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EVALUATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE AFRICA COMMISSION: REALISING THE POTENTIAL OF AFRICA'S YOUTH

Evaluation

June 2016

Evaluation of the results of the Africa Commission: Realising the Potential of Africa's Youth

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Contents

The following separate annexes to the report can be downloaded from http://evaluation.um.dk:

Annex 1	Terms of reference for an evaluation of the results of the Africa Commission: Realising the Potential of Africa's Youth
Annex 2	List of those interviewed
Annex 3	Timeline of milestones in international development before and after the Africa Commission Report
Annex 4	Initiative 1: Benchmarking African competitiveness
Annex 5	Initiative 2: Access to investment finance for SMEs
Annex 6	Initiative 3: Unleashing African entrepreneurship
Annex 7	Initiative 4: Access to sustainable energy
Annex 8	Initiative 5a: Promoting post-primary education and research (Skills for Youth)
Annex 9	Initiative 5b: Support to Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UniBRAIN)
Annex 10	Members of the Africa Commission 2009

List of Abbreviations

AIIC	Agribusiness Innovation Incubation Consortium
ADOA	Additionality and Development Outcome Assessment
AfDB	African Development Bank
AGF	African Guarantee Fund
AREF	African Renewable Entergy Fund
AUC	African Union Commission
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DKK	Danish Krone
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
ILO	International Labour Organisation
JSSO	Joint Secretariat Support Office
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
LFM	Logical Framework Matrix
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SEFA	Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa
SME	Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises
UniBRAIN	Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural INnovation
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
USD	United States Dollar

Glossary of Terms[1]

Activity	Actions taken or work performed through which inputs, such as investment funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilized to produce specific outputs.
Assumptions	Hypotheses about factors or risks which could affect the progress or success of a development intervention.
Attribution	The ascription of a causal link between observed (or expected to be observed) changes and a specific intervention. While rigorous proof of attribution will be beyond the means of almost all programmes, attribution should always be demonstrated to a level that would convince a reasonable but sceptical observer.
Baseline	An analysis describing the situation prior to a development intervention, against which progress can be assessed or comparisons made. This should include the status of indicators before an intervention starts or has resulted in changes at the level being measured.
Benchmarking	The process of comparing a country's performance metrics to international best practices and the performance metrics from other countries.
Competitiveness	The set of institutions, policies and factors that determine the level of productivity of a country. The level of productivity, in turn, sets the level of prosperity that can be earned by an economy.
Contribution	The performance of one of the partners in a collaborative, joint intervention or the contribution to the results of such an intervention that can be attributed to the performance of one or several of the partners individually
Effectiveness	A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.
Efficiency	A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into results.
Guarantee fund	A guarantee fund, in its most common form, is an independent entity that acts as a third party between a lending bank and a borrower who does not meet all of the bank‘s qualifications, but is otherwise considered a good credit risk. The guarantee fund provides the bank security, in the form of a guarantee for a portion of the loan, in order to enable the borrower to obtain a loan.

1 Evaluation terms drawn from http://www.oecd.org/dac/2754804.pdf and http://www.sida.se/globalassets/publications/import/pdf/sv/glossary-of-key-terms-in-evaluation-and-results-based-management_3709.pdf

Impact	Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.
Indicator	Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.
Monitoring	A continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds.
Outcome	The likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs.
Output	The products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes.
Relevance	The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and government/donor.
Results Chain	The causal sequence for a development intervention that stipulates the necessary sequence to achieve desired objectives beginning with inputs, moving through activities and outputs, and culminating in outcomes, impacts, and feedback.
Sustainability	The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.
Sustainable Energy for All	A multi-stakeholder partnership between governments, the private sector, and civil society with three inter-linked objectives: (i) ensure universal access to modern energy services; (ii) double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and (iii) double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.
Target	Predetermined goal of a development intervention
Theory of Change	The inter-connections of all the activities, outputs, and outcomes required to achieve the required impact. The theory of change is depicted on a map known as a results chain.
UniBRAIN	A mutually beneficial partnership between selected African universities, research organisations and the private agribusiness sector in order to create profitable agribusinesses while also improving agribusiness education to produce readily employable graduates and self-employed entrepreneurs.

