security threats was recognised in the revised Article 11 of the Cotonou Agreement. This was also a consequence of the increasing attention to peace and security in the framework of the Africa-EU Partnership, as demonstrated by the successive action programmes/roadmaps since 2007.

The **African Peace Facility (APF)**, financed by the European Development Fund, is probably the most relevant EU instrument to support cooperation with Africa in the area of Peace and Security. As such, it is widely recognised to have had a direct and positive impact in the resolution of a number of crises in the continent<sup>8</sup>. Since 2004, a total

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<sup>6</sup> Examples include the Central African Republic (EDF 11, EUR 43 million); Somalia (EDF 11, 100 million), Chad (EUR 65 million), Niger (support for justice and the rule of law, EUR 15 million), Nigeria (support for the criminal justice sector, EUR 28 million), a defence reform programme in DRC (EUR 20 million), Guinea Conakry (security sector reform programme, EUR 20 million), Somalia (support for the governance and security sectors, EUR 54 million), Guinea Bissau (state-building), and Liberia (institutional and capacity-building, EUR 20 million). National indicative programmes under the EDF have further made ‘significant contributions to development, peace and stability’ in Ethiopia (Commission evaluation, 2012), and a positive contribution to conflict mitigation, stabilisation, reconstruction and rehabilitation in ACP countries including Angola, the Central African Republic, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste.

<sup>7</sup> Decision No 3/2003 of the ACP-EC Council of Ministers of 11 December 2003 on the use of resources from the long-term development envelope of the ninth EDF for the creation of a Peace Facility for Africa.

<sup>8</sup> The 2013 external evaluation of the African Peace Facility recognised the added value and relevance of APF-supported actions, which "have had a direct and positive impact on the lives of millions of

amount of over EUR 2.1 billion<sup>9</sup> has helped to finance African-led peace support operations in a number of conflict-affected countries (e.g. Somalia, Mali, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Uganda and Guinea Bissau). APF support has also effectively contributed to enhancing the African Union's and the regional economic communities' capacity to prevent and react to crises and threats to stability by strengthening the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The APSA is the main African-created mechanism to prevent and manage conflicts and offer mediation, with important tools and structures and initiatives such as the Panel of the Wise, the Peace and Security Council, the Continental Early Warning System, and the African Standby Force.

APF support for the APSA has been complemented by specific assistance via EDF Regional Indicative Programmes (RIPs) to build capacity among Africa's regional organisations, as building blocks of the African Union, to prevent and manage conflict and security threats in their regions, including threats that spill across borders like terrorism and violent extremism, organised crime and piracy)<sup>10</sup>. Under the 11th EDF (2014-2020), the amount allocated to this sector in African RIPs totals around EUR 430 million.

The EU has further expanded its engagement and investment in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, in complementarity with and beyond the EDF, through the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace, the EU Electoral Observation Missions, CSDP missions, the use of preventive sanctions, humanitarian assistance, the work of Special Representatives<sup>11</sup> of the EU and support for civil society. These are also part of efforts to ensure a comprehensive approach in fragile and conflict-affected situations<sup>12</sup>.

The Consensus Review shows that the EU has strengthened its policy framework and become one of the strongest players in **conflict prevention and peacebuilding**. In this way, it has contributed to containment, mitigation and stabilisation of conflicts and to post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction, including in Africa.

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Africans affected by political crisis". At the same time, it found room for improvement in effectiveness (due to the capacity weaknesses of the AU Commission and regional economic communities), and complementarity with other EU financing and political tools, including the RIPs, although good examples can be found, e.g. in Somalia and Mali. Another evaluation of the APF carried out in 2015 by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly also acknowledges the relevance and impact of this instrument.

<sup>9</sup> During the 10th EDF period (2008-2013), the EU committed EUR 815 million through the APF. Under the 11th EDF, the APF is now at EUR 1 051 million, for the 2014-2016 period alone. This represents an annual increase of more than 200%.

