

ANNEX 1

of the Commission implementing Decision on the Annual Action Programme 2014 of the
DCI Pan-African Programme

Action Document for "The African Union Capacity in Election Observation (AUCapEO)"

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	The African Union (AU) Capacity in Election Observation (AUCapEO) CRIS number: DCI/PANAF/037-481		
Total cost	Total estimated cost: EUR 6 500 000 Total amount of EU budget contribution. For an amount of EUR 6 500 000 from the general budget of the European Union for 2014		
Aid method / Management mode and type of financing	Project Approach Direct management – grant- direct award to the African Union Commission and procurement of services		
DAC-code	15151	Sector	Elections

2. RATIONALE AND CONTEXT

2.1. Summary of the action and its objectives

The African Union (AU) has been observing elections since 1989. However, the AU itself acknowledges that its capacity in election observation remains limited and that the types of missions it has deployed over the years have been mostly short term and not conducted in a comprehensive and systematic manner. As part of the AU's efforts to develop and implement a long-term methodology for its election observation missions, the EU and the AU have forged a close partnership in the area of elections within the context of the Joint Africa-EU Strategic Partnership.

The main objective of the project is that "the AU conducts credible long term election observation to international standards, making an increased contribution to credible elections in Africa". The specific objectives of the project tackle different aspects of developing and implementing a long-term methodology including the development of human capacity, the development of a methodological and technical basis, and the deployment of long-term missions.

The current proposal covers the period 2014-17, but it can be considered as the first phase of the project as, if successful, support could be foreseen until 2020.

2.2. Context

2.2.1. *Pan-African context*

2.2.1.1. Economic and social situation and poverty analysis

Africa has experienced impressive growth despite the global economic crisis maintaining an average growth rate of about 4% in 2013. But growth performance varied widely across country classifications and regions with Sub-Saharan Africa recording 5% in 2013, while East and West Africa recording 6% or above in 2013. External financial flows and tax revenues play an increasingly important role in Africa's development and economic growth prospects. External financial flows have quadrupled since 2000 and are projected to reach over USD 200 billion in 2014. Official remittances have been continuing their increasing trend since 2009 and are projected to reach USD 67.1 billion in 2014¹.

Africa's poverty rates are declining, according to the Millennium Development Goals Report (AUC et al., 2013a). The proportion of people living in extreme poverty (on less than USD 1.25 a day) in the regions of Central, East, Southern and West Africa fell from 56.5% in 1990 to 48.5% in 2010. However, due to the slow pace of poverty reduction, the actual number of people living in extreme poverty in those four regions increased from 289.7 million to 413.8 million over the same two decades². Besides the high rates of poverty, Africa continues to face other challenges such as fragility, conflicts and lack of democratic institutions. Similarly, 26 out of the 47 fragile states identified by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Fragile States Report in 2013 are African. There is also room for more progress in the areas of inclusion, gender equality and environmental sustainability which are needed to further promote sustainable human development.

State legitimacy plays an important role favouring stability, allowing the countries to escape from the vicious circle of poverty.

2.2.2. *Sector context: policies and challenges*

The history of elections in Africa often shows a process of conflict before, during and after elections arising from the lack of public confidence in the electoral process. These have often been translated into boycotts of elections by opposition parties, violence and intimidation of political opponents and refusal to accept officially declared results by aggrieved parties.

Since 1989 the AU, formerly the Organization of African Unity (OAU), has made positive contributions to observation increasing voters' confidence in the integrity of the electoral process, enhancing the acceptability of an election outcome and the legitimacy of the government constituted through such elections.

The adoption of a number of legal instruments confirmed the commitment of the African Union to the strengthening of its role in promoting and protecting the integrity of elections at the regional level. The 2002 Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa (the Durban Declaration) and the 2007 African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance constituted the key basis for the African Union to observe elections in member states. The African Union Commission (AUC) Strategic Plan 2014-17 has also given a strong priority to promoting good governance and democracy and to the full implementation of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

¹ OECD/AfDB/UNDP (2014), African Economic Outlook 2014: Global Value Chains and Africa's Industrialisation, OECD Publishing.

² Ibid.