Executive Summary

This evaluation report presents the findings of the evaluation of the results of the Africa Commission: Realising the Potential of Africa's Youth, commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark.

Background

The Africa Commission was launched by Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen in 2008 'to help Africa benefit more from globalisation'. The majority of the 18 Commissioners were senior politicians and officials from African states and regional organisations, reflecting the Commission's commitment to ensure African ownership of its recommendations and initiatives. The aim of the Commission was to present new and creative strategies to revitalise and strengthen the international cooperation with Africa.

The Commission focused on ways to create employment for young people through private sector-led growth and improved competitiveness of African economies. This included discussions on decent jobs, entrepreneurship, and the provision of opportunities for young African women and men through education, skills development and access to finance.

Facilitated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the Commission held three high level meetings in Denmark 2008-2009, complemented by separate meetings across Africa and specific thematic workshops aimed at identifying policy recommendations and initiatives, which could further this agenda.

As a result of the Commission's work 22 policy recommendations were agreed to 'refocus international development cooperation' to support private sector led growth and youth employment. 10 recommendations were direct stand-alone policy recommendations and the remaining 12 were operationalized into five concrete development initiatives and launched in support of the recommendations. The Commission itself was as such closed in 2009, some projects have been finalised and some are still on-going. The total disbursement to the five initiatives was DKK 897 million.

The objective of this evaluation is "to document and assess the results of the Africa Commission both in terms of its policy impact as well as the results of the five initiatives" covering the period from the establishment of the Commission in 2008 until March 2016.

Assessment of the Africa Commission's ten policy recommendations

The Africa Commission's 10 stand-alone recommendations broadly addressed the need for a refocused agenda for international development cooperation with Africa. The most important priority identified here was to create jobs for Africa's increasing youth population through private sector-led growth and through reforms that improve the competitiveness of African economies. Africa's large and growing work force was regarded by the Commission as a significant development opportunity for Africa, provided that more jobs could be created. The Evaluation has assessed the effects of the 10 policy recommendations on (i) the Danish development agenda, (ii) the international development agenda and (iii) the African development agenda.

In relation to the Danish development agenda, the Evaluation concludes that the Africa Commission had a significant impact on the scale and nature of Danish policy towards Africa in relation to private sector development, although it must be noted that there already before the Africa Commission was a considerable support towards private sector development. Danish stakeholders consulted by the Evaluation emphasized that the Commission had changed the way that private sector development was viewed by the Danish development community. The main Danish policy commitment in this area was "to double Denmark's annual support to private sector development in Africa by 2014".[2] The Evaluation notes that this was realised, inter alia, by the increase in Denmark's support to business sector programmes in Africa together with the Africa Commission initiatives from DKK 223 million in 2009 to an average of DKK 459 million in the years 2010-2015, confirming that the level of assistance was doubled compared to prior to the launch of the recommendations of the Africa Commission.

In total almost DKK 3 billion was allocated for the business sector programmes together with the five Africa Commission initiatives in the period 2009-2015. A number of other private sector support measures were additionally supported in parallel with this, for example IFC programmes and Danida's B2B programme.

In relation to the international development agenda, the Evaluation finds that the Africa Commission was a part of the ongoing debate on the role of development aid and the need to bring the private sector more into play to ensure growth and jobs in Africa and hence in congruence with the development aid debate at the time. The focus of the Africa Commission specifically on jobs for the youth was a relatively new aspect and considered quite timely. There is however no evidence that this aspect was carried forward by members of the Commission afterwards. Therefore, while placing the Africa Commission's policy recommendations firmly within the policy discussion at the time, and highlighting their relevance, the Evaluation concludes that it is not possible to track a specific contribution from the Africa Commission to the "refocusing" of the international agenda per se.

In relation to the African development agenda, the Evaluation also confirms that the recommendations were in line with the on-going debates but there is limited evidence of effects on the national development strategies at country level in Africa and on the Pan-African development agenda. Neither is there any significant evidence that the Commission members took forward its recommendations and actively engaged with national and international partners in the public and private domain in Africa to promote a refocused agenda for international development cooperation with Africa, to which they had committed.