<sup>10</sup> For example, the regional evaluation for West Africa (2008) provided evidence of the positive results of the Commission's support to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in terms of contributions to its institutional conflict prevention and peacebuilding capacity-building and to technical expertise, but highlighted the fact that support had been mainly limited to funding.

<sup>11</sup> Consistent with the joint communication *The EU's comprehensive approach to external conflicts and crises*, JOIN(2013) 30, 11.12.2013, and Council Conclusions, May 2014.

<sup>12</sup> For example, the EU has conducted five civilian CSDP crisis management missions and operations in Africa since 2003, five autonomous EU military operations (EUFOR Artemis, EUFOR DRC, EUFOR Chad, EUNAVFOR Atlanta, and EUFOR CAR) and two military training missions (EUTM Somalia and EUTM Mali).

The EU and the Member States are also acknowledged to have played an important role in **addressing state fragility globally**, which was one of the principles of the Consensus. The *EU accountability report on financing for development 2015* stated that ‘approximately half of the development funding of the EU is channelled to crisis/conflict situations and fragile states.’<sup>13</sup> For the Member States, addressing state fragility has gained prominence in a number of development cooperation policies, strategy and programming. Some Member States contribute to addressing fragility within sector strategies or in pursuit of global priorities, such as climate change and good governance.

Finally, it was recognised that the efforts of the EU to address root causes of conflict needed to increase, including efforts to help countries face challenges linked to refugee and migration flows.

### **3.3. Democracy, good governance and human rights**

Progress in the protection of human rights, good governance and democratisation is fundamental for poverty reduction and sustainable development and the EU has greatly increased its efforts related to ‘broad governance’, human rights and democracy, especially in the last decade.

Available time-series on fundamental rights and good governance performance across ACP countries suggest a dilemma emerging in terms of a trade-off between greater accountability and stability through time and, a decline in the rule of law, quality of regulation, governmental effectiveness and control of corruption. These data are based on a wide range of performance, across sub regional and national performance, and so the emerging message might be misleading. Nonetheless, a certain element of concern about the current performance of ACP countries in terms of good governance is certainly suggested (particularly so in sub-Saharan African countries, which generally score lower than the ACP region as a whole).

The references to democracy, human rights and the rule of law as ‘essential elements’ of cooperation, and the provisions on possible appropriate measures to be adopted if they are breached, were largely a response to serious governance challenges in certain ACP states. Such challenges were a liability to the Partnership as a whole and to the use of EDF resources in particular. Economic partnership agreements (EPAs) between ACP partners and the EU are explicitly based on the ‘essential elements’ of the Cotonou Agreement and refer to appropriate measures under the Cotonou Agreement in non-execution clauses. In practice, this means that trade preferences under the EPAs could be suspended under the suspension mechanism in the Cotonou Agreement, if a party acts in breach of the ‘essential elements’ clause.

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<sup>13</sup> *EU accountability report on financing for development 2015*, Section 4.4.2. Commission staff working document, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/eu-accountability-report-financing-development-2015\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/eu-accountability-report-financing-development-2015_en).



In general, studies<sup>14</sup> and EEAS internal reviews<sup>15</sup> point to the relevance of holding political dialogues<sup>16</sup> as an efficient way of keeping communication channels open with governments on these issues. However, a number of major challenges have been identified. These include geopolitical, security and economic interests that may interfere and water down EU positions in favour of human rights in a given country; little government ownership of or commitment to the dialogue (making it an EU-led process); and lack of political will to change or improve the human rights situation. Resistance by some ACP governments to addressing politically sensitive or taboo issues such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans- and intersex issues, the death penalty, and the International Criminal Court are also major challenges. A recent study<sup>17</sup> refers to the benefit that such a dialogue may have as a ‘lifeline’ to civil society organisations working on human rights, particularly in repressive environments.