The AU has observed well over 400 elections in a majority of the 54 AU Member States. However, its practice has been largely to deploy short term missions focused on procedures on polling day. This has led to judgments about the conduct of an election that are not comprehensive and with limited impact. The conduct of short-term election observation missions has enabled the AU to engage on a large number of African elections, but the downside has been no consistent or rigorous methodology and instances of political expediency overriding technical analysis. As a consequence its findings have been rather ad hoc, and the reputation and impact of the institution has suffered accordingly. A number of factors over time have contributed to this: funding constraints, lack of expertise among the observers, poor quality of their reports, poor quality of public outreach strategies, and a lack of consistent or rigorous methodologies to assess pre, during and post electoral periods of the election.

Since 2012 the AU has decided to ‘up its game’ in terms of its observation practices, with a view to establishing a more robust long term observation methodology in some of its Electoral Observation Missions (EOMs) . Since 2013 the AU has deployed several EOMs with long-term observers (LTOs) that were deployed throughout the country 6 weeks before the election date took place. The deployment of LTOs has allowed the AU to improve the quality of their EOM reports and to be able to have a more holistic analysis of the electoral processes.

However, the AU still faces some constraints with its current practices to meet its future aspirations:

- The AU does not yet deploy a core team for the duration of the long term observation. This is critical in terms of representation, management and ensuring a comprehensive observation and statements. It also constrains the capacity to analyse the information provided by LTOs in a systematic way and to address in depth key issues such as electoral law, gender, and media. The AU intends to start deploying core teams from 2015.
- The AU lacks a large, trained pool of persons to be LTOs. The AUC Democracy and Electoral Assistance Unit (DEAU)’s database currently holds details of around 700 observers. However, many of them are no longer active, there is a significant gender imbalance and the database has no searchable fields.
- Despite the effort by DEAU to transition from short term mission to a comprehensive long term mission, there is still a gap between the political leadership of the AU team, usually a former President or Prime Minister which comes in for only a short period and the technical aspect of AU election observation. Finding a balance between technical imperatives and political exigency should constitute the focus on African Union in strengthening its election observation mission from one based on Election Day approach to a more comprehensive long term approach based on electoral cycle.

In addition to the gap in term of technical and political balance, the AUEOM still faces communication challenge. The AU is currently trying to establish a communications strategy in terms of how to manage the content of the statements and the verbal statements by the head of mission to the public.

The AU recognises that their current approach is a step in their endeavour to develop their capacity, but that it still needs to consolidate the new methodology in within its structures.

The Roadmap adopted at the 4th EU-Africa Summit identifies election observation as a key area of cooperation between the two regions in the field of democratic governance and human rights.

2.3. Lessons learnt

The EU has been supporting the AU's aim of deploying credible long-term missions since 2012. The main lessons learnt during this time are:

- The EU's technical expertise in the area of election observation is widely recognised by the AU and the AUC has acknowledged that it could draw significant lesson from the EU experience to strengthen its identified gaps
- The absence of a standardized methodology or guidelines for conducting EOMs is a major challenge for the AU. A long-term, comprehensive, consistent and systematic election observation methodology would add consistency to the DEAU's work and enhance its credibility.
- The AU does not have a sufficient pool of trained, experienced observers from member states that would allow for a quick mobilization and for an adequate implementation of the long-term methodology.
- Better coordination of the election observation efforts of the AU and other regional and domestic organizations will improve the effectiveness of election observation and minimize duplication of effort in the field.
- It is necessary to provide initial support for AU EOMs in order to ensure "on the job" training and, during an initial phase, to allow African states time to understand the new methodology changes and the impact on democratisation processes and to mobilise funds for undertaking long-term missions.

The project aims to address directly some of these constraints while drawing of the EU's expertise to enhance the close partnership of the two institutions have already established in the field of election observation.

2.4. Complementary actions

Several EU funded programmes have been used in 2013-14 to strengthen the support the EU provides to the AU on election observation:

- In 2013 and 2014 the AU Support Programme (CRIS number contract 196.638) provided USD1.1 million to the AU to undertake EOMs and also funded the participation of DEAU staff at trainings for EU observers,
- In 2013 the JAES Support Mechanism funded a seminar on comprehensive and long term election observation further strengthened the relationship between the two organisations,
- The EU project Election Observation and Democracy Support (EODS) has been providing technical assistance to the DEAU since 2013 in the form of trainings and elaboration of instruments,
- The EU support under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights to strengthen regional and domestic observation in Africa.

