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ANNEX 5

to the Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the multiannual action plan in favour of Sub-Saharan Africa for 2023-2025

Action Document for the Regional Team Europe Initiative Opportunity-driven Skills and Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Africa

MULTIANNUAL PROGRAMME

This document constitutes the multiannual work programme within the meaning of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, within the meaning of Article 23 of the NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1 SYNOPSIS

1.1 Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS business reference Basic Act	Opportunity-driven Skills and VET in Africa OPSYS number: ACT-62133 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)
2. Team Europe Initiative	Yes. Regional Team Europe Initiative Opportunity-driven Skills and Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Africa.
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in Sub-Saharan Africa
4. Programming document	Multiannual Indicative Programme for Sub-Saharan Africa 2021-2027
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives / expected results	<p>Priority Area 1: Human Development – Education and Skills</p> <p>Specific Objective 2: Enhance regional and continental (Intra-Africa) integration for improved quality of education and skills development; and EU-Africa policy dialogue and cooperation in the fields of education, skills development, youth learning mobility, and teacher governance, leadership, training and professional development</p> <p>Result 2.2: Enhanced regional and continental (Intra-Africa) integration and EU-Africa policy development and coordination in the field of education and skills development</p> <p>Priority Area 5: Sustainable Growth and Decent Jobs</p> <p>Specific Objective 3: An investment climate in Sub-Saharan Africa conducive to private sector development and investments, and improved business capacities and access to finance for MSMEs.</p> <p>Result 3.2: Regional support measures for MSMEs business capacities are enhanced at continental and regional level.</p>

PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION				
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Human Development – Education and skills DAC Sector: Education – 110			
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: 4 Quality education Other significant SDGs: 8 Decent work and economic growth, 5 Gender Equality, 10 Reduced inequalities, 17 Partnerships			
8 a) DAC code(s)	11330 - Vocational Education and Training 50% 11430 - Professional-level vocational training programmes and in-service trainings 50%			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	Consortium EU Member State Agencies 11004			
9. Targets	<input type="checkbox"/> Migration <input type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
	Biological diversity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers and Tags	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Digitalisation @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	digital connectivity digital governance digital entrepreneurship digital skills/literacy digital services	YES <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Connectivity @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	digital connectivity energy transport health education and research	YES <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Reduction of Inequalities @	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

BUDGET INFORMATION	
12. Amounts concerned	<p>Total estimated cost: EUR 75 000 000</p> <p>Total amount of EU budget contribution: EUR 75 000 000</p> <p>The contribution is for an amount of EUR 75 000 000 from the general budget of the European Union</p> <p>14.020120-C1-INTPA WEST AFRICA:</p> <p>EUR 26 250 000 from the general budget of the European Union for 2023</p> <p>14.020121-C1-INTPA EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA:</p> <p>EUR 26 250 000 from the general budget of the European Union for 2023</p> <p>14.020122-C1-INTPA SOUTHERN AFRICA AND INDIAN OCEAN:</p> <p>EUR 22 500 000 from the general budget of the European Union for 2023</p> <p>Key Member States providing support to the TEI will be identified later</p>
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION	
13. Type of financing	Indirect management , preferably with a multi-party contribution agreement. Entities to be selected in accordance with the criteria set out in section 4.3.1

1.2 Summary of the Action

The core employment challenge in Sub-Saharan Africa is the fact that the economy does not produce enough decent wage jobs when compared to the number of labour market entrants today and in the decade to come. A majority of jobseekers and workers ends up in informal and precarious jobs, including self-employment. Young women tend to be more disadvantaged than young men in access to work and experience worse working conditions than their male counterparts. This employment challenge cannot be addressed only by VET as training people without an expansion of jobs leads only to pushing out those who have jobs.

During the European Union - African Union summit in February 2022, the Africa-Europe Global Gateway Investment Package of EUR 150 billion was announced. Through this EU-Africa Investment Package, the European Commission is supporting the creation of decent jobs by stimulating investment, trade and private sector development while contributing to the green and digital transition.

The Investment Package on Education and Training places education and training at the heart of collective Africa-Europe efforts towards an integrated and prosperous Africa, by focusing on strengthening education and training systems at all levels, in particular on providing labour-market relevant quality education and training, ensuring equality and equity in access to it, and on fostering skills for life and employment. To offer expanded skills development opportunities to meet emerging needs for Africa's economic and social transformation, opportunity-driven VET was presented as a key element of the Global Gateway Investment Package on Education and Training. Opportunity-driven VET means reverse engineering vocational education and training starting from concrete and decent employment opportunities created by investments, trade, economic diversification, value chain development and other market dynamics. It calls for a strong engagement with the private sector that creates a majority of jobs. Opportunity-driven VET will help to deliver on this Global Gateway Investment Package through the availability of skills needed by the private sector. It generates a win-win situation as learners are better prepared to grab opportunities, while business will more easily find the required technical profiles. Thus it seeks to build a bridge between the Global Gateway and other flagship initiatives which depend in many cases on the availability of skilled labour while VET systems suffer from a number of deficits which are often too narrowly addressed without being linked to concrete employment opportunities. Coupled to measures that stimulate the demand side of the labour market through the Global Gateway Investment Package, VET can fulfil its potential as an important enabling factor for inclusive employment and the transition to a green/circular economy.

The Action will be accessible to countries in Sub-Saharan Africa who have identified VET and skills development as significant priority areas for EU financed interventions, addressing the green and digital transitions, sustainable growth and decent job creation, strengthening of health systems or as dedicated priority area in their EU MIPs or as envisaged by MS implementation.

The Action will be implemented as a Team Europe Initiative allowing for a broad mobilisation of expertise and experience from EU Member States and support from European financing institutions while stimulating more effective interventions due to immediate and direct learnings available from innovative approaches piloted by consortium members.

The Action complements Vocational Education and Training (VET) programmes financed by the European Commission or Member States at country level. It seeks to orient those bilateral VET interventions toward concrete employment opportunities in selected sectors and value chains under the Global Gateway.

The **Overall Objective** (Impact) of this Action is to improve VET provision to address the skills needs of Global Gateway and other flagship initiatives while enhancing the employability of women and men in SSA.