Political dialogues on democracy, governance and human rights have gained some ground under the regional frameworks that the EU and ACP countries have concluded throughout the years, especially the joint Africa-EU strategy: human rights dialogue between the EU and the AU takes place every year<sup>18</sup>. This approach was promoted by the EU *Strategic framework and action plan on human rights and democracy* (2012); it is difficult to assess whether these regional dialogues are more effective than bilateral ones.

### **3.4. Human development, migration and mobility management**

The EU has supported ACP countries’ efforts to improve the availability of education, including through bilateral programmes, the global partnership for education and the higher education cooperation programmes of the EU. The EU has contributed to ACP countries having more educational infrastructure and teaching and learning resources, larger numbers of trained teachers and incentives for training opportunities. However, the new resources and inputs provided are still insufficient; sustainability has been affected by big increases in enrolment figures as a result of population growth. EU support for school education has focused on primary schools, with only a small share of overall

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<sup>14</sup> EP study *Political dialogue on human rights under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement* (2014). Also relevant for this evaluation is the EP report on the use of political instruments for the protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law under the Cotonou Agreement of 2007.

<sup>15</sup> Annual reports 2010-2014 on the European Union’s development and external assistance policies and their implementation; DEVCO annual budget & EDF implementation reports; internal EU review on how human rights issues are addressed under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement (political dialogue), conducted in 2014-2015.

<sup>16</sup> For example the dialogue referred to in article 8 of the Cotonou agreement, for sub-Saharan African countries.

<sup>17</sup> EP study *Political dialogue on human rights under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement* (2014). Also relevant for this evaluation is the EP report of 2007 on the use of the political instruments for the protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law under the Cotonou Agreement (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu>).

<sup>18</sup> The African Union has beefed up its normative framework for democratic governance on the continent, specifically in the area of unconstitutional changes in government. This is particularly relevant because, with the exception of Fiji and Haiti, all Article 96 consultations have been with AU Member States.

support providing direct assistance to secondary education — mostly in ‘medium human development’ countries<sup>19</sup>.

ACP governments have been helped with sector budget support and sector support programmes to improve the quality of the education sector. Budget support has played a catalytic role, in strengthening systems and tools to improve education sector policies, service delivery and resourcing<sup>20</sup>. As a result, government ownership has been high and new education policies and plans have been set up or improved since the late 1990s<sup>21</sup>. Nonetheless, despite some improvements in terms of systems capacity (e.g. in Burundi, Madagascar, Namibia, Pacific), the impact on quality of education is still weak. Despite the increase in enrolment, the learning targets set by ACP governments often remain unmet<sup>22</sup>. EU provision under the Cotonou Agreement has also strengthened the capacity of higher education institutions and supported greater mobility of staff and students from ACP countries to EU countries and between ACP countries (e.g. Edulink, Erasmus Mundus, the Intra-ACP Academic Mobility Scheme, and the African Higher Education Harmonisation and Tuning initiative).

Evidence of a significant increase in access to school education has also been recorded, especially for primary education, with net enrolment rates in primary education rising from 59% in 1999 to 79% in 2012<sup>23</sup>. Most countries supported by the EU in this sector are in sub-Saharan Africa (i.e. 15 out of the 19 under the 10th EDF), with free access to primary education promoted in many of these countries during the past decade<sup>24</sup>. As for equitable access, the school enrolment rate for girls has grown faster than for boys across ACP countries. In this respect, EU investments in rural areas have been significant, resulting in large increases in access for the poor (e.g. in Zambia and Tanzania), although major differences between geographic areas persist across the region.

The quality gap in education in sub-Saharan Africa is confirmed by a recent assessment of student abilities in mathematics and reading in 10 countries in francophone West Africa. Over 70% of early primary pupils have not achieved ‘sufficient’ level in

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<sup>19</sup> Thematic global evaluation of European Commission support to the education sector in partner countries (including basic and secondary education) 2000-2007 (2010).