These supports will be phased out and most of the activities taken over by the current programme when it is approved.

There is also regular exchange of information and coordination between EU EOMs in Africa and AU EOMs.

Furthermore, these actions will complement other actions to be undertaken at country level or regional level under the 11th European Development Fund.

2.5. Donor coordination

Three EU Member States (United Kingdom (UK), Sweden, and Denmark) have pledged to support DEAU activities for the period 2014-16 to the tune of USD 2.1 million/year under a pool fund called Joint Financing Agreement.

In recent years the electoral institute for sustainable democracy in Africa (EISA) has provided significant support to the AU in the area of election observation with funds from the UK and Sweden. This support, which is expected to continue over the coming years, has allowed EISA to provide direct technical assistance to DEAU and to deploy 2 experts in each AU EOM mission.

The main vehicle for ensuring donor coordination is the AU Partners Group (AUPG) for the shared values pillar, currently being co-chaired by the UK and the AU. The AUPG meets formally at least twice a year with the AU's Department of Political Affairs to discuss the implementation of agreed activities. The co-chair of the AUPG calls for coordination meetings among partners on a more regular basis (once every six weeks on average).

In 2014, the AUC signed with several partners - including the EU, UK, Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands - a Joint Partnership Agreement to support the activities undertaken by the Department of Political Affairs. This is a joint programmatic document that forms the basis for donor coordination in the area of governance and elections for 2014. In 2014 the AUC will develop a multiannual plan that will help to coordinate donor support until 2017. Within the agreement, partners are allowed to provide either direct support or be members of one of the two pool funds that have been created: one for elections and one for governance/humanitarian affairs. All the activities currently foreseen in the current programme are part of the agreement ensuring ownership by the beneficiary and avoiding duplication. The EU contribution would help meet some of the financial gap in the area of election observation.

3. DETAILED DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The main objective of the project is that "*the AU conducts long term election observation to international standards, making an increased contribution to inclusive, transparent and credible elections in Africa*". Currently, the AU's reputation in election observation is mixed. However, it is a vital institution in the African context and has more recently improved the quality of its missions and also recognised the need to ensure a more consistent, credible and comprehensive approach to its observation work. Best practices for long term election observation according to international standards are well documented and can be incorporated into the AU context and the AU is already a signatory to the International Declaration of Principles (DoP) on Election Observation.

The three specific objectives of the project are:

- (i) To support the AU, at the institutional level and mission levels, in developing its human capacity to conduct long term election observation

(ii) To support the AU in refining its methodological and technical basis for the conduct of credible and effective long term election observation

(iii) To support the AU in deploying its long term election observation missions

3.2. Expected results and main activities

Objective 1 – Expected results

The main results to be achieved under the specific objective "To support the AU in developing its human capacity to conduct long-term election observation, at the institutional and mission levels" are:

- Capacity of DEAU is enhanced
- DEAU has established a training mechanism to develop a training map and curriculum and to coordinate all training activities
- AU has a pool of trained persons able to fulfil the main tasks within an EOM, including coordinators, core team members, long-term observers, and short-term observers

Objective 1 – Main activities

The main activities that will be undertaken to achieve these results include:

- Development of a training manual and curriculum for election observers
- Specialised training for potential core team members/analysts and DEAU staff in specialised areas including legal framework for elections, electoral law, election administration, political analysis, media, gender
- Recruitment of around 2 election observation officers at DEAU
- Training for long-term observers
- Training of short-term observers
- Development of a comprehensive Aide Memoire for Head of Mission which will include, Overview of AU Long Term Methodology, Terms of Reference, (ToR) for Heads of Mission (HoM), Communication Strategy and Channel, the role of HOM's support team (Secretary and Personal Security where they exist)
- High Level Consultation with AU HoMs and Prospective HoMs

Objective 2 – Expected results

The main results to be achieved under the second specific objective "To support the AU in refining its methodological and technical basis for the conduct of credible and effective long term election observation" are:

- AU develops its own handbook on election observation and specific guidelines outlining its methodology for long-term observation
- AU's capacity to manage its observation activities is improved through the strengthening of appropriate website and observer roster