2 Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Danish Prime Minister and Chairman of the Africa Commission: foreword to "Growth and Employment: Visions at Work", Africa Commission, August 2010.

Assessment of the Africa Commission's Five Initiatives

Five initiatives were established by the Africa Commission relating to African competitiveness, access to finance, entrepreneurship, sustainable energy, and education (the last initiative on education is de facto two separate initiatives split into post-primary education and research). These were:

- Benchmarking African Competitiveness, implemented by the Global Competitiveness Network of the World Economic Forum, aimed at expanding and using the Global Competitive Index in Africa and supporting reforms promoting African competitiveness in the African Union.

- Access to Investment Finance for Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) by creating the African Guarantee Fund aimed at providing guarantees to African financial institutions lending to SMEs.

- Unleashing African Entrepreneurship, implemented by International Labour Organisation aimed at providing packages of assistance to young African entrepreneurs.

- Access to sustainable energy, implemented by the African Development Bank aimed at addressing the energy deficit in African countries by focusing on renewable energy.

- Promoting post-primary education and research, implemented by the ILO Skills for Youth programme aimed at strengthening the formal and informal systems for technical and vocational training to increase opportunities for youth employment.

- Support to universities, business and research in Agricultural innovation, better known as UniBRAIN, implemented by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa, promoting innovation and facilitating graduation of more entrepreneurial students by joining education research and business common efforts for improved agro-business in Africa.

Results were first and foremost achieved on the ground of the individual projects. Concerning the first initiative, Benchmarking African Competitiveness, all the envisaged results have been achieved. This includes that seven new sub-Saharan countries were included in the Global Competitiveness Report and the World Economic Forum produced the report "Africa Competitiveness 2010: The State of Affairs" which was published and released at the 2010 United Nations Conference on progress in achieving the millennium development goals.

The second initiative, Access to Finance, saw the establishment of the African Guarantee Fund (AGF) in close cooperation with African Development Bank and is now a well-functioning institution. The fund filled a gap in terms of providing guarantees to banks to reduce their risk (perceived or real) in facilitating lending to SMEs. The AGF is still at an early stage of operations but so far links have been established with 62 banks and about 850 small- and medium-sized enterprises have gained access to finance with many more expected to come. The AGF has attracted a significant level of additional funding from other donors, which increases its sustainability prospects and outreach potential to many more SMEs.

The third initiative, Unleashing African Entrepreneurship, implemented in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, led among other things to introduction of the entrepreneurship education in national curricula, and general entrepreneurship training and support to business start-ups and an estimated 40,000 enterprises were reported to have started by youth across Africa resulting from the ILO-implemented initiative.

The fourth initiative, Sustainable Energy for Africa (SEFA), has thus far seen slow progress but should now be at a stage where it is ready to accelerate implementation. It has developed a solid pipeline of potential electricity generation projects – 13 approved so far – in its endeavours to bring more sustainable energy provision to SMEs. Expected results indicate that the amount of megawatts generated is anticipated to exceed targets. The job creation targets are however unlikely to be met directly, although jobs will indirectly be created through access to more reliable energy, improving productivity and competitiveness of enterprises.

The first project of the fifth initiative, Skills for Youth, was implemented in Benin, Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe. It saw a large roll-out of informal training and the project reports that almost 12,000 jobs have been created for youth, informal apprenticeships have been established, master crafts trainers trained, beneficiaries have participated and benefitted from crafts training and institutional partners have been trained. There is evidence that aspects of the project may be about to become institutionalised in one country whereas there is little indication of this in the other countries.

Concerning the second project of the fifth initiative, support to universities, business and research in agricultural innovation (UniBRAIN), progress has been slow but this should be seen in the light of probably over-optimistic projections of how rapidly self-sustainability of business incubators could be achieved. Hence, the actual commercialization of agribusiness innovations has not been rolled out yet and the support to tertiary educational institutions to produce efficient entrepreneurs has only to a very limited degree been initiated. "The UniBRAIN model" has been branded well across Africa and is a well-known concept, which may per se lead to replication of the incubator idea, but not necessarily while adhering to the good practice principles of becoming self-sustained (i.e. self-financing) but rather as an approach to linking business and academia.