The **Specific Objective** of this Action is to ensure orientation of VET interventions towards decent employment opportunities in selected sectors and value chains (VC) under the Global Gateway (GG) and other flagship initiatives.

To achieve these goals, the action consists of three building blocks:

1. **A Technical Assistance (TA) facility** providing support based on requests from EU Delegations, EU Member States or private sector organisations to identify employment opportunities and required skills needs around flagship initiatives and translate findings in targeted recommendations for VET system support responsive to identified employment opportunities.
2. **Regional exchange on Public-Private-Partnerships** to promote opportunity-driven VET and skills development in SSA, and to create a space to allow for practical exchange between public and private stakeholders on active partnerships. This includes a linkage to relevant Erasmus+ financed actions on capacity building for PPP in VET to strengthen EU-Africa engagement on skills.
3. **A Competitive Funding mechanism** to finance regional and multi-country VET initiatives in support of (regional) value chains that complement country MIPs, as well as actions that more generally support this paradigm shift of reverse engineering VET in function of employment opportunities market dynamics create.

The Action is aligned with the priority areas of the regional MIP for Sub-Saharan Africa 2021 – 2027 (Priority area 1: Human Development, Result 2.2. and Priority area 5: Sustainable Growth and Decent Jobs, Result 3.2.) and SDGs 8 Decent work and economic growth, 4 Quality education, 5 Gender equality, 10 Reduced inequalities and 17 Partnerships.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Context

In the ‘New European Consensus for Development’¹ from 2017, the EU and its Member States have committed to carrying out actions that reflect the key themes of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership. The Consensus emphasises the importance of creating sufficient good-quality jobs, especially for young people and women and in support of the green/circular economy transition. The Consensus also calls on ‘ensuring access to quality education for all as a prerequisite for youth employability and long-lasting development’, highlighting the importance of education and skills development for the social, economic and environmental well-being of communities.

The Joint Communication ‘Towards a comprehensive strategy with Africa’² which was approved in March 2020 provides a roadmap towards elevating the EU-Africa Partnership to the next level. The strategy provides a common

¹ [European Consensus on Development \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/e3000000/1/press-18-10-2017-01_en.pdf)

² [EUR-Lex - 52020JC0004 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/comm/communication/2020/1/1/en)

policy framework and calls for strengthened economic integration and structural transformation, having job creation in Africa as key target, with green investments and sustainable trade as the main vehicles. It also underlines the demand of the digital economy for better digital skills and for a qualified, local workforce in all sectors that can benefit from the digital transformation. It emphasises the need to keep investing in people and empowering them, including ensuring access to inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

In December 2021, the Joint Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the European Investment Bank ‘The Global Gateway’³ was adopted, setting out Global Gateway as the strategic framework on how Europe can build more resilient connections with the world. It aims at boosting smart, clean and secure links in digital, energy and transport sectors and to strengthen health, education – including vocational education and training - and research systems across the world.

Strengthening linkages between the world of work and education and training systems is a specific objective of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 and addressing mismatches and the fact that most VET systems in Africa are supply driven are core to the AU’s Continental Strategy for TVET to foster Youth Employment⁴ published in 2018. The AU’s Digital Education Strategy and Implementation Plan highlight s the need to deliver digital literacy and skills through Technical and Vocational Training and Education, in alignment with job market and industry requirements.

At the European Union - African Union summit in February 2022, the Africa-Europe Global Gateway Investment Package of EUR 150 billion was announced. Through the Africa Investment Initiative, the European Commission is supporting the creation of decent jobs: stimulating investment, trade and private sector development while contributing to the green and digital transition. Opportunity-driven VET was presented as a key element of the Global Gateway Education and Training Investment package.

Through this action, the EU places VET in a comprehensive employment strategy that calls for a close collaboration with the private sector as a solution to high youth unemployment and a successful transition to the labour market. VET is considered an enabler which can support skills-related interventions and support a just transition in areas which are part of the Global Gateway Investment Package: such as accelerating the green and digital transition, strengthening health systems, accelerating sustainable growth and decent job creation. It can also respond to other market dynamics that generate jobs and are in need of qualified staff. These dynamics may be triggered with European involvement and/or as a result of African developments at national or continental level as the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement or a Just energy Transition Partnership.

Reverse-engineering VET systems to job opportunities generates a win-win situation as VET graduates will see their chances of decent employment improve while investments and other developments will be able to come to fruition thanks to the availability of the required human capital.

The Action seeks to work closely with the private sector in the EU and in Africa. It will build on existing networks and relationships, particularly from the EU – Africa Business Forum.

The Action intends to complement VET and skills development programmes financed at country level by helping these orient towards concrete employment opportunities created by (EU) investments, trade, (regional) value chain development and other market dynamics in partner countries. Country level enveloppes will be the primary source to finance the implementation of recommendations of the TA Facility.

The Action will be accessible to countries in sub-Saharan Africa who have identified VET and skills development as significant activities under the priority areas addressing the green and digital transitions, sustainable growth and decent job creation, strengthening of health systems or as dedicated priority areas in their MIPs or as envisaged by MS implementation in national TEIs.

The action builds on the proven approach of the currently running VET Toolbox, a multi-donor action implemented by a consortium of development agencies⁵: the core of this approach is rethinking VET and skills development

³ [joint_communication_global_gateway.pdf\(europa.eu\)](#)

⁴ [35308-pr-tvet-english - final 2.pdf \(au.int\)](#)

⁵ Enabel-the Belgian Development Agency, LuxDev, Expertise France, GIZ and the British Council. The VET Toolbox is funded by the Commission (30 million EUR) and co-funded by the German Government (BMZ).

support to be responsive to the opportunities the economy offers. It promotes stronger linkages between business and VET and ensures proper involvement of employers to make sure that the skills provided are relevant.

The Action will seek to cooperate with other regional and national TEIs providing support services in relevant areas – as e.g. the TEI IYBA providing support to the ecosystem for entrepreneurial development; sector specific TEIs which have identified skills as a relevant support service, e.g. in the green and digital spheres knowing that VET is an engine of the twin transitions indispensable for a just recovery and a critical enabler of a just transition; in the health or pharmaceutical sector/value chain which requires skills and workforce development to ensure e.g. reliable logistics, manufacturing processes. The Action complements other EU-funded regional initiatives on skills recognition such as the Support of the implementation of the African Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF II), with which synergies could be identified in terms of development of qualifications profiles for emerging jobs, green occupations and other occupations related to investment and market dynamics, as well as in the framework of the activities related to regional PPP exchanges.

