

HOW TO MONITOR THE AFRICA-EUROPE RELATIONSHIP, AND WHY

Approach and methodology outline note

WHAT'S THE OPPORTUNITY?

The core problem underlying the relationship between Africa and Europe is the prevailing lack of trust, and not just between governments, but civil society, private sector and citizens as well. Without trust and mutual respect, there can be no meaningful so-called partnership of equals. The 6th EU-AU Summit in February 2022 made an important breakthrough in agreeing on a follow up mechanism to monitor the delivery of the commitments made at the Summit. The AEF seeks to establish an independent monitoring platform to complement the formal follow up mechanism for several reasons, most importantly to foster a renewal of trust through improving access to information and visibility of progress in delivering the commitments. The object of AEF's monitoring function is to provide a basis to improve, not just report on, the joint performance of the AU-EU in delivering the commitments, thus contributing to strengthening the Africa-Europe partnership.

PROGRESS SO FAR: THE 'COMMITMENT FRAMEWORK'

In the From Commitments to Action – progress review on the implementation of the 6th EU-AU Summit: Year 1 report, AEF monitored the relationship between Africa and Europe against ten commitments – which are derived from the final declaration of the Summit.

TEN SUMMIT COMMITMENTS

Commitment 1: Access to vaccines, African health sovereignty and comprehensive WTO response to the pandemic

Commitment 1.1: Africa-Europe investment package for Health

Commitment 2: Facilitation of economic recovery through the Common Framework for Debt Treatments, reallocation of SDRs and increased spending through international programmes

Commitment 3: Combating Illicit Financial Flows, addressing domestic tax base erosion and profit sharing and cooperating on tax transparency

Commitment 4: Scientific and technological cooperation; student, research and cultural exchanges; restitution of cultural assets and promotion of cultural heritage

Commitment 5: Africa-Europe investment package for education

Commitment 6: Investment package (energy, transport and digital infrastructure, energy transition, green transition, digital transformation, sustainable growth and decent job creation, transport facilitation and human development)

Commitment 7: Implementation of the investment package through public funds and innovative financing and boosting regional and continental economic integration

Commitment 8: Renewed and enhanced cooperation for peace and security

Commitment 9: Enhanced and reciprocal partnerships for migration and mobility

Commitment 10: Promoting effective multilateralism

Recognising the implicit mechanism of delivery on the Summit commitments, which in select areas focuses on policy coordination but primarily involves development assistance cooperation, the AEF 'Commitment framework' approach to monitoring is based on two dimensions:

- 1) Tracking the flagship programmes, in the first instance, and their contributing projects. This includes the Global Gateway Investment Package for Africa flagships designed and implemented through the Team Europe Initiatives and the 15 AU Flagships. The Flagships are the primary tool for the AU and EU to deliver on their commitments and as such represent the 'baseline' for the AEF's monitoring.
- 2) Undertaking rapid contextual assessment, which places the design and implementation of the Flagships in the broader context of the current sectoral priorities for Africa and Europe and provide opportunity for nuance based on the dynamic economic and geopolitical environment.

Although this approach and the Progress Review report can contribute to significant progress in accountability, there are weaknesses in using the 'commitments framework' to monitor the Africa-Europe relationship; the ten Summit commitments did not articulate the state of play (the baseline) or, except for the vaccine roll-out and high-level financial contributions of the Investment Package, the expected outcomes (the targets) making it impossible to make definitive judgements. Some of these can be mitigated whilst retaining the framework. For example, efforts to improve the quality of data provided on European aid investments are underway and there is scope to triangulate information between the source and destination of aid funds. Yet, it is also important to look beyond aid as a one-way financial transaction. The 'commitments framework' approach will need to be augmented to monitor the Africa-Europe relationship effectively. This is because the 'commitment framework' focuses only on the specific commitments made and does not consider the powerful Joint Vision agreed upon at the Summit, which is the agreed basis of the renewed partnership. The ten commitments also have important blind spots – for instance, climate adaptation and agriculture which are key for Africa and her policymakers. This is why AEF is proposing a new monitoring methodology to complement the existing framework.

Commitment framework' approach to monitoring;

- *EU and AU project data and updates*
- *Policy research and mainstream media report tracking*
- *Expert platform assessments (Strategy Groups and Working Groups)*
- *Rapid sectoral assessment studies*

HOW AEF WILL MONITOR THE AFRICA-EUROPE PARTNERSHIP?