In most cases, the initiatives were designed without a proper results-matrix to guide the implementation and results measurement, so the evaluation has consequently found it hard to assess outcomes and impact against set targets. There is however evidence that most of the initiatives were effective in achieving the set outputs[3].

In terms of transformative capacity, there are some noteworthy results so far. Several of the initiatives have contributed with some degree of upstream policy influence. The support to competitiveness benchmarking in Africa has inspired further results, such as the establishment of the Nigerian Competitiveness Council and there are examples of the media picking up on the debate and undertaking a series of debates on competitiveness. The AGF was created from scratch, but has been able to gain momentum, and future commitment of funding from a range of other donors, which will enable the AGF to

3 Note: first, in most cases there was limited evidence enabling triangulation of results, and second, that it in most cases is too early in the implementation to assess evidence of impact.

continue to stimulate the market for SME financing. It is assessed as likely to see good results in the future and hence good potential for both expansion and replication, and may in that sense have a transformative capacity. Linked to the third initiative, Unleashing African Entrepreneurship, the Evaluation notes that the International Labour Organisation has entered into a new coalition to address youth unemployment – the Joint Youth Employment Initiative for Africa, which was launched in 2013 by the African Development Bank, African Union, International Labour Organisation and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. They were all key partners of the Africa Commission but it has not been possible to establish whether the initiative could have been inspired by the discussions of the Africa Commission[4]. The Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (Initiative 4) can be considered as a front-runner and innovative as being the first of its kind. It has attracted much additional donor funding, which can be regarded as an indicator of its transformative capacity. Moreover, the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa is well integrated into a number of global initiatives.

There has thus been some policy influence of the initiatives but the vision that the initiatives should be used actively as demonstration models for wider replication is still to be achieved. Most of the initiatives have a fairly indirect causal-relationship to generating jobs for youth and it is hence hard to establish the extent to which there has been a positive policy change concerning youth employment due to the policy recommendations and initiatives.

Assessment of Programme Monitoring, Evaluation and Dissemination of Results of the Africa Commission

The Africa Commission recommended the establishment of an African Monitoring and Evaluation Unit to follow up on the Commission's recommendations and ensure continued African ownership of the activities and that the initiatives maintained their Pan-African scope. To this end, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs financed the establishment of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Unit within the Joint Secretariat Support Office of the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. The unit was tasked to ensure continued African ownership of the initiatives, to develop and disseminate the recommendations of the Africa Commission and to document the experiences and results gained from the five initiatives. However, the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Unit did not fulfil the important tasks that it was expected to undertake. Hence, there has been limited direct follow-up on the Africa Commission's policy recommendations and on disseminating experiences from the initiatives. The Evaluation considers that the failure of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Unit to fulfil its functions was due to lack of institutional and political ownership to the Commission's work, little oversight, which weakened the prospects for further impacting the international and African policy agenda.

The five initiatives were on the other hand monitored in accordance with the standard monitoring procedures of the Ministry anchored in the Technical Advisory Services of the Ministry as well as part of the implementing organisations' own procedures.

4 http://www.ilo.org/addisababa/whats-new/WCMS_210399/lang--en/index.htm

Conclusion

The Evaluation concludes that the Africa Commission participated in the wider debate on the role of development aid and the need to bring the private sector more into play to ensure more and better employment for Africa's youth. The Africa Commission did extend the debate in Danish development policy as to whether private sector development should be one of the focal points for Denmark's international development assistance and its recommendations did lead to a significant increase in Danish funding for private sector development in Africa.

With respect to bringing about a refocused international development agenda, the Africa Commission's recommendations were in congruence with the ongoing debate, and timely when it came to bring the issue of placing youth employment on the agenda, though without evidence of significant contribution to the international agenda.

