

PIDA PAP 2 – Digitalization across PIDA sectors
Wednesday, 27th May (10:00 to 12: 30 GMT)
Brief notes

Introduction notes:

- 43 attendees including MS& RECs PIDA-PAP 2 Focal Points, task force members, AUC, AWIN members and GIZ PIDA team;
- The PIDA coordinator opened the session by stating the objective and emphasizing the need for digitalization across the PIDA Sectors.
- Mr. Moctar Yedally, head of information Society Division within the AUC's Infrastructure and Energy Department, then presented on the importance of digitalization in the infrastructure sectors and the AUC's Digital Transformation Strategy. And further stressed that all hard infrastructure sectors (PIDA sectors) are amenable and compatible with digitalization - as they are based on the same network theories applied in ICT sectors.
- The PIDA coordinator on behalf of Dr. Abu Sufian Dafalla then presented on Digitalization in the process of implementation of infrastructure and highlighted on safety, productivity and sustainability of infrastructure through digitalization.

Questions and Discussions:

The following are the submissions and discussion that were made during the interactive discussion:

- A query on whether there is any strategy to help countries with data collection since the starting point of digital transformation in projects is data collection.
 - Mr. Moctar explained that there is no specific strategy from the AUC department of infrastructure and energy, but it is the mission of the AUC for Africa to provide its own African Statistics and define itself without outside influence. Hence the creation of the center of statistics based in Tunisia to build capacity to all African countries. However, he highlighted that the collection of data has problems that should be tackled. One important issue is the manner of how to take and collect data from the sources. From a technological point of view this is being solved by the rise of sensors, that are now implemented in most items. With sensors it is easy to trace everything and collect data. Nevertheless, there is a need for a regional and national strategy on how to utilize the sensors in combination with internet of things (IoT) to be able to collect data. And to ensure that the data collected is used for the sole purpose of development. Hence the AU convention on cyber security and data collection.
 - Furthermore, AUDA-NEPAD ICT Task force, Mr. Abdou Rahman Mboob, encouraged the participants to ensure that their countries sign and ratify the AU convention on cyber security as there is still 10 countries that have not ratified, as this impends on the processes of digital transformation in the continent.
- A query on who leads the discussions on digital cooperation principals and are they open to all African countries and organizations?
 - Mr. Moctar explained that there is a need to understand on a national level how all the other hard sectors will cooperate in relation to ICT used in their sector. There are several international forums that discuss on digital cooperation matters, internet governance and norms, and ICT standards such as ITU, ITF etc. He further highlighted that the united nations secretary general created a high-level panel called, "The high-level panel on digital cooperation," that is cochaired

by Melinda Gates and Jack Ma. From this they have created regional and sub regional consultations that come up with reports with specific recommendations. This panel is not open to everybody, but member states can contribute to these processes through the United Nations government expert group (UNDGG) and the new United Nations open working groups. Unfortunately, these working groups are closed for the African member states that were to participate through the AUC, the reason being lack of talent and capacity to participate in those debates.

- A participant raised the issue that, as digitalization is changing the African and global economy nonetheless can there be innovative ways to utilize it to keep and sustain the current employment or will it cut off the informal and formal employment?
 - To respond to this Mr. Moctar gave an example of the 1970's when the computer was being introduced in the manufacturing plants and there was a lot of push back that it would eliminate jobs and people will suffer. Seventy years later, this wasn't the case. He gave another example of the solar panel field in Egypt, where robots that could clean the solar panels 24/7 replaced the laborers and hence increased the efficiency of the panels by 90 percent. The laborers then took up the job of maintaining and cleaning the robots. Therefore, digitalization may eliminate old jobs, but it will replace them with new and more efficient jobs and hence, it is a transformation of jobs.
 - The PIDA coordinator then gave an example of Abidjan and Ethiopia where efficiency of local Taxi travel has been increased due to the creation of local applications, similar to Uber that have increased travel time and safety of taxis. And enabled the Taxi drivers to stay in one place and wait for a call from the customers, rather than roaming around burning fossil fuel. Therefore, increasing the efficiency, while being a positive impact on the economy and the environment.
 - Dr. Abu Dafalla further emphasized that ICT is a job creator and not an eliminator. What needs to change is people's mentality and skills. People have to grow with the digital transformations.
 - Lastly, AfDB, Mike Selawou, highlighted on the importance of ICT as it is in all sectors. Hence an enabler for other sectors to perform and therefore it is more important than ever. He further stressed that Africa needs to search and adopt technology that can enhance efficiency and bridge the infrastructure gap across the sectors. He announced that the bank understands this and has been working to support this with the AUC and AUDA-NEPAD since NEPAD's short time action plan to PIDA PAP 1 and will continue in PIDA PAP 2.
- PIDA coordinator emphasized that regulatory framework and liberalization of the ICT sector to the private sector is an important issue to be tackled and Africa should take advantage on how to leapfrog new models and new ways of doing business in this sector. In the same breath, it was also noted that digitalization is not only for big infrastructure and data centers but the impact of digitalization on the last mile on rural electrification is tremendous and also important. This has opened up new business models, new ways of managing batteries and energy services etc. Prior to digitalization these things were thought to be impossible. An example was given how off grid energy service providers in Tanzania, aside from providing basic energy are also providing their customer with Radios and TVs.
- Lastly, from the lessons learnt from PIDA PAP 1 with regards to ICT projects. It was highlighted that it is important that PIDA PAP 2 devise a strategy of retrieving accurate information from project owners for the sake of reporting, evaluation and monitoring.