2.2 Problem Analysis

Africa is experiencing an employment crisis. Up to 90% of the population works in the informal sector, which is often characterised by precarious employment. The crisis is exacerbated by the fact that 1) the population is growing faster than decent jobs are created and 2) economic growth is decoupled from employment growth. This can only be addressed by increasing the pool of decent jobs.

According to ILO forecasts, Sub-Saharan Africa will need to create about 18-20 million new jobs per year between now and 2035 to absorb the growing employable population. While most African countries experienced impressive growth since the turn of the millennium, pre-Covid estimates place job creation around a quarter of needs. The growing problem of youth unemployment and underemployment is one of the main socio-economic development concerns. Jobless growth is a threat to social cohesion and there is the risk that a majority of Africa's working-age population will either be trapped in precarious employment with low-incomes in rural areas, or in low-productivity informal employment in urban areas, especially women and groups in vulnerable situations. Jobs have to be created to avoid further increasing and long-term (youth) unemployment and alleviate high levels of inequality.

The African Union's (AU) Vision 2063 sees job creation as an integral part of its aspiration for 'A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development'. The strategy document acknowledges that private sector investment is the basis of economic development. It is a key concern of African leaders to equip their growing youth with skills needed in the labour market and to take advantage of opportunities offered by increased investment, industrialisation, regional and global trade, as well as the green and digital transition, to create linkages between industry and skills. Strengthening linkages between the world of work and education and training systems is a specific objective of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 and addressing mismatches and the fact that most TVET systems in Africa are supply driven are core to the AU's Continental Strategy for TVET to foster Youth Employment⁶ published in 2018.

In many countries, VET and skills development are expected to solve the problem of youth unemployment. This expectation ignores the fact that vocational training does not create jobs. Rather it is the private sector that creates jobs and hence the collaboration with the private sector, be it in (social) sector dialogues or in the development and implementation of concrete training measures is a necessary requirement and a key feature of opportunity-driven approaches.

In such a scenario, VET and skills development has a crucial role as an important enabling factor for inclusive green and decent employment when coupled to measures on the demand side of the labour market and taking employment opportunities as the point of departure when designing VET and skills development interventions. This can create a win-win situation: investment and other initiatives will be able to come to fruition thanks to the availability of the required human capital while learners will see their chances of decent employment improve. The Action has the potential to support environmental protection, the transition to the circular economy and the adaptation to climate change through skills development in relevant areas like e.g. agriculture, transport, construction, energy and manufacturing, as well as technical service sectors like waste management. Climate adaptation measures, in particular in infrastructure development, can contribute to job creation. Responsive VET

⁶ [35308-pr-tvet-english - final 2.pdf \(au.int\)](#)

interventions can support the transition to these employment opportunities or support job retention through up-skilling.

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational issues (mandates, potential roles, and capacities) to be covered by the action:

- As core activity the action will deliver on demand advisory services at **country level including as part of a regional/multi-country approach** where there will be direct interaction with public and private sector partners in the context of the Commission's and EU Member States country's programmes in coordination with EU Delegations and EU Member State's country offices. This includes in particular government services addressing economic development, labour and education, VET institutes and business (networks).

The Action will interact with multiple stakeholders at regional/international level:

- Private sector networks (business organisations/associations) in Africa and the EU – in selected value chains and sectors aligned to the global Gateway, as e.g. the European Business Council for Africa (EBCAM), Pan African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PACCI), sub-regional business organisations, business organisations from EU Member states and European chambers based in Africa.
- Authorities with a continental or regional mandate, such as the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and African Union Commission - Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (ESTI) and the AU implementing agencies working in the field of TVET (AUDA-NEPAD).

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The **Overall Objective** (Impact) of this action is to improve VET provision to address the skills needs of Global Gateway and other flagship initiatives while enhancing the employability of women and men in SSA.

The **Specific Objective** (Outcome) of this action is to:

- **SO 1:** Ensure orientation of VET interventions towards decent employment opportunities in selected sectors and value chains (VC) under the Global Gateway (GG) and other flagship initiatives.

The **Outputs** to be delivered by this action contributing to the Specific Objective are:

- **Output 1:** Decent employment opportunities in (sub-) sectors & value chains, notably those responding to EU Global Gateway priorities, are identified & assessed at country level
- **Output 2:** Improved capacities of VET actors for development of VET services relevant to identified decent employment opportunities
- **Output 3:** Enhanced exposure to public-private partnerships on opportunity-driven VET at country and regional level (including Erasmus+ partnerships) for private sector, VET actors & public sector.
- **Output 4:** Enhanced access to finance for opportunity-driven regional and multi-country VET actions in specific (regional) value chains and Global Gateway initiatives

3.2 Indicative Activities

This Action will have activities implemented at regional and national levels (single country or multicountry interventions).

The Action will include the following activities - this list is non-exhaustive and additional activities can be implemented that are consistent and coherent with the delivery of the established outcomes; some activities will contribute to achieving more than one output so they are grouped as follows:

Activities relating to Output 1

- Consult EU Delegations and Member State representations to identify sectors and/or value chains of interest responding to Global Gateway and other country-level priorities of EU and Member States
- Conduct opportunity screenings at local/country/regional level for skilled labour in (sub-) sectors & value chains, including those responding to EU Global Gateway priorities with particular attention for employment opportunities for women
- Conduct mappings of private sector stakeholders for (sub-)sectors & value chains at local/country/regional level
- Support evidence-based identification of sectors and value chains with employment potential
- Identify decent employment opportunities for skilled labour (men and women) with a focus on (sub-) sectors & value chains responding to Global Gateway priorities
- Support dialogue processes with relevant private and public sector stakeholders
- Foster synergies with relevant EU initiatives stimulating job creation (e.g., SME support/EFSD+), investment climate and trade (IYBA, MAV+, national TEIs)
- Develop approaches unlocking potential for opportunity-driven VET in SMEs to engage in sustainable value chains

Activities relating to Output 2

- Analyse required skills profiles to match opportunities at country level in sectors and value chains
- Analyse skills gaps responding to identified decent employment opportunities
- Provide advice & tools for capacity building of VET actors for development of VET services in selected sectors and value chains
- Provide advice setting up mechanisms for public private cooperation in VET (e. g. skills councils)
- Disseminate tools for opportunity-driven VET at country/regional level to relevant VET actors
- Exchange knowledge with/between business organisations/VET actors/EUDs/Member States/ Partner countries/ relevant regional and continental organisations

Activities under Output areas 1 and 2 will be implemented by the Technical Assistance (TA) facility. The Technical Assistance facility will target sub-Saharan countries. Starting from concrete decent employment opportunities, it will offer its services on-demand, and requests will need to be submitted by the EU Delegations or endorsed by them.