<sup>20</sup> Review of strategic evaluations managed by DEVCO to assess the European Consensus on Development Final Report October 2016  
[https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/consensus\\_review\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/consensus_review_full_report.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> E.g. Zambia, Mozambique, Uganda in the 2000s, Burkina Faso, the Dominican Republic and others, reviewed in *Thematic global evaluation of European Commission support to the education sector in partner countries (including basic and secondary education) 2000-2007* (2010).

<sup>22</sup> Review of strategic evaluations managed by DEVCO to assess the European Consensus on Development Final Report October 2016  
[https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/consensus\\_review\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/consensus_review_full_report.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> Review of strategic evaluations managed by DEVCO to assess the European Consensus on Development Final Report October 2016  
[https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/consensus\\_review\\_full\\_report.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/consensus_review_full_report.pdf).

<sup>24</sup> *Thematic global evaluation of European Commission support to the education sector in partner countries (including basic and secondary education) 2000-2007* (2010). *EU development assistance for basic education in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia*, European Court of Auditors, Special Report No 12/2010.

language, and over 50% in mathematics. At the end of the primary cycle, close to 60% of pupils are below this level in both subjects<sup>25</sup>.

Special attention is needed to the conditions to benefit from the *demographic dividend* in Africa. A new priority to education and employment policy could be considered in the context of Africa-EU dialogue. Education, training and employment promotion in Africa is key for long-term sustainable development.

Digitisation can be a powerful tool to improve access and equity in education, delivery of quality learning and teaching, and teachers' professional development, as well as education management, governance and administration. Distance learning, for example, has a long and successful history in the developed countries. As digital services tend to reach urban, better-off and educated groups first, it is important to ensure that the urban poor, the rural population and people from disadvantaged groups can fully benefit from digitisation. Internet users need to master not just the basic literacy skills but also language skills and other technical, structural and strategic skills in order to fully benefit from internet access. EU higher education programmes have supported e-platforms, e-learning and virtual mobility.

According to UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs statistics<sup>26</sup>, around 50% of African migration is within the continent, but there is a significant difference between sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa in this regard. Intra-regional emigration in sub-Saharan Africa accounts for almost 65% of total emigrants, the largest intracontinental or South-South movement of people in the world. In contrast, more than 90% of emigrants from North Africa head to countries outside Africa. Intra-African emigration is driven largely by a search for job opportunities in neighbouring countries, by the complexities of historical state formation — colonial borders often overlooked linguistic and ethnic commonalities — and by waves of internal and cross-border conflicts.

Figures for refugee flows recorded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) put the number of refugees and internally displaced persons in Africa at 14.9 million<sup>27</sup> in 2015. Around 25% of the forcibly displaced people across the globe are in Africa, where some countries have hosted large refugee populations for over 20 years. Furthermore, important new displacements caused by conflict, violence and human rights abuses are likely to continue to affect many countries in Africa in subsequent years. Somalia was the third-largest source country for refugees worldwide and the largest in sub-Saharan Africa, with the number of Somali refugees remaining stable at 1.1 million. South Sudan (744 100) was the fourth-largest source country for refugees worldwide, followed by Sudan (640 900), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (535 300) and the Central African Republic (470 600). Half of the top 10 refugee-

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.pasec.confemen.org/>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimatesgraphs.shtml?2g2>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4a02d7fd6.html>

hosting countries are now located in sub-Saharan Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Chad, and Sudan), with four of them being least-developed countries<sup>28</sup>.

The figures for asylum seekers coming from Africa varied between 61 650 and 84 400 in 2008-2012 and then started to increase sharply in 2013 to 96 920 and then 152 110 in 2014<sup>29</sup>. The major origin countries in terms of absolute figures are Eritrea, Somalia, Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, The Gambia, Guinea and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Some African countries, such as Nigeria, Somalia and Senegal<sup>30</sup>, figure among the top 27 countries from which irregular migrants were apprehended in the EU Member States between 2008 and 2014. The number of Africans staying irregularly in the EU fell annually between 2008 and 2012<sup>31</sup>, but then increased in 2013 to 72 370 and again, very sharply, to 134 895 in 2014. Eritrea was the major country of origin, followed by Somalia and Nigeria<sup>32</sup>.