There is limited evidence of effects on the national development strategies at country level in Africa and that the Commission members actively engaged with national and international partners in the public and private domain in Africa to promote a refocused agenda for international development cooperation with Africa, as the commitment in the Commission-endorsed "Copenhagen Statement" stipulated.

While the Africa Commission was a Danish-led and -financed initiative, the expectation was that African ownership of the Commission's recommendations would derive from its African membership, which included a number of important and influential individuals. In other words, it was expected that these individuals, being party to the discussions and work of the Commission, would take forward its recommendations, but little evidence to this effect has been found. A form of operationalisation of the policy intents and follow-up would have been beneficial to secure a higher level of political engagement by the Pan-African institutions as well as the individual members.

The bulk of the five (*de facto six*) initiatives supported were found to be relevant to the Commission's objectives and largely effective in meeting or on track in meeting their targeted outputs, although that it has been challenging to assess outcomes and impact due to generally weak results frameworks. Most significant is the initiatives that have been well institutionalized and continues to contribute to the Commission's agenda.

1 Introduction

1.1 The Africa Commission: A brief description

The Africa Commission was launched by the then Danish Prime Minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, in 2008 to help Africa benefit more from globalisation. The Commission consisted of Heads of State and Government, politicians, experts, representatives from international and regional organisations as well as the business community, civil society and the academic world. The majority of the 18 Commissioners were from Africa, reflecting the Commission's commitment to ensure African ownership of its recommendations and initiatives. An overview of the members of the Africa Commission in 2009 is provided in Annex 10.

The Commission identified methods to create employment for young people through private sector-led growth and improved competitiveness of African economies. There was special emphasis on creating decent jobs, fostering entrepreneurship, and providing greater opportunities for young African women and men through education, skills development and access to finance. Drawing on existing analyses and best practices, the Commission's aim was to make specific policy recommendations and devise concrete initiatives.

During 2008 and 2009, the Africa Commission held three summits and organised five thematic conferences and a number of workshops in Africa, gathering stakeholders from across the continent, representing civil society, youth, governments, regional and international organisations, universities and research institutions as well as the private business sector. The five thematic conferences focussed on Africa's youth and women, their employment opportunities and their potential as drivers of economic growth and employment creation. All in all, forums were held where more than 1,000 stakeholders representing the private sector, trade unions, civil society, governments, and research institutions were consulted[5].

The Commission presented its final report entitled *Realising the Potential of Africa's Youth* and containing a number of recommendations and initiatives in Copenhagen on the 6th May 2009. The Commission made 22 policy recommendations: 10 of which were stand-alone and 12 were concretised in the five specific initiatives. The Commission members also endorsed the "Copenhagen Statement", which included a commitment to actively engage with national and international partners in the public and private domain as well as youth organisations in Africa to promote a refocused agenda for international development cooperation with Africa. Following this, the Commission held no further formal meetings but would continue to function as a network with its individual members promoting the views of the Africa Commission and contributing to the international development debate[6].

5 "Growth and Employment: Visions at Work", Africa Commission, August 2010.

6 Growth and Employment: Visions at Work, Progress Report of the Africa Commission, July 2010.

1.2 Objective and scope of the evaluation

The objective of the Evaluation, as set out in the terms of reference, is "to document and assess the results of the Africa Commission both in terms of its policy impact as well as the results of the five initiatives".[7] Its main focus is to:

- Assess the 10 policy recommendations of Africa Commission with respect to promoting a refocused development agenda – in Africa, in Denmark and internationally (the 10 policy recommendations).

- Assess the results from the five Africa Commission initiatives – where results can be outputs, outcomes and impact, depending on how mature the projects/programmes are (the five initiatives).

- Assess whether the policy changes and the changes supported by the five initiatives were transformative, especially for youth (men and women).

1.3 Approach and methodology of the evaluation

During the inception phase, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the evaluation team agreed that – due to the eclectic nature of the Evaluation – the standard OECD/DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability) should not be applied in the assessment of the 10 policy recommendations as this would neither be credible nor useful given the lack of "evaluability" of the Africa Commission's recommendations and that only impact should be considered and this only with respect to clearly documented changes.