Activities relating to Output 3

- Organisation of regional exchange on public-private-partnership experiences in VET
- Initiate exchange of good practices between private sector, VET actors & public sector for opportunity-driven VET at regional (within Africa) and/or continental level between Africa and Europe (through Erasmus+)
- Encourage exposure of African VET actors to European public-private-partnership experiences (through Erasmus+)
- Accompanying research on public-private partnerships in the area of opportunity-driven VET

Activities relating to Output 4

- Develop criteria for a competitive funding mechanism to finance relevant regional and multi-country VET interventions to support specific (regional) value chains actions that strengthen the paradigm shift to opportunity-driven VET, responding to Global Gateway priorities, including the green and digital transitions
- Definition of the framework and clear guidelines (including eligibility of participants, countries or regions, private sector financial contributions, selection and evaluation criteria etc.) to be agreed by the European Commission
- Setting up a transparent selection process open to private and public entities and select proposals corresponding to the guidelines established by the Commission and the consortium of EU Member States
- Accompany implementation of interventions funded from the competitive funding mechanism through capacity development measures
- Monitor and evaluate implementation of funded interventions
- Knowledge production and dissemination to support the sharing of good practices

3.3 Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Increased economic growth and trade may have certain negative or positive impacts on environment and climate change. On the one hand, more trade and investment activities can put more pressure on the environment (land, air, water, coastal area, fisheries, etc) and contribute to further climate change. On the other hand, with the revenue and income generated from the increased trade and investment in resource-efficient production, Governments and Industry within the Region may have more financial resources to tackle environmental problems and promote the agenda for investments in the green and circular economy. The action will promote VET addressing green and circular economy skills development, including compliance with environmental standards, in order to prepare the work force for the green transition in selected value chains.

Outcomes of the SEA screening N/A

Outcomes of the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) screening N/A

Outcome of the CRA (Climate Risk Assessment) screening N/A

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per the OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that the Action will specifically aim to reduce gender gaps particularly employment opportunities for women related to sector and value chain developments and thus promote women's economic and social empowerment.

The Action is linking VET to concrete employment opportunities that market dynamics generate. The identification of opportunities for women will be a compulsory requirement and hence reflected in the eligibility criteria of the Technical Assistance facility. All support interventions need to explain explicitly which opportunities could be identified for women and which additional support measures are required to allow women to actually benefit from the suggested support. The results from this gender-sensitive identification of employment opportunities will inform the regional exchange, e.g. showcasing good practices which could inspire other interventions to expand outreach and/or providing a platform to reflect together on possible support to eliminate existing barriers preventing women to access employment opportunities and responding to country and/or sector specific and socio-cultural challenges. The choice of sectors in the competitive funding mechanism should allow for specific targets for women participation to be established.

Human Rights

The proposed Action will abide by the 'do no harm principle' to avoid unintended negative impact in terms of human rights and will be implemented following the rights-based approach working principles (all rights, participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency).

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. This implies that disability will not be explicitly targeted.

Reduction of inequalities

N/A

Democracy

The Action will contribute to social dialogue.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

No specific activities are foreseen

Disaster Risk Reduction

No specific activities are foreseen

Other considerations if relevant

Activities will be tailored considering different needs of each of the target groups.

Because of its weight in African countries economy, informal sector and SMEs and ways of tackling the needs will be subject to special attention.

Good governance, including the fight against corruption and bribery, transparency, accountability, non-discrimination and participation within the legal/regulatory spheres will be promoted through public-private structured dialogue and cooperation.

3.4 Risks and Lessons Learnt

Category	Risks	Likelihood (High/ Medium/ Low)	Impact (High/ Medium/ Low)	Mitigating measures
1. Risks related to the external environment	Lack of economic opportunities (trade, investments and other market dynamics)	Medium	Low	During the design stage (regional) private sector stakeholders will already be actively engaged in the conceptual development of the TEI to ensure ownership and active participation on the side of business actors. Selection of value chains based on priorities identified by EUDs and aligned to Global Gateway priorities.
1. Risks related to the external environment	Economic opportunities are not coming with (local) employment opportunities	Medium	Medium	Include dialogue and exchange between private and public sector stakeholders showcasing good practice examples of public private partnership in close collaboration with EUDs in SSA. Focus on value chains and sectors coming with job opportunities. Include opportunities which can be addressed by up- and re-skilling to change the perception of VET, support job retention and a social just transition.
1. Risks related to the external environment	Spillover effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukrainian conflict	Medium	Medium	COVID led to supply shocks and increased unemployment with particular challenges for women and young people. The conflict in Ukraine has further affected poverty and creates barriers to growth in Africa. At the same time it became obvious that enhanced value addition, development of (regional) value chains and infrastructure in strategic areas as energy, transport, health can strengthen resilience in African partner countries. While the project itself cannot reduce these risks it can be one relevant support factor/enabler contributing to these development.