The trends described above and the existence of huge regional differences in forced displacement and migration, have led to a number of regional initiatives to enhance dialogue and cooperation on migration including the following.

**The Rabat process** started in 2006 in order to respond to the challenges of increasing flows of irregular migration from sub-Saharan Africa to Europe along the West African migration route. The Rabat Process covers cooperation on: legal migration and mobility; prevention of irregular migration and measures to counteract it; migration and development; and international protection.

**The Africa-EU Migration, Mobility and Employment (MME) partnership** was launched at the Africa-EU Summit in Lisbon, in December 2007. The EU-Africa Summit in 2014 adopted a declaration on migration and mobility, and an action plan 2014-2017, focusing on the following priorities: fighting trafficking in human beings; remittances; the diaspora; mobility and labour migration (including intra-African mobility); international protection (including internally displaced persons); and irregular migration.

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<sup>28</sup> UNHCR Mid-year trends report 2015, <http://www.unhcr.org/56701b969.html>

<sup>29</sup> Eurostat data on asylum seekers (migr\_asyappctza).

<sup>30</sup> Eurostat — statistics on citizens apprehended in the EU, [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/f/f3/T1\\_Top\\_citizenships\\_of\\_non-EU\\_citizens\\_apprehended\\_in\\_the\\_EU\\_with\\_more\\_than\\_30\\_000\\_apprehensions\\_from\\_2008%e2%80%932014.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/f/f3/T1_Top_citizenships_of_non-EU_citizens_apprehended_in_the_EU_with_more_than_30_000_apprehensions_from_2008%e2%80%932014.png). Nigeria is the first non-EU country of origin for victims of trafficking in human beings registered (both identified and presumed) in the EU in the period 2013-2014, see Report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings [http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/report\\_on\\_the\\_progress\\_made\\_in\\_the\\_fight\\_against\\_trafficking\\_in\\_human\\_beings\\_2016.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/report_on_the_progress_made_in_the_fight_against_trafficking_in_human_beings_2016.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> At 98 115 in 2008; 95 170 in 2009; 85 595 in 2010; 75 290 in 2011; and 66 040 in 2012.

<sup>32</sup> Eurostat — Third country nationals found to be illegally present — annual data (rounded). The data includes Madagascar, Mauritius, and the Seychelles. As noted in the Report on the progress made in the fight against trafficking in human beings, for the period 2013-2014, Nigeria and Morocco were, respectively, the first and fifth main non-EU countries of origin for trafficking victims registered (identified and presumed) in the EU [http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/report\\_on\\_the\\_progress\\_made\\_in\\_the\\_fight\\_against\\_trafficking\\_in\\_human\\_beings\\_2016.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/report_on_the_progress_made_in_the_fight_against_trafficking_in_human_beings_2016.pdf)

**The Khartoum process** was launched in November 2014 in Rome in order to tackle increasing irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking in human beings along the Eastern /Horn of Africa migration route. It is a regional dialogue with nine African countries (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Egypt and Tunisia), as well as the African Union Commission. It is led by a Steering Committee comprising five EU Member States (Italy, France, Germany, UK, and Malta), five African countries (Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Sudan), the European and African Union Commissions and the EEAS.

More recently, **the Valletta Summit**, held at head of state level with some African countries in November 2015, adopted a political declaration and an action plan to be implemented in five key areas. These are: development benefits of migration and root causes; legal migration and mobility; protection and asylum; prevention and the fight against irregular migration, migrant smuggling and trafficking of human beings; and return, readmission and reintegration.