- Afdb, Mike Selawou concluded the session by emphasizing that it is crucial to pay attention to ICT and how to mainstream it to other infrastructure sectors. He announced that COMESA has approached the Bank for support on feasibility study for a project on Datacenters. And they will be submitting this project for PIDA PAP 2 as it is very important to the region. And will seek the support and guidance of the AUC.

Way Forward:

- Regional Webinar with UMA PIDA Focal points on 2nd June 2020
- Regional Webinar with SADC PIDA Focal points on 3rd June 2020

Attendees:

1. Dr. Abu Sufian Dafalla, ISM ICT Expert
2. Abdou Rahman Mboob, AUDA-NEPAD, task force member, Email: AbdouR@nepad.org
3. Alpha oumar BAH, Point Focal des Eaux Guinée Ministère de l'Environnement des Eaux et Forêts Afrique de l'Ouest (Francophone)
4. Atanin Davyes, Director of Bureau for Studies and Panification. Minister for Transportation and Communication, Republic of Guinea-Bissau
5. Aziz SFAR BEN CHEKIR - Project Manager Technical Assistance to AUC/ISM, funded by EU. Email: aziz.sfarbenchekir@dt-global.com
6. Apollo Kashanku
7. Benabou Abderraouf
8. Engr. Bertrand Kisito NGA, Deputy Director of Development and Planning of ICT, Email: bertrand.nga@minpostel.gov.cm, Tel: 237693066405, Focal Point PIDA Cameroon
9. Bernard Brian Cudjoe, ICT Consultant to African Union.
10. Dr. Lovasoa Christine Razanamahandry, Task force member, AUDA-NEPAD LovasoaR@nepad.org
11. Ephrem Getahun, AUDA-NEPAD, EphremG@nepad.org
12. Francesca Adrienne, Seychelles, Department of Blue Economy, f.adrienne@gov.sc
13. Gilbert Nii-Okai Addy, Team Leader, Technical Assistance to the AU/ Infrastructure Support mechanism, EU-funded. e-mail: gnaddy@gmail.com
14. Ghada Darwish ANWIN member and Energy, Renewable energy and biogas projects development expert. ghada@dem-consulting.net
15. Huleiman Athumani, Senior Engineer EAC Secretariat
16. Hanief Ebrahim, Presidency, South Africa.
17. Hussein TALLOUA, NWSAS Consultation Mechanism, Tunisia, E.mail: hussein2004m@gmail.com ; hussein.talloua@oss.org.tn
18. Jean Baptiste Mutabzai
19. Jose Luis Bobes, Transaction Advisor ISM
20. Krishna Joy Heeramun, Ethiopia, PIDA Coordinator, HeeramunK@africa-union.org
21. Leonard Chitundu
22. Margaret Nyambura Ndung'u
23. Mohamed Moallin
24. Moses Ntamelle SADC Sec
25. M. Gouled Mohammed

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28. Mervin Azeta from ANWIN & Schlumberger. Nigerian based Rep. of the Congo.
29. Mike Salawou AfDB, Task force member, Email: m.salawou@afdb.org
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35. Senn
36. Stephan Fox, EU Delegation to the African Union, Attaché, stephan.fox@eeas.europa.eu.
37. Souhila Amazouz, Senior Policy Officer, African Union Commission and Member of the PIDA-PAP 2 Task Force
38. Simbini Tichakunda, Task force member, AUDA-NEPAD, SimbiniT@nepad.org
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40. Younes Touitha, Task force member, AUDA-NEPAD, YounesT@nepad.org
41. Yagouba Traore, Head of Infrastructure division, AUC-DIE, Ethiopia, traorey@africa-union.org
42. Yedally Moctar, Head of ICT, AUC-DIE, Ethiopia
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