1. Risk related to the external environment	Reputational risks of being associated with private sector networks.	Low	Medium	Build on an existing network with the private sector established e.g. through the EU – Africa Business Forum. Include compulsory business partner screenings to detect any potential reputational or other risks.
1. Risks related to the external environment / 2. Planning, processes and systems	Lack of interest of private sector stakeholders to engage with governments and public sector stakeholders and vice versa to improve the quality and relevance of VET provision for concrete employment opportunities.	Low	Medium	Engage with private sector already during the design stage at (regional) level and link interventions to relevant Global Gateway interventions. Prioritise relationship building, networking and exchange with business/private sector to address potential reluctance at an early stage.
2. Risk related to planning, processes and systems	Packaging of the overall intervention as both country level actions and Erasmus+ have their independent decision processes.	Medium	High	The demand driven nature and close interaction with EUDs in the design stage and during implementation to ensure the action is responsive to priorities at country level and raises awareness for the relevance of the action to enhance value addition and employment in partner countries. On Erasmus+, the Commission actively engages the implementing agency to set criteria for selection of twinning that supports opportunity driven VET.

Lessons Learnt:

Key lessons learned from previous VET and skills development initiatives:

- Sub-Saharan Africa is a highly heterogeneous region made up of countries which differ dramatically but there is a common trend in most countries: education systems are rapidly expanding, but the labour market rewards for most people are low. The evaluation of the EC VET portfolio 2014-2018 found that while interventions were generally aligned with national policies and priorities. But not enough to labour market policies And further that VET was too much associated with education policies and not enough with private sector actors. Reforms have tended to focus on changing aspects of TVET provisioning, but in most cases without the expected results:
- Support from EU and EU Member states for VET and skills development show mixed results. The most meaningful contributions can be grouped in the following sets of domains:
 - Increased Dialogue and partnership between VET stakeholders
 - Strengthened Capacities of VET institutions
 - Broadened access to VET training
 - Improvement of the technical and entrepreneurial skills of the VET graduates including the broadening of VET opportunities for vulnerable groups.
 (Evaluation of the EU's cooperation on Vocational Education and Training for inclusive and sustainable Growth 2014 – 2018).
- Lessons learnt from the ongoing VET Toolbox implemented by a consortium of implementing agencies from EU Member States and in a Team Europe spirit provide relevant recommendations:

- An overarching theory of change is fundamental to develop results-oriented strategies and focus on outcomes and learnings aligned to strategic intentions of the respective action.
- Short term actions can act as catalysts, address gaps and be effective – be realistic and not overly ambitious in terms of systemic impact. Focus on innovative approaches, piloting, testing preferably at critical junctures in policy reform processes.
- Integrating different intervention/output areas is important to allow for peer learning and spreading of innovation.
- The collaborative spirit and high level trust in the governance structures of the VET Toolbox is not only a highly valuable asset but also a necessary pre-condition for the outside perception of a true Team Europe approach.
- The expertise from various EU Member States in the context of a programme can inspire innovative approaches.
- Transaction costs need to be considered designing a Team Europe initiative:
 - The higher the number of actors to be coordinated, the higher the transaction costs.
 - Transactions represent knowledge exchange and are effective vehicles for learning and need to be allocated to avoid falling into the ‘operations trap’.

3.5 The Intervention Logic

(Youth) unemployment is high all over Sub-Saharan Africa. While most African countries experienced impressive growth since the turn of the millennium, pre-Covid estimates place job creation at around a quarter of the needs. Economies in Sub-Saharan Africa do not produce enough decent wage jobs when compared to the large number of labour markets entrants. This gap can only be addressed by increasing the pool of decent jobs which are mainly created by the private sector. It cannot be addressed by VET alone, which needs to follow job opportunities that market dynamics create. This is in line with a similar paradigm shift African policy promotes to boost employment. It is expected that Global Gateway investments and other flagship initiatives will create business and employment opportunities. The Action will take these real job opportunities as starting point and seeks to orient VET interventions, financed by the EU or member states at county level, towards decent employment opportunities in selected sectors and value chains created by Global Gateway investments or other flagship initiatives (**Specific Objective 1/Outcome**). It is thus expected to reverse-engineer existing and new VET and skills development programmes to sector and investment needs and opportunities and contribute to improving VET provisions addressing the skills needs of Global Gateway and other flagship initiatives in view of enhancing the employability of women and men in sub-Saharan Africa (**Overall Objective/Impact**). Opportunity-driven VET means starting from concrete and decent employment opportunities created by investments, trade, economic diversification, value chain development and other market dynamics.

The intervention logic of the Action is based on the following assumptions:

A regional approach addressing the gap between VET interventions and employment opportunities created by the above mentioned dynamics **will add value to VET interventions at national level:** All the above-mentioned challenges have to be resolved at national level through actions of public and private sector stakeholders. However, a regional intervention can promote national interventions through knowledge sharing, stimulating and disseminating innovation and collective capacity building. Learnings and approaches can be transferred more easily between countries and (sub-)regions.

The regional approach is aligned to Global Gateway interventions promoting cross-country initiatives for the green and digital transition, health, transport, infrastructure and sustainable regional value chains. The regional approach allows to address relevant topics from a sector and not a geographical (country) perspective which is obviously highly relevant looking at developments as e.g. Green Hydrogen (Namibia, Mauritania, DRC) and the Pharmaceutical Industry (Senegal, Ghana, Rwanda, South Africa). Value chains may also cover several countries. All these industry developments come with employment opportunities and specific skills requirements up-stream and downstream which then need to be addressed in an appropriate way by VET systems.

A regional approach allows to strengthen relationships with private sector stakeholders who have already been actively engaged in regional exchange in the context of the European-Africa Business Forum (EABF) and mobilise private sector involvement related to selected value chains/global Gateway priority sectors.

The regional approach offers the opportunity to **advocate for a closer collaboration between public sector partners from different ministries and seeks to overcome silo mentalities in partner countries** – a topic that can be addressed more effectively showcasing regional experiences.

The Action builds on the experiences of the VET Toolbox 2, a TEI avant la lettre, implemented in 11 African countries by a consortium of implementing agencies from four EU Member States. The VET Toolbox confirms above-mentioned strengths of a regional approach allowing for more effective interventions due to immediate and direct learnings available from innovative approaches piloted by consortium members. Three of the member states (Belgium, France and Germany) will implement the TEI joined by Finland. These Member States will contribute their experiences in the implementation of programmes in the areas of VET, employment promotion and cooperation with the private sector. Furthermore, they can mobilise expertise from relevant sector interventions and add geographical coverage in sub-Saharan Africa.