Regional fora, such as the Rabat and Khartoum processes set up independently of the Cotonou Agreement, have proven to be currently the best channels for cooperation on the fight against irregular migration, migrant smuggling and fundamental rights violations such as trafficking in human beings. These crimes are inherently cross-border crimes, with regional particularities, and therefore concerted and coordinated international cooperation on specific (regional) routes, through the regional fora, is better suited to addressing the problems at hand.

In addition, bilateral dialogues on migration and mobility between the EU and African countries has been reinforced, e.g. in a Mobility partnership with Cape Verde and Common Agendas on Migration and Mobility with Nigeria and Ethiopia, and more recently High-Level Dialogues. These allow more concrete and effective targeted cooperation, taking into account the particularities of a given partner country.

Due to ongoing, unprecedented levels of forced displacement and irregular migration, the EU Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa was set up to support the most fragile and affected African countries (November 2015). The Trust Fund aims to help foster stability in the regions to respond to the challenges of irregular migration and forced displacement and to contribute to better migration management. More specifically, it will help address the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration, by promoting economic and equal opportunities, security and development.

### **3.5. Sustainable and inclusive development and growth and continental integration**

A significant number of developing countries have experienced a relatively steady, positive performance in terms of **economic growth**. African countries showed greater resilience to the global crisis and better performances after 2009 compared with the world economy as a whole. This review suggests that the EU has indirectly contributed to the economic growth of developing countries via a wide range of channels, in line with the policy guidelines of the European Consensus for Development, in particular support

for macroeconomic stability, stronger public finance management, trade and a broader range of transport networks.

The improvement in economic growth in the 1990s has undoubtedly helped halt or check the spread of poverty in some countries, but has not reduced it. This would require more sustained economic growth, among other things. The World Bank estimates that, given the economic structures and population growth rates in sub-Saharan Africa, an increase in GDP of 5% per year would still not suffice to stabilise the numbers living below the poverty threshold. A great deal also needs to be done to improve the impact of growth on poverty: access to basic social services should be widened significantly and, in some countries, access to productive resources (such as education, training, land ownership, electricity, capital and credit) could be greatly improved: entire population groups are practically excluded from the formal sector of the economy. Women are particularly vulnerable and an improvement of their socioeconomic situation would act as an effective lever to curb poverty.

The working age population in Africa is young and growing in size, representing a key asset for the continent's development. But it is also a major challenge<sup>33</sup>.

Social protection and support for employment is essential to the fight against poverty. An evaluation of indicative programmes on employment and social inclusion (ESI)<sup>34</sup> shows that 22 African countries have at least one ESI-relevant sector as a core area of activity. These include action on vocational education and training, private sector development, and institutional strengthening through trade-related assistance at regional levels. Nonetheless, action supporting training and labour market needs has been judged poorly integrated in most country strategy papers.

Importantly, attention to employment was not duly addressed in assistance to private sector development. Employment concerns were not systematically mainstreamed in economic reform programmes, although positive exceptions existed under specific programme (e.g. banana, rum and rice support). Most EU action in support of trade, macroeconomic stability, economic reform and private sector development has not explicitly focused on employment creation as the main target.

In more systematically targeting employment as a key target, EU policies and interventions should take better account of the formal/informal employment nexus which is particularly relevant in sub-Saharan Africa, where the informal economy plays an essential role, employing up to 66% of all non-agricultural workers, and up to 90% of workers if agricultural employment is included.

In terms of trade flows, ACP integration in global markets has seen a stronger increase than intraregional integration for most ACP regions and for the ACP group as a whole. For sub-Saharan Africa, however, intraregional trade's share of total trade increased from 16% in 2000 to 24% in 2014<sup>35</sup>. One of the main contributing factors has certainly been

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<sup>33</sup> NEPAD, *A new emerging rural world — an overview of rural change in Africa*.

<sup>34</sup> European Commission, *Thematic global evaluation of European Commission support in the sectors of ESI (Employment and Social Inclusion) in partner countries (including vocational training)*, 2011.