- AU refines and implements a methodology for follow-up to observation reports, working with Electoral Management Bodies and host governments to further improve the electoral process
- AU mainstreams gender in its election observation missions,
- AU enhances coordination with Electoral Monitoring Bodies (EMBs) and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) with the objective of harmonising methodologies across African actors involved in election observation

Objective 2 – Main activities

The main activities foreseen to achieve these results are:

- Developing and printing of AU Handbook on election observation and guidelines on analysis of campaigns, and the media, women participation, human rights, non-discrimination, election management, voter register and legal analysis. Others issues, as the role of civil society, could be envisaged to be analysed.
- Integration of gender and human rights perspectives into handbook, guidelines and other materials
- Enhancing the database and roster that would allow the AU to search for observers based on training, age, sex, language, number of missions, gender, number of missions and other relevant experience
- Identification of observers and analysts with the capacity to conduct gender analysis to be trained and deployed in AU EOMs
- Missions led by DEAU to follow-up on EOM recommendations, whenever possible in coordination with other African and international organisations involved in election observation in those respective countries
- Coordination meetings with RECs to present AU long-term methodology and to exchange experiences with the objective of moving towards greater harmonisation

Objective 3 – Expected results

The main result to achieve the third objective "To support the AU in deploying long term election observation missions" is:

- AU deploys an increased number of missions that effectively apply the long-term methodology.

Objective 3 – Main activities

The activities that will be undertaken to achieve this result are the deployment of long-term observers and core team members in AU EOMs. The AU intends to gradually increase the number of LTOs it deploys in its EOMs and, from 2015, it intends to deploy core team members in its long-term missions. In addition, it plans to increase the number of EOMs that include LTOs and core team members to enhance the quality of its missions.

The activities described in this project will be mostly conducted by the DEAU and are part of their own plan of action. The DEAU will be responsible for conducting all training activities, deploying EOMs, organising missions to follow-up on EOM recommendations, developing

handbook and guidelines and organising meetings with EMBs and RECs to harmonise methodologies. In order to ensure that the DEAU has sufficient manpower to conduct these activities, the project will provide funding to DEAU to hire additional election observation experts.

The project also contemplates the hiring of technical assistance (under a service contract with centralised management by the EUD to the African Union) to help the DEAU develop its methodology and instruments as well as a training curriculum and plan. Previous experience suggest that a part-time expert (3 months per year) will deliver the best value for money for this technical assistance, complemented by a pool of short-term experts that can be deployed at the request of the AU to develop specific areas of expertise (e.g. specialised training, development of guidelines,...).

3.3. Risks and assumptions

The project will face a series of risks. The main risk relating to the long term viability of the project is the AU's willingness to fully adopt and maintain long term election observation as one of its key activities. This will require not only a willingness at the outset to fully implement the long-term methodology but more critically a willingness to maintain its support for the deployment of missions even in case of more public discourse on critical elections as a consequence of the more rigorous methodology.

The second major risk relates to the mid to long term sustainability of the project. At present the AU's programme budget is heavily reliant upon donor support. The move from short term election observation to long term observation has led to a substantial increase in the AU's budget for election observation. While in the short term this can be achieved with the support of partners (including from this suggested programme) in the mid- to long-term the AU will have to identify/allocate funds in order to match its desire to increase its role in this field. This will include the staffing costs for the responsible unit (DEAU) as well as the general costs of deploying missions.

Although still dependent on external support, in 2013 the DEAU managed to mobilise USD 2.1 million from member states funds for election observation activities and this has increased to over USD 4 million in 2014 (representing about 60% of the DEAU's total budget). In relative terms, this is substantially larger than the majority of the departments in the AUC.

A third risk relates to the need for EOMs to effectively support democratic processes by influencing electoral processes throughout the electoral cycle. This risk will be mitigated by the AU's follow-up missions to discuss implementation of previous recommendations.

The key assumptions are that:

- The AU remains committed to developing and implementing its methodology and moving towards a long term comprehensive observation model;
- The AU will source viable and sustainable funding to support this expansion of its activities;
- There is political support among AU member states for this evolution in its observation activities, taking account of the potential for a more critical outcome on occasion;
- AU EOMs have the political weight to influence and deepen democratic processes in African states.

3.4. Cross-cutting issues

The project directly aims to improve democratic processes and the respect of human rights in Africa.