Fully engage the private sector: As the majority of jobs are created by the private sector, the action is based on the assumption that it is crucial to fully engage the private sector. Investments as in the case of Global Gateway in infrastructure and manufacturing present ideal opportunities for employment. Even if triggered by public policies, programmes and spending, the implementation lies with the private sector.

The Action will intervene in the following output areas:

Identification of decent employment opportunities in (sub-)sectors & value chains, notably those responding to EU Global Gateway priorities and the promotion of opportunity-driven VET (Output 1) Most promising sectors leveraging investments and offering employment opportunities in growth areas may include but are not limited to the green and digital spheres, initiatives for promoting high-quality infrastructure and transport including climate friendly technologies, health and pharmaceutical products and technologies. So, where there is a specific investment (e.g., pharma, hydrogen, etc.) under EU and /or EU Member states initiatives which offers employment opportunities, the action would help identify the required skills profiles, including those linked up and down stream, and translate this in recommendations for the design of VET measures. Special attention is given to identifying employment opportunities for women and their related participation in training.

Dialogue on employment-oriented VET and skills development between private and public stakeholders to promote opportunity-driven interventions is also crucial for this Pillar of the action. Throughout this process there is a close engagement notably with private sector investors but also with the institutes that are envisaged to provide training and relevant authorities.

Improved capacities of VET actors for the development of VET services relevant to identified decent employment opportunities (Output 2): The action will provide recommendations for VET provision that is responsive to the identified employment opportunities and required skills profiles. The implementation of recommendations, however, will be financed from bilateral resources (European Commission, Member States or national stakeholders). To secure this link between advice and implementation, the services of the TA facility will be rendered based on requests and originate from or are validated by the competent EU Delegation(s).

Both output areas will help orient country-level VET and skills development interventions towards inclusive opportunity-driven approaches for decent employment and provide tools and advisory services strengthening the capacities of VET providers .

Enhanced exposure to public-private partnerships on opportunity-driven VET at country and regional level (including Erasmus+ partnerships) for private sector, VET actors & public sector Output 3): Enhancing active public-private partnerships for opportunity-driven and reversed engineered VET through regional exchange and learning for opportunity-driven VET will support mutual learning at country and regional level. The exchange in form of regional events will build on already existing dialogue formats and the 12 working groups established under the European-Africa Business Forum (e.g. European-African Business Network, the Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals Working Group, Sustainable Agri-Food Systems Working Group, etc.). Regional knowledge exchange will be supported to strengthening the required role of the private sector in opportunity-driven VET while enhancing EU-Africa engagement on skills. It also provides valuable insights on employment opportunities for pillar 1 in the sense of a reality check. It will further seek to build linkages with other TEIs and relevant activities such as Erasmus+ in the field of capacity building for VET which started in 2022. The action will seek to connect to the African-European partnerships financed under Erasmus+ to opportunity driven VET, in particular capitalising on the European experience with engaging with the private sector in VET. Under this line of action, synergies may also be explored with other regional/continental initiatives supported by the EU such as the Support to the implementation of the African Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF II), which could benefit from the analysis, knowledge production and dissemination deriving from the Opportunity-driven VET TEI.

Enhanced access to finance for opportunity-driven regional and multi-country VET actions in specific (regional) value chains and Global Gateway initiatives (Output 4) in particular those that contribute to the green and digital transition through a Competitive Funding Mechanism: The Competitive Funding Mechanism provides financial support for the implementation of opportunity-driven VET measures. To help realise the ambitions of the Global Gateway and other flagship EU interventions where available MIP financing is not sufficient, the envisaged financing mechanism will - through a competitive process - finance VET interventions and regional actions that strengthen the paradigm shift to opportunity-driven VET.

The Competitive Funding Mechanism will focus on key areas of the Global Gateway Investment Package which have the potential to stimulate sustainable and resilient value and supply chains (including regional and in support of the ACFTA) and related employment opportunities as for example:

- Green transition in agri-food systems or through access to renewable energy particularly for productive use including the greening of local value chains; improved energy efficiency in key sectors of the economy (industry, buildings, transport);

- The development of the green hydrogen value chain and its potential downstream employment effects in industry, mobility and logistics. Hydrogen has become a strategic field for investment and economic development for several African countries as Namibia, South Africa, Kenya, Angola and Mauretania and offers potential for Africa's regional integration;
- The scaling-up of production and manufacturing capacities for vaccine and medicine production and health technologies.

The conditions, criteria and focal areas will be determined in the guidelines of the Competitive Funding Mechanism and will require ex-ante approval by the European Commission.

Proposals which will be selected based on the set criteria will be administered by the consortium. Support measures will be foreseen, implemented by the consortium, so that actions selected in the competitive process are well integrated to help realise the ambitions of the Global Gateway and other flagship EU interventions in the countries or regions concerned.

The Action will seek to cooperate with other regional and national TEIs particularly sector specific TEIs which have identified skills as a relevant support service, e.g. in the green and digital spheres knowing that VET is an engine of the twin transitions indispensable for a just recovery and a critical enabler of a just transition; in the health or pharmaceutical sector/value chain which requires skills and workforce development to ensure e.g. reliable logistics, manufacturing processes and in line with EU policy priorities (Net Zero, Critical Raw Materials, Due Diligence).. Of particular interest with regard to employment opportunities is as well the the TEI IYBA providing support to the ecosystem for entrepreneurial development.

3.6 Logical Framework Matrix

This indicative logframe constitutes the basis for the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the intervention.

On the basis of this logframe matrix, a more detailed logframe (or several) may be developed at contracting stage. In case baselines and targets are not available for the action, they should be informed for each indicator at signature of the contract(s) linked to this AD, or in the first progress report at the latest. New columns may be added to set intermediary targets (milestones) for the Output and Outcome indicators whenever it is relevant.

- At inception, the first progress report should include the complete logframe (e.g. including baselines/targets).
- Progress reports should provide an updated logframe with current values for each indicator.
- The final report should enclose the logframe with baseline and final values for each indicator.

The indicative logical framework matrix may evolve during the lifetime of the action depending on the different implementation modalities of this action.

The activities, the expected Outputs and related indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix may be updated during the implementation of the action, no amendment being required to the Financing Decision.