<sup>35</sup> United Nation Comtrade database: <http://comtrade.un.org/>.

the negotiation of economic partnership agreements (EPAs). The ACP countries' integration in world trade hinges on the success of domestic economic policies and on greater economic competitiveness and access to foreign markets.

Regional integration has been strongest in the agricultural products, textiles, and machinery and transport equipment sectors. In Africa, the region in which intraregional trade has grown fastest compared with overall trade is the East African Community<sup>36</sup>.

ACP exports to the EU are dominated by Africa and by minerals. With 27.3% of sub-Saharan Africa's total trade, the EU is its main trading partner, ahead of China (10.7%), the United States (8.4%) and India 6.8%<sup>37</sup>. In 2015, China's imports from Africa were reported to have fallen by nearly 40%<sup>38</sup>, which highlights the importance of the EU as Africa's main export destination. In 2014, Africa accounted for 97.6% of ACP exports to the EU. South Africa alone accounted for almost a quarter of that (21.6%)<sup>39</sup>.

EU assistance for **digitisation** has mainly targeted regulatory harmonisation and infrastructure deployment. The main goal was to create an enabling environment for investment and affordable connectivity. This has been done for Africa under the programme 'Support for harmonisation of ICT policies in sub-Saharan Africa' (HIPSSA), its planned successor, HIP Africa, and the Euromed telecommunications regulator group EMERG in the southern Mediterranean.

The exponential spread and scale-up of digital technologies and services has profound global implications, creating opportunities for sustainable development and inclusive growth, but at the same time new threats and challenges. Digitalisation has an important role to play in a wide range of areas including gender, good governance, transparency and accountability, the fight against corruption, job creation and private sector development, access to micro-finance, improving access to public services - notably energy, protecting the environment and addressing climate change, providing humanitarian aid, education health or developing agriculture. As such, digital solutions can help combat poverty, contribute to better targeting and the linking of humanitarian and development activities, and help to manage migration and address shortcomings in a number of EU partner countries where eIdentification and civil registries, digital entrepreneurship and Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's), eServices, eGovernment, mobile financing or blockchain secured transactions can reduce inequalities and increase prosperity.

The digitisation agenda is to be seen in the context of 'an **enabler** for sustainable development, inclusive growth and societies'. There are undoubtedly a growing number of ICT applications being developed for the benefit of agriculture and agribusiness — from the geographical information system (GIS), remote sensing and satellite imagery technologies to mobile phone applications. Literature shows the importance of the development of ICT infrastructure (especially in rural areas), digital skills, digital

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<sup>36</sup> International Trade Centre, *ACP Trade — Prospects for Stronger Performance and Cooperation*, ITC Technical Paper, 2014.

<sup>37</sup> United Nation Comtrade database: <http://comtrade.un.org/>.

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35303981>

<sup>39</sup> United Nation Comtrade database: <http://comtrade.un.org/>.

entrepreneurship and sound legislation and regulations leading to competitive markets as enablers to the ICT for agriculture<sup>40</sup>.

**Agriculture and rural development** are recognised as crucial to poverty eradication and growth in the Consensus. This review finds that EU support has targeted some areas and types of action: support for agricultural commodities; strengthening food security; and support for agricultural enterprises and rural employment, mainly in the ‘neighbourhood’ policy context. Support for agriculture has focused on food security and traditional commodities, while the sector approach, including sustainable food value chains and rural development, has not been sufficiently developed.

Agriculture (including livestock, fisheries and aquaculture) has the potential to generate growth, and employment in rural areas and along the value chains. It is a major determinant of environmental management and of rural people’s livelihoods. In Africa, the working age population (aged 15 to 64) will increase by 875 million people by 2050. Overall, the population should remain predominantly rural, with an increase of 350 million new people (which will push up rural population density). And by 2030, a total of 440 million young men and women already born will need to find an occupation to support themselves and their families. This increase in young people in rural areas poses a real challenge for employment in agriculture and related sectors.