Vision-led

We agree that the aim of the Joint Vision is to consolidate a renewed Partnership for solidarity, security, peace and sustainable and sustained economic development and prosperity for our citizens and for our future generations, bringing together our people, regions and organisations. (6th EU-AU Summit)

The realisation of the Joint Vision is the key cumulative outcome of all the various interactions between Africa and Europe. In addition to quantitative economic indicators, such as economic prosperity, this will also include qualitative indicators to assess the perceptions of policymakers and the public in Africa and Europe on issues such as migration, solidarity, security and social interaction, and assessing any changes in multilateralism.

Rigor in selecting what is monitored and how change is envisaged and monitored

The partnership monitoring approach is detailed below. In summary, the aim will be to select policy areas to monitor which are important, involve shared working and can yield benefits for Africa and Europe. The change process envisioned will be made on an explicit understanding of the binding constraint to change and a theory for how the change will occur. This will drive the selection of indicators to assess change so, too, the performance of those responsible for making it happen

Step 1: Select appropriate policy priorities to monitor: the Africa-Europe partnership encompasses policy priorities that are genuinely shared, where progress can be directly controlled by the AU and EU and, if successful, will deliver meaningful on-the-ground impact. These should be purposively selected.

Step 2: Identify the binding constraint to progress in each policy area: solving a problem effectively requires a clear understanding of what is the starter or core problem. A problem tree analysis separates the effects of the problem, the core problem and the causes of this problem.

Step 3 - Understand how policymakers can make change happen: Develop a theory of change to articulate how and what joint action by policymakers in Africa and Europe can help make change happen.

Step 4 - Select indicators to assess if a change is happening: using the theory of change makes it possible to select indicators that will identify if the desired change is starting to happen.

Step 5 - Reliable and practical data sources: the perfect indicator is only feasible if regular and reliable data can be easily accessed to measure and analyse it.

Step 6 - Public accountability and dialogue: the key purpose of a monitoring system is to enable informed debate, decision-

An examination of a range of policy documents from Africa and Europe identified nine policy areas that are priorities for the AU and the EU to work on together.

Proposed policy priority areas for monitoring the Africa-Europe partnership

Policy priorities	Rationale	African priority	Europe priority
1. Migration and mobility	A contentious issue that currently undermines the partnership and one over which the two continents can control both the supply and demand side of mobility and is a high priority for both.	VV	VV
2. Climate change & biodiversity	Europe is a high emitter that must decarbonise rapidly. Africa is a low emitter that is already suffering the costs of climate change and needs adaptation support and to urbanise and industrialise following a low carbon trajectory. Both continents need to navigate this transition away from hydro-carbons with the support of the other.	VV	VV
3. Regional, intra and inter-continental economic integration	The AfCFTA is a fundamental prerequisite for African industrialisation and self-determination. Europe is Africa's largest investment and trading partner and has recent practical experience in integrating diverse national economies into a single market. Transport and connectivity (incl. digital) investments should be aligned with the integration ambition.	VV	V
4. Health	A critical area for inclusive African development. The control of infectious diseases is a clear priority for both continents.	VV	V
5. Energy	The priority in Europe is to decarbonise the energy sector rapidly, and the priority in Africa is to access energy to support development.	VV	VV
6. Sustainable agricultural transformation & value addition	Doubling agricultural yields and productivity in Africa is necessary to feed the population, halt the encroachment of farming onto sensitive areas and support African economic transformation. European agricultural, environmental and trade policies could support this & deliver cheaper food for European consumers.	VV	VV
7. Peace & security	Africa and Europe have a joint interest in a peaceful Africa with a less strong migration 'push' factor.	VV	V
8. Financing of development	Move beyond aid discourse (€4.5bn aid provided annually from EU to Africa and about €10bn when including MSs). Africa requires an order of magnitude greater funds from other sources to finance transformation. This includes greater domestic resource mobilisation, joint action on tax transparency and Illicit Financial Flows and SDRs reallocation and support for private finance for African investments.	VV	VV
9. Scientific cooperation & skills	A key priority for Africa's successful economic transformation and a focus for European support.	VV	V

AU-EU Tracking products

Each year, the AEF will produce a list of monitoring products which will be publicly accessible:

- 1) The State of Africa-Europe Partnership Report, part of the AEF Flagship Report – annual, next issue in October 2023
- 2) From Commitments to Action: Progress Review – annual, next issue in April 2023
- 3) AU-EU Online Tracker – continuously updated, launch in April 2023
- 4) Infosheet Bulletins – 5 to 6 a year, next issue in May 2023
- 5) #TalkingAfrica-Europe Broadcast Series – 5 to 6 a year, next broadcast debate in May 2023