DECISION ON THE REPORT OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT ORIENTATION COMMITTEE (HSGOC) ON NEPAD Agency / Doc. Assembly/AU/--(XXV)

The Assembly,

NOTES WITH APPRECIATION the report by the Chairperson of the NEPAD Agency Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC), H.E. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal.

REQUESTS the Nepad Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) to develop the NEPAD Agency Policy Framework on Youth Employment in Africa in partnership with the AUC, UNECA and UNDP, and submit to the HSGOC in due course for consideration.
Introduction

Young Africans are the key to an African renaissance and will remain players in, and advocates of social transformation and development in many spheres. The enormous benefits young people can contribute are realized when investment is made in young people’s education, employment, health care, empowerment and effective civil participation. Several initiatives on youth education and employment have been undertaken in Africa, but these need to be deepened in order to exploit the full potential of young people in contributing to poverty reduction, sustainable development, and ultimately the transformation of the African continent.

This paper firstly seeks to promote new and deeper knowledge of the potential of African young people and the broad conditions that have an influence on this potential. Secondly it invites to explore ways and means to develop and implement youth employment operational action plans by governments, in partnership with the youth, and all actors of national economic and social ecosystem of African member states. It acknowledges the predicament of African young people today, noting that they share visions and aspirations that are seemingly beyond their reach, yet are essential elements of today’s societies and the future which awaits coming generations. It intends to emulate the creation of knowledge, invites to benchmark against best practices, identifies scenarios to operationalize national and sub-regional actionable plans, poses questions that policymakers should take into consideration when working on issues that affect young people, and calls for mainstreaming youth agenda into African continental frameworks that are being operationalized under the umbrella of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD Agency). It calls for a reflection on how best to turn what could be a missed demographic opportunity into a demographic dividend, pathway to an Africa that is pro-youth, that provides abundant opportunities, and aims to ensure that its youth feel that they have a stake in an integrated, prosperous and peaceful continent. The outcome of the reflection should move forward the agenda of African youth who constitute at least 25% of the population of the continent.

Justification for the development of the continental framework

There is growing global recognition of the need to prioritize youth development in Africa where youth constitute the majority of the population. This priority has been captured and expressed firstly by the adoption of the African Youth Charter in 2006 by African Heads of State. However, the clauses and implications of the African Youth Charter are still not well known even in government circles, let alone among the broader range of stakeholders, in particular the youth themselves.
1. The African Youth Charter sets out clearly the principles, rights and obligations of African Youth as well as the obligations of member states to ensure fulfillment of these rights;
2. This debate will help further the analysis and provide a clear set of concrete recommendations, which can lead to the effective implementation of the Youth Charter;
3. It should contribute to its operationalization leading to effective youth development and its inclusion in the development of their countries.

Such inclusion is particularly important, given that, over the last 20 years, there has been a huge expansion of youth programmes and activities, both by young Africans themselves, and organizations claiming to work for young people. Furthermore, these programmes have yet to be fully mainstreamed into and anchored to African Union continental frameworks, such as CAADP, PIDA, and Agenda 2063, which the NEPAD Agency Planning and Coordinating Agency could help translate into practical and measurable actions that support the implementation of the African youth agenda.

In this context, NEPAD Agency has a key role to play in forging partnerships between stakeholders and in mobilizing public and private sector support for youth development.

Coherence both within and between development programs is of vital importance where Youth Employment is concerned. It is therefore essential that a continental framework be designed to facilitate the operationalization of youth employment action plan:

1. Co-owned by the youth, governments and private sector;
2. Incorporated into the Continent’s development plans; including all programs and projects of NEPAD Agency coherently and systematically articulated at the regional, sub-regional and national levels in their approaches;
3. Is viewed in the context of integrated policies and good understanding among the bodies, government structures and other partners concerned;
4. Integrated into the African member states’ mainstreamed national planning, with particular attention to the agricultural and rural sector.
5. Supporting countries and partners development programmes and projects, whether through the establishment of lines of action exclusively for the youth and women or through effective integration, promotion and participation of youth and women in all programmes and projects in all sectors.