In line with the AUC's strategic plan, the project will mainstream gender and human rights issues, in particular those relating to discrimination, in the activities of the AU EOMs by enhancing the gender and human rights analysis of the EOM reports and follow-up activities, and by seeking to increase the number of short-term and long-term female observers.

Climate change issues will be addressed by promoting climate-offsetting in the travel expenses of election observers and other project participants.

3.5. Stakeholders

In the African context the AU is a critical and high profile actor and it has the potential for becoming a more credible body in terms of its election observation. The AUC has been given the responsibility of carrying out EOMs in all its member states. The Department for Political Affairs is responsible for this task and in 2006, it created the Democracy and Electoral Assistance Unit (DEAU), which coordinates and organises AU election observation and technical assistance. Members of the Pan-African Parliament do no longer carry out their own EOMs but its members are embedded in AU missions.

The DEAU has significantly increased its capacity in recent years by increasing its staff numbers. However, this was mostly done through the support from different international partners. The increase in human resource capacity has allowed the DEAU to move beyond carrying out the task of election observation to focus on enhanced quality. Despite the increase in the number of staff the unit still faces significant gaps to fully implement its mandate.

The AU also needs a substantially larger number of qualified long-term and short-term observers for its missions to have maximum impact. Training of these observers on new instruments will be critical to increase the quality and the impact of the AU EOMs. It will be especially important to get a more balanced number of qualified female observers.

African Regional Economic Communities also undertake their own EOMs mostly of a short-term nature. They have diverse means to carry out these missions, but they usually have lower capacity and weaker methodology than the AU. Although these EOMs remain independent of the AU, coordination with the AU has improved and in recent years, the AU has become a lead coordinator of these EOMs and have produced some joint preliminary statements.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country, referred to in Article 184 (2) (b) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

4.2. Indicative operational implementation period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in sections 3.2. and 4.3. will be carried out, is 42 months from the adoption of this Action Document, subject to modifications to be agreed by the responsible authorising officer

in the relevant agreements. The relevant Committee shall be informed of the extension of the operational implementation period within one month of that extension being granted.

4.3. Implementation components and modules

4.3.1. Procurement (direct management)

Subject	Type (works, supplies, services)	Indicative number of contracts	Indicative trimester of launch of the procedure
Technical assistance	Services	1	4 th quarter 2014 *

* Taking into account that the service contracts have to be signed before 31/12 of year N+1 and the need to launch an international restricted tender for the recruitment of a technical assistance team, a *suspensive clause* was granted in order to launch the tender on time to ensure that the technical assistance will be working by the 3rd quarter of 2015.

4.3.2. Grant: direct award (direct management) with the African Union Commission

(a) Objectives of the grant, fields of intervention, priorities of the year and expected results

The main objective of the grant is that *"the AU conducts long term election observation to international standards, making an increased contribution to inclusive, transparent and credible elections in Africa"*. The three specific objectives of the project are: (i) To support the AU, at the institutional level and mission levels, in developing its human capacity to conduct long term election observation; (ii) To support the AU in refining its methodological and technical basis for the conduct of credible and effective long term election observation and (iii) To support the AU in deploying its long term election observation missions. The grant will mainly cover capacity building activities (trainings, publications, etc...) and the deployment of long term election observation missions as described in the "expected results and main activities" (3.2).

(b) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the authorising officer by delegation, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the AUC as the beneficiary is in a legal and factual monopoly situation.

Under the responsibility of the authorising officer by delegation, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because the AUC has a specific mandate to perform its task. No other body has such mandate.

(c) Eligibility conditions

N.A.

(d) Essential selection and award criteria

The essential selection criteria are financial and operational capacity of the applicant.

The essential award criteria are relevance of the proposed action to the objectives of the call; design, effectiveness, feasibility, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of the action.

(e) Maximum rate of co-financing

The rate of co-financing is 100 % in accordance with Articles 192 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 if full funding is essential for the action to be carried out. The essentiality of full funding will be justified by the responsible authorising officer in the award decision, in respect of the principles of equal treatment and sound financial management.

(f) Indicative trimester to contact the potential direct grant beneficiary

Last quarter of 2014

(g) Exception to the non-retroactivity of costs

The Commission authorises the eligibility of costs prior to the submission of the grant application as of 1st January 2015.