PROJECT MODALITY (3 levels of results / indicators / Source of Data / Assumptions - no activities)

Results	Results chain (@): Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (@): (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	Improve VET provision to address the skills needs of Global Gateway and other flagship initiatives while enhancing the employability of women and men in SSA	1. Unemployment rate by sex, age and persons with disabilities (SDG 8.5.2) 2. Proportion of youth (aged 15- 24 years) not in education, employment or training (disaggregated by sex) (GERF 1.12/SDG 8.6.1)	1 TBD in the inception phase 2 TBD in the inception phase	1 TBD in the inception phase 2 TBD in the inception phase	1 Global SDG Indicators Database; https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database 2 Global SDG Indicators Database; https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	Ensure orientation of VET interventions towards decent employment opportunities in selected sectors and value chains (VC) under the Global Gateway (GG) and other flagship initiatives. ⁷	1.1 Percentage of the participating VET actors having mechanisms in place to trace employment effects 1.2 Percentage of companies reporting satisfaction with the skills provided by initial, upskilling or reskilling	1.1 TBD in the inception phase 1.2 TBD in the	1.1 TBD in the inception phase 1.2 TBD in the	1.1 Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Africa-Europe initiatives including Global Gateway and value chain

⁷ Focus on selected sectors and value chains under Africa-Europe investment initiatives, including the Global Gateway applies to all output areas

		<p>supported by the EU & EU MS interventions, disaggregated size and sector of the companies.</p> <p>1.3 Number of people who have benefitted from institution or workplace-based VET/skills development interventions supported by the EU a) all VET/skills development, disaggregated by sex (GERF 2.14a)</p> <p>1.4 Extent to which programmes in selected sectors and value chains under Africa-Europe investment initiatives (e.g., energy, logistics, infrastructure, urban development) which benefitted from the EU support take into account the VET dimension.</p>	<p>inception phase</p> <p>1.3 TBD in the inception phase</p> <p>1.4 TBD in the inception phase</p>	<p>inception phase</p> <p>1.3 TBD in the inception phase</p> <p>1.4 TBD in the inception phase</p>	<p>1.2 Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention</p> <p>1.3 Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention; Avoid double counting of beneficiaries, see EURF methodological note</p> <p>1.4 Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention;</p>	<p>developments are implemented without major delays.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiatives come with employment opportunities for (young) people, particularly women with VET qualifications. • Political and economic stability in target countries in Sub-Saharan Africa conducive to economic growth. • Willingness from African and European business networks / companies to engage in a dialogue and joint interventions.
<p>Output 1</p> <p>relating to Outcome 1</p>	<p>1.1 Decent employment opportunities in (sub-) sectors & value chains, notably those responding to EU Global Gateway priorities, are</p>	<p>1.1.1 Extent to which the EU-funded intervention contributed to the involvement of business organisations/private sector</p>	<p>1.1.1 0</p> <p>1.1.2 0</p>	<p>1.1.1 TBD in the inception phase</p>	<p>1.1.1 Analysis of documentation of dialogue mechanisms/ participant lists; registration on online platforms</p>	<p>EU – Africa initiatives and value chain developments are implemented</p>

	identified & assessed at country level.	<p>representatives and VET actors in dialogue mechanisms for the identification of employment opportunities in (sub-) sectors & value chains</p> <p>1.1.2 Number of (sub-)sectors & value chains in which a mapping of employment opportunities is conducted with support of the EU funded intervention</p>		1.1.2 TBD in the inception phase	1.1.2 Assessment and analysis of employment opportunities' mapping	<p>without delay and come with employment opportunities for (young) people with VET qualifications.</p> <p>Business/private sector representatives and VET actors are willing and have the autonomy to initiate change processes responding to identified employment opportunities</p> <p>VET actors/responsible public stakeholders are aware of the role of VET as an enabling factor</p> <p>Interest from VET providers and private sector to engage in partnerships</p>
Output 2 relating to Outcome 1	1.2 Improved capacities of VET actors for development of VET services relevant to identified decent employment opportunities.	<p>1.2.1 Number of VET actors' representatives who received advisory services and/or tools of the EU-funded intervention with increased knowledge and/or skills in VET provision responsive to identified employment opportunities, disaggregated by sex and type of advisory services and tools</p> <p>1.2.2 Extent to which the EU-funded support interventions improved the technical capacities of VET actors to implement training approaches responsive to identified employment opportunities</p>	<p>1.2.1 0</p> <p>1.2.2 TBD in the inception phase</p>	<p>1.2.1 TBD in the inception phase</p> <p>1.2.2 TB in the inception phase D</p>	<p>1.2.1 Endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention</p> <p>1.2.2 Baseline and endline surveys conducted and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention</p>	
Output 3 relating to Outcome 1	1.3 Enhanced exposure to public-private partnerships on opportunity-driven VET at country and regional level (including Erasmus+ partnerships) for private sector, VET actors & public sector.	<p>1.3.1 Number of Erasmus+ partnerships associated to the TEI</p> <p>1.3.2 Number of participants in the good practices sharing events confirming having acquired increased knowledge and/or skills on public private partnerships (PPP) on opportunity-driven VET, disaggregated by sex and type of knowledge/skills</p>	<p>1.3.1 0</p> <p>1.3.2 0</p>	<p>1.3.1 TBD in the inception phase</p> <p>1.3.2 TBD in the inception phase</p>	<p>1.3.1 Analysis of Erasmus+ projects in the field of Capacity Building for VET; Reports from Erasmus+ CB VET project implementation</p> <p>1.3.2 Endline surveys conducted; and budgeted by the EU-funded intervention Analysis of event documentations, participants lists</p>	

Output 4 relating to Outcome 1	1.4 Enhanced access to finance for opportunity-driven regional and multi-country VET actions in specific (regional) value chains and Global Gateway initiatives	<p>1.4.1 Number of opportunity-driven regional or multi-country VET actions responding to concrete employment opportunities implemented by the EU-funded intervention, disaggregated by value chains and other Global Gateway initiatives including contributions to green and digital transition</p> <p>1.4.2 Number of (young) people trained by the EU-funded interventions with increased knowledge and/or skills relevant for sectors/value chains associated with the TEI, disaggregated by sex</p>	<p>1.4.1 0</p> <p>1.4.2 0</p>	<p>1.4.1 TBD in the inception phase</p> <p>1.4.2 TBD in the inception phase</p>	<p>1.4.1 Reports from funding beneficiaries; Analysis of actions funded through the Competitive Funding Mechanism; analysis of annual progress reports</p> <p>1.4.2 Reports from funding beneficiaries; Annual assessment of participants lists; Pre- and post-training test reports</p>	

4 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner countries.