Given that the 10 policy recommendations do not meet the normal criteria of evaluability[8], it was agreed that the Evaluation would undertake an assessment of the "contribution of the Africa Commission with respect to promoting a refocused development agenda – in Africa, in Denmark and internationally" based on such evidence as may be available, including:

7 As defined in the terms of reference of the evaluation (see Annex 1).

8 "Evaluation – promise and performance", Joseph Wholey, The Urban Institute, 1979. Recent policy guidance recommends that "an impact evaluation should only be undertaken when its intended use and users can be clearly identified, and when it is likely to produce useful findings" (Evaluability assessment for impact evaluation", ODI, August 2015). Moreover, the OECD/DAC define evaluability as "the extent to which an activity or project can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion". Assessed against these criteria, the Africa Commission's 10 policy recommendations stretch the limits of evaluability as: (i) The recommendations were extremely broad in scope and no underpinning theory of change was defined as to how they might bring about change; (ii) No clear indicators (either benchmarks or targets) were defined to measure success in achieving the recommendations; (iii) No specific implementation structure was envisaged: the recommendations were intended to be adopted by key stakeholders but without any specific guidelines as to how or when; (iv) The recommendations – whilst undoubtedly important and relevant – formed part of a continuing spectrum of change in development policy globally and attribution or contribution of impact to the ten specific recommendations of the Africa Commission is impossible – except in the context of Danish development policy.

- The views (both evidenced and anecdotal) of the Africa Commission members and other key stakeholders as to their understanding of the impacts arising from the Africa Commission's ten policy recommendations.

- In the event that an Africa Commission member (or other key stakeholder) was able to cite how a specific recommendation catalysed change in their nation or organisation's development policy, then the Evaluation would seek to trace such change using "outcome harvesting".

With respect to the evaluation of the five initiatives, it was further agreed that the primary focus would be on results (where results can be outputs, outcomes and/or impact) depending on the level of maturity of the initiatives. Additionally, an assessment would be made of relevance to assess the extent to which the five initiatives are coherent and consistent with the twelve recommendations of the Africa Commission that led to their formulation.

The terms of reference for the Evaluation is included as Annex 1.

Data Collection
The Evaluation interviewed as many African Commission members as could be reached and were prepared to present their views. Missions were made to Geneva (International Labour Organisation and World Economic Forum), Ghana (Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa and the CCLEAr Incubator), Ivory Coast (African Development Bank), Kenya (African Guarantee Fund and the SVCDC Incubator) and Tanzania (ILO Country Office, Tanzania Institute of Education, the Ministry of Education and the National Economic Empowerment Council). A full list of individuals interviewed is contained in Annex 2.

The Evaluation builds on a desk study of all materials made available by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other stakeholders. Stakeholders from the five different initiatives were consulted and 11 out of 18 members of the Africa Commission were interviewed. A total of 104 persons were consulted during the process of the Evaluation.

It should be noted that the Evaluation has ensured full anonymity of statements made during the interviews. Where quotes are presented in this report, the individual interviewees have approved these.

Limitations
The Evaluation has assessed the findings presented to be of the quality and scope needed to ensure an evidence-based evaluation. However, a number of limitations were identified during the inception and implementation phases, which the Evaluation has had to work around. These include:

- *Challenges of assessing attribution with regards to affecting policy levels*. The Africa Commission was working in a context and period where many actors and events influenced the policy agenda in the thematic areas of the Africa Commission. Due to this complexity, the Evaluation has been challenged in identifying changes in international and national African policies deriving from the recommendations of the Africa Commission.

- *Challenges of triangulation in assessing the initiatives.* The limited time in the field made it difficult to speak to a diverse and representative range of interviewees (from project staff, to external stakeholders and beneficiaries) for each of the initiatives. This meant that the Evaluation has had difficulties in identifying and/or accessing external (non-affiliated) resource persons as well as direct and indirect beneficiaries that could confirm/reject findings presented by initiatives. Additionally, in was agreed that – given the limited scope of the evaluation exercise – some initiatives would only be assessed through secondary sources, a sampling approach and desk review, for example of the evaluations performed by the implementing partners.