**Objective**

The main objective of the African Continental Framework on Youth development is to assist African member states to define national employment policy scheme with an
African Continental Framework on Youth Development

operational action plan, in line with the objectives of inclusive growth - in a creative dynamic of decent and sustainable jobs - taking into account the African youth Charter, national and sub-regional development plans, Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable development goals. It will constitute an accelerator of Agenda 2063 implementation under the leadership of the chair of the African Union Commission, and as such, will need the support of the AU Foundation in its capacity as representative of the private sector.

Specific objectives:

1. Provide a platform for the implementation and monitoring of the African youth charter
2. A national response to the global jobs pact of ILO;
3. A development of national, and or domestication of Youth Employment Operational Action plan spearheaded by Regional Economic Communities, which includes the activities and means to achieve measurable results, on the basis of a multi-year budgeting;
4. Assist to design how youth can play an important role in operationalizing Agenda 2063 and development frameworks such as CAADP, and PIDA;
5. Help to address key challenges facing African youth in the optimal engagement in social; economic and political spheres.

Rationale:
The rationale for the conceptualization, development and implementation the continental framework builds on the following decisions and principles:

1. HSGOC, under the chairmanship of President Macky Sall took the decision to have this framework designed and implemented, based on the necessity to take advantage of Africa’s demographic dividend;
2. Nepad Agency, as tasked by the HSGOC, developed this concept note to support the development of the continental framework, and to align it fully with Agenda 2063 and the Nepad programmes;
3. In order to ensure a "collective leadership“, the development and implementation of the continental framework requires participation and critical inputs from the aforementioned stakeholders;
4. As the technical arm of the African Union Commission, the Nepad Agency solicits the leadership of Madam Zuma with the necessary support and guidance during the design and implementation of the framework.

Outcome

The preparation and design of the African Continental Framework on Youth Development will entail collaboration with various stakeholders at the national, sub regional and
regional levels. This collaboration will be in data collection, policy analysis and recommendations, as well as review and impact analysis of youth employment initiatives spearheaded by governments, development partners, the private sector or civil society organizations.

1. Nepad Agency, AUC, ECA, OSAA and UNDP will work on an African Continental Framework on Youth Development to address the challenges of African Youth;

2. Ten (10) countries, namely Senegal, Cabo Verde, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Egypt, Tanzania, Ethiopia, South Africa, Rwanda, Nigeria, will be selected as the pilot countries that will be covered by the task team to design continental framework from October 2015 to May 2016;

3. A first draft of the framework should be completed by January 2016 and presented to HSGOC at the AU summit in January 2016. The first draft will be informed by the youth employment operational action plans developed in Senegal by, and Ivory Coast by UNDP;

4. Once all the remaining 8 countries are covered, a validation workshop that brings together member States and key stakeholders will be organized to validate the final draft framework;

5. The approved framework will be submitted to HSGOC for their endorsement in June 2016;

6. After the endorsement of the framework, Nepad Agency, in collaboration with member States, will embark on a programme of domestication of the framework in the development plans of member States.

The consultations in the selected 10 countries will lead to the technical validation of mission reports and the design of the African Continental Framework on Youth Development with operational action plans. The operational action plans will include a roadmap indicating the direct, indirect, and or shared responsibilities of different actors, among which governments, private sectors, civil society organizations, academia, development partners, within a public-private partnership framework mutualize their efforts to the advantage youth development, at the national, sub-regional and continental levels.

The Operational Action Plans will be substantiated with practical measures, performance indicators at the macro, meso, and micro levels, to impact simultaneously on the following three levels:

1. The macroeconomic framework, strategies and reforms of the legislative and / or regulatory framework;

2. Capacitating public and private sector organizations and sectors, as well as developing forward-looking strategies for the promotion of the national economic and social fabric, and ecosystem;

3. Workforce productivity, reorienting education policies, and incentive policies to promote youth entrepreneurship, leadership, and engagement.