4.2 Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 72 months from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3 Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures⁸.

4.3.1 Indirect Management with an entrusted entity

This action will be implemented in indirect management, preferably with a multi-party contribution agreement. The entities will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria:

- (i) extensive experience in identifying employment opportunities in selected sectors and value chains in close cooperation with business organisations, and taking into account investment, trade or other market dynamics
- (ii) (ii) extensive experience in fully engaging the private sector in exchange at regional and national/local level to develop and implement VET interventions responsive to employment opportunities
- (iii) (iii) in-depth understanding of private sector interests and experience how to create win-win-situations for VET providers, companies and working-age population with particular attention on women and youth in international cooperation projects (iv) pertinent experience regarding skills profiles in relevant sectors and value chains
- (iv) (v) operational capacity to provide relevant support in Sub-Saharan Africa based on requests from EU and EU member states programmes (vi) experience mobilising expertise, including from European Member States
- (v) (vii) extensive project management experience implementing complex interventions and relevant management tools (including project planning, results-oriented monitoring and evaluation, reporting and (strategic) communication.

4.3.2 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)

If the above implementation modality under indirect management cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, as an alternative, a part or the totality of this action may

⁸ www.sanctionsmap.eu. Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

be implemented in direct management through grants. The grants will contribute to achieve the whole scope of the action and will target public entities.

4.4 Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3	
Outputs 1, 2 & 3: Technical Assistance and support for regional exchange	25 000 000
Output 4: Competitive Funding Mechanism (call for proposals administered by consortium)	50 000 000
Evaluation – cf. section 5.2 Audit – cf. section 5.3	may be covered by another Decision
Contingencies ⁹	0
Totals	75 000 000

4.5 Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The Action will use a Delegation Agreement with a consortium of EU Member States Organisations building on their experience and on the experience of the current VET Toolbox. They will be responsible for mobilising/providing technical expertise in a way that reflects the added value of a Team Europe approach.

It is envisaged to establish a Strategic Steering Committee which will be co-chaired by the EU. It will meet at least twice a year to coordinate and follow progress and to provide overall strategic guidance on programme implementation.

The steering committee will be made up of at least

- Representatives of the European commission
- Representatives of the participating EU Member states and/or their implementing agencies

The terms of reference of the Strategic Steering Committee will be drafted by the consortia of EU Member States and approved by the Strategic Steering Committee members. The Secretariat of the Strategic Steering Committee will be the responsibility of the EU Member States consortia. The EU will co-chair the steering committee together with representatives from EU Member States (organisations).

At the operational level, a Project Management Unit will be established preferably in Brussels ensuring the technical execution and the coordination between implementing Member States agencies, associating the Commission.

Operational guidelines for the Project Management Unit are to be developed at a later stage by the consortia members and approved by the Commission.

An Advisory Board including representatives from private sector will offer advice and guidance to the Strategic Steering Committee. Members will be selected based on their interest and motivation to support the purpose of the action, their level of required knowledge and individual skills. This could include representatives of business groups such as those identified in the Africa-EU Business Forum and agencies working in the field of VET under the responsibility of the African Union or Regional Economic Communities.

⁹ Consider that for contracts where no financing agreement is concluded, contingencies must be covered by individual and legal commitments by 31 December of N+1.

A Stakeholder Conference organised during the first months of the implementation and then annually could serve as a platform to invite institutions/individuals particularly from the private sector to exchange around employment opportunities and VET needs. The Stakeholder Conference could be an opportunity to identify potentially interested and relevant members of the Advisory Board.

For the Competitive Funding Mechanism a working group will be established, chaired by the Heads of Unit E2 and A2 or their representatives, to determine and validate the guidelines that will identify the conditions, criteria and focal areas relevant for the awarding of contracts.

5 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1 Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (Outputs and direct Outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality).

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring will be defined by the technical working group of the EU and EU Member States and established under the consortia agreement.

5.2 Evaluation

Having regard to the importance and nature of the action, mid-term and final evaluations will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted via an implementing partner.

The mid-term evaluation will be carried out for problem solving and learning purposes, in particular with respect to optimise the delivery of services in view of beneficiaries needs.

The final evaluation will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the complexity of the action and the fact that the action seeks to support a paradigm shift where the VET offer is reverse engineered from concrete job opportunities. Wherever appropriate, evaluations will be conducted jointly with Member States (programmes).

The evaluation reports may be shared with the partners and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, apply the necessary adjustments.

The financing of the evaluation may be covered by another measure constituting a Financing Decision.]

5.3 Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6 STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The 2021-2027 programming cycle will adopt a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

In line with the 2022 '[Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions](#)', it will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU member states.

However, action documents for specific sector programmes are in principle no longer required to include a provision for communication and visibility actions promoting the programmes concerned. These resources will instead be consolidated in Cooperation Facilities established by support measure action documents, allowing Delegations to plan and execute multiannual strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with sufficient critical mass to be effective on a national scale.

Appendix 1 REPORTING IN OPSYS

A Primary Intervention (project/programme) is a coherent set of activities and results structured in a logical framework aiming at delivering development change or progress. Identifying the level of the primary intervention will allow for:

Articulating Actions or Contracts according to an expected chain of results and therefore allowing them to ensure efficient monitoring and reporting of performance;

Differentiating these Actions or Contracts from those that do not produce direct reportable development results, defined as support entities (i.e. audits, evaluations);

Having a complete and exhaustive mapping of all results-bearing Actions and Contracts.

Primary Interventions are identified during the design of each action by the responsible service (Delegation or Headquarters operational Unit).

The level of the Primary Intervention chosen can be modified (directly in OPSYS) and the modification does not constitute an amendment of the action document.

The intervention level for the present Action identifies as a Single Action

Action level		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Single action	Present action: all contracts in the present action