- *Lack of outcome level data*. Some initiatives assessed in this Evaluation did not have adequate results or reporting frameworks and some initiatives have not reached the stage of maturity where this is ready to be assessed, which meant that assessing outcomes of their programmes was challenging. The Evaluation has thus had to rely on qualitative analysis in the field and secondary data to identify results to the extent possible, as also agreed in the Inception Report.

- *Contextual relevance* of the five initiatives is not assessed as it was agreed that relevance would focus on how well initiatives fit the intended goal of the recommendations of the Africa Commission.

2 Assessment of the 10 Policy Recommendations

2.1 Background and objectives

In this chapter, the Evaluation assesses the contribution of the policy recommendations. This is done by considering their effect on: (i) the Danish development agenda; (ii) the international development agenda, and (iii) the development agendas of African countries.

The overall objective of the Africa Commission's policy recommendations was to address the significant challenges and the new opportunities facing the African continent. The Commission recommended the development of a refocused agenda for international development cooperation with Africa. The most important priorities were identified as creating jobs for Africa's increasing youth population through private sector-led growth and reforms that improve competitiveness.

Due to the demographic transition, youth will comprise an increasing share of Africa's growing population. The Commission recognised that this larger and younger working force constitutes a significant opportunity for Africa – but only if more jobs are created. If the political will can be mobilised, then the energy and talent of Africa's young women and men will be a force for positive change in Africa.

The Africa Commission made 22 policy recommendations. 10 of these were stand-alone recommendations in order to implement its refocused agenda and the other twelve recommendations were supported by the five Africa Commission initiatives (these are discussed in Chapter 4 of this report). The majority of the recommendations relate to private sector development. Several of them make specific references to youth. Two of the recommendations (numbers 4 and 8) have a focus on gender equality and women's economic opportunities as drivers of growth.

The 10 policy recommendations of the Africa Commission

Recommendation 1: Increased emphasis on the role of the private sector, including agriculture, in delivering growth and employment. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and sustaining progress in health, food security and education requires strong growth and employment opportunities for African youth. This must be recognised at the 2010 UN Millennium Development Goals review conference.

Recommendation 2: Shift focus from donor led growth to private sector led growth. Increased competitiveness of the private sector combined with international trade liberalisation is the best way to reduce poverty, create jobs for young Africans and ensure sustainable development.

Recommendation 3: Increase support from development partners to build the private sector, including through value chain approaches and other strategies that can help transform and grow African economies and create jobs for African youth.

Recommendation 4: Ensure progress on governance, which is a prerequisite for economic growth and development. Efforts should aim to develop effective public sectors able to combat corruption, protect property rights and ensure the rule of law, promote gender equality and strengthen the role of civil society and the private sector in holding governments accountable.

Recommendation 5: Develop and implement national development strategies through broad consultative processes involving the private sector, business associations, labour market associations and civil society. The aim should be to improve the business environment by expanding and maintaining major infrastructure, financial markets and skills development and other measures that enhance competitiveness. International development assistance must build upon and support such strategies.

Recommendation 6: Establish strong partnerships between the public and the private sector to eliminate barriers to growth and to strengthen the competitiveness of the private sector. African governments should support private sector initiatives to develop value chains and promote labour-intensive manufacturing, especially in areas such as agriculture and agro-processing. Support from the public sector should aim to help develop competitive markets, which attract private investments and create jobs.

Recommendation 7: Ensure more is done to open markets, including for South-South trade. Developed countries must give African goods full and free access to their markets, including easing “rules of origin” requirements and phasing out trade distorting subsidies. Relative to other developing countries, there is a case for allowing African countries privileged access to markets in developed countries, at least for a limited period of time.

Recommendation 8: Unleash the potential of women as drivers of economic growth and development. Gender equality and improvement of women’s economic opportunities should be promoted by mainstreaming and benchmarking gender equality in all policies, strategies and actions for private sector development and through special efforts by government, the private sector, labour market organisations, civil society and development partners.