Africa has many assets, among them resource wealth, fertile soil, a growing small business sector, and above all, its young people. By 2035, Africa will have the largest potential workforce in the world, still mainly located in rural areas at present.

Africa is a very diverse continent. Many countries face severe economic development constraints. Africa is not well integrated into the world economy or as an economic region; it does not offer a secure environment for private investment and some countries face a growing risk of remaining permanently in debt. As a result of insufficient economic diversification, not enough value is added to local resources. There is a lack of business initiative and industry.

Industrialisation and diversification of ACP economies remain limited. At global level, ACP countries have on average diversified significantly less than other developing countries, often due to their small size, remoteness or land-locked character. However, two regions in Africa (the East African Community and Central Africa) have managed to diversify their exports over the last 10 years<sup>41</sup>. Manufactured goods now account for more than 28% of total of East Africa’s exports to the rest of the world (against only 17% in 2000). In Central Africa, manufactured goods account for 25% of total exports (6% in 2000)<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> The technical centre for agricultural and rural cooperation (CTA), set up under the Cotonou Agreement, has an important component of its work programme that addresses issues of digitisation and agriculture (<http://www.cta.int/en/our-programmes/policies-markets-icts.html>).

<sup>41</sup> International Trade Centre, *ACP trade — prospects for stronger performance and cooperation*, ITC Technical Paper, 2014.

<sup>42</sup> United Nation Comtrade database: <http://comtrade.un.org/>.



Moreover, it is important to recognise that, by contrast to East Asia, manufacturing's share of employment is not expanding rapidly in Africa. In East Asian economies, the rapid expansion of labour-intensive manufacturing for export accelerated structural change-led growth. Although manufacturing has an important role to play in the African economy, it seems unlikely that it will play the same role that it played in East Asia. This is not necessarily bad news; it simply highlights the importance of investing in things like human capital and infrastructure, which can raise productivity levels in all sectors of the economy (IFPRI report)<sup>43</sup>.

### **3.6. Global and emerging issues**

Fostering environmental protection and addressing challenges related to climate change are strategic EU policy goals, with commitments agreed in several international fora including the relevant SDGs in the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. These SDGs refer specifically to agriculture and fisheries, land degradation and desertification, protection of terrestrial and marine ecosystems and the services they provide, sound management of chemical waste, resource efficiency and sustainable use of natural resources. SDG 13 calls for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

African countries are home to a large share of the world's biodiversity, which is severely affected by the persistence of unsustainable industrial practices and illegal activities. Although African countries are currently among the lowest greenhouse gas producers, trends for sub-Saharan Africa in the next 15 years are predicting a steep increase in energy demand. Many African countries are very vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. To address these challenges and vulnerabilities, it is essential that the Paris Agreement is implemented.

Addressing environmental challenges in African countries will have high returns for the EU and the world. Large-scale destruction of wildlife and ecosystems is primarily an irreversible environmental loss, which indirectly exposes African societies to economic and social threats. Ecosystems provide goods and regulatory and support services which are crucial for human wellbeing and for the economic development of African countries, as well as indirectly for the entire planet. Importantly, a shift towards sustainable practices in local production will allow a range of indirect gains for the EU.

Evidence shows that the Partnership has not sufficiently delivered in addressing global challenges and in particular climate change, which remains one of the most pressing threats to the achievement of sustainable development in the EU and in the world.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

The findings show that the engagement of the EU in Africa has significantly contributed to the progress towards the eradication of poverty, sustainable development, the promotion of peace and security, to improved and more equitable access to basic services and the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, the picture is

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<sup>43</sup> IFPRI, *The changing structure of Africa's economies*, Discussion Paper 01598, January 2017.

mixed as regards African partners' respect for 'essential elements' (human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law). In addition, no sufficiently convincing and common answers have been provided to critical or global challenges such as migration and mobility, jobs for growing ranks of young people or climate change.