4.4. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act shall apply.

The responsible authorising officer may extend the geographical eligibility in accordance with Article 9(3) of Regulation (EU) No 236/2014 on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the markets of the countries concerned, or other duly substantiated cases where the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

4.5. Indicative budget

Results	Amount in EUR
1 –Human capacity developed	
<i>Grant with AUC</i>	
Strengthening the DEAU capacity	600 000
Pool of trained persons	750 000
2 –Methodology skills developed	
Procurement (direct management) – Technical Assistance ³	400 000
<i>Grant with AUC</i>	
Follow-up of EOMs' recommendations	600 000
Development of tools (roster, handbook, guidelines, database, etc ..)	150 000
Coordination with RECs	300 000
3 – AU EOMs deployed	
Grant with AUC	3 200 000
Contingencies	500 000
Total	6 500 000

³ The technical assistance will also be used for training and human capacity development.

The contract with the AUC will be of a total amount of EUR 5 600 000 aligned with the AUC programme budget approved annually. The budget presented above is aligned with the 2015 AUC budget.

4.6. Performance monitoring

The indicators used to evaluate these activities have been identified by the DEAU as part of its own monitoring and evaluation system and include quantitative aspects as well as qualitative issues. The indicators foreseen to monitor and evaluate the activities include: number of different types of observers trained; utilisation rates of trainees - to ensure that money is being spent in the right people and that the system is making good use of them; number of long-term missions deployed; number of LTOs and core team members deployed; use of roster and data base for recruiting observers; number of recommendations effectively followed by states. The main outcome indicator for these results will be whether the quality of the reports prepared by the EOMs have improved over time and whether they make use of all the information provided by the different members of the EOMs. The main impact indicator is whether AU EOMs manage to enact electoral reforms so as to deepen democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Africa.

The EU is a signatory of the Joint Programming Arrangement (JPA) with the AUC Department of the Political Affairs, together with the UK, Sweden, Netherlands, Denmark, and the US. The agreement clearly indicates that "quality reporting and regular opportunities for consultation among Signatories on achievements and challenges are essential to effective implementation of this agreement and continued engagement of Signatories. Consultation needs will principally be covered through two structures: "the African Union Partners' Group Dialogue Structure (...) and a Steering Committee specifically for matters relating to this Arrangement" (article 25). It also foresees that "The Steering Committee will take place at least twice a year, to review the semi-annual and annual reports (article 28)". The EU will play an active role in these steering committees and will be appropriately represented by EU Delegation to the AU, EEAS, and DEVCO.

This programme will help meet some of the objectives agreed in the Joint Africa EU Strategy's Road Map 2014-2017 approved by European and African Heads of State in April 2014. As a result, the performance monitoring mechanisms described above will be complemented by high level political dialogue on democratic governance and human rights, including elections, and regular contacts between EU and AU institutions on election observation.

Policy dialogue would also be carried through regular technical contacts between the two institutions (EC/EEAS and AUC) with a view to assist the methodological development and capacity building aspects of the program. This dialogue will also allow for regular consultation on progress, thus ensuring overall consistency with the transfer of best practices and know-how on election observation as well as enhanced EU-AU cooperation on the ground.

4.7. Evaluation and audit

The European Commission will carry out a final external evaluation, via independent consultants at the beginning of the closing phase. In the context of the previous Pillar Assessment review realised in March 2013, the European Commission shall appoint in accordance with EU procurement rules, an internationally recognised external auditor. The external audit could be carried out annually or only at the end of the action.

The external audits and evaluation are funded under other funding sources.

4.8. Communication and visibility

In the AU Strategic plan (priority n°7) the focus is given to "strengthen a people centered Union through active communication of the programs of the African Union, the branding of the Union and participation of Member States and other stakeholders in defining and implementing the African agenda".

A specific AU communication strategy is being prepared to strengthen the communication between AUC, AU organs and Regional Economic Communities. The DEAU is preparing a specific communication strategy aimed at making its actions in the field of election observation more visible.

Due to the sensitiveness of the action and in order to ensure AUC ownership, communication and visibility of the EU will be restricted. The Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Action will not be applicable.

Nonetheless, in the framework of the implementation of the Joint Africa EU Strategy Road-Map 2014-2017, communication tools will be developed including all the support provided under the Pan African Programme.