Recommendation 9: Realise the potential of African youth by giving them influence over policies and strategies. Young people should be given a much-needed voice and the opportunity to participate in decision-making, including through improved career opportunities.

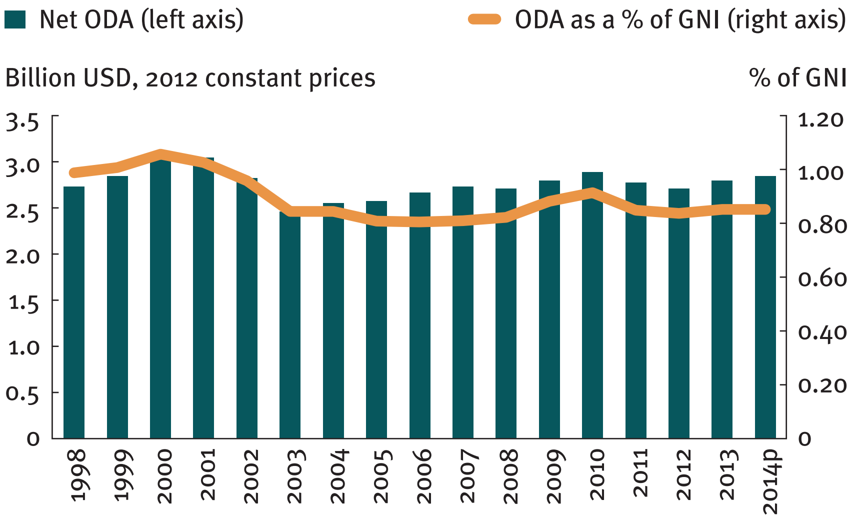
Recommendation 10: Strengthen efforts to include climate change considerations in all development strategies. The international community should support African governments in adapting to the risks and impacts of climate change and benefiting from mitigation measures, including through reaching an ambitious agreement during the UN Conference of Parties (COP15) in Copenhagen in December 2009.

Contribution on Danish development policy

Denmark is one of the most generous international aid donors: it has consistently exceeded the United Nations' target of 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) allocated to Official Development Assistance (ODA).[9] Figure 1 shows Denmark's net official development assistance (share of the Gross National Income) in the period 1998-2014.

In his Opening Address to the Folketing (the Danish Parliament) on 27th November 2007, Prime Minister Fogh Rasmussen announced that Denmark would again[10] raise Danish development assistance from the then level of 0.8% of GNI, increase the focus on Africa, and set up an Africa Commission whose task would be to present recommendations as to how Denmark can best contribute to progress and development in Africa.[11]

Figure 1: Net official Development Assistance: trends in volume and as a share og GNI, 1998.2024, Denmark



Source: http://www.oecd.org/dac/denmark

This commitment is reflected in the terms of reference for the *Commission on Efficient Development Cooperation with Africa*,[12] which mandated the coming Commission to "analyse the results of previous Danish development aid to Africa and develop recommendations for a future strategy, which most effectively contributes to poverty reduction and ensures development in Africa, including the promotion of the UN's Millennium Development Goals", and "the general theme for the work of the Commission will be youth and employment which is not yet high on the international development-political

9 The 2011 Act on International Development Cooperation provides the legal basis for Danish international aid. Denmark's international development is directed by a clear strategy: the current strategy is "The Right to a Better Life". The Government also produces annually "Priorities of the Danish Government for Danish Development Assistance" together with an overview of the development assistance budget and these roll constantly over a five-year period.

10 Following an initial reduction of the development budget from the same government.

11 http://www.stm.dk/_p_12766.html

12 Kommission for effektivt udviklingssamarbejde med Afrika (Engelsk: Commission on Efficient Development Cooperation with Africa – CEDCA), Udkast til Kommissorium, 21st January 2007.

agenda".[13] Subsequently, the Africa Commission chose to focus on youth employment through growth and private sector development. This was later reflected in the Danish Government's new Development Strategy 2010. As one part of the revised strategic focus, the commitment was made to "double Denmark's annual support to private sector development in Africa by 2014".[14]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also regarded the August 2007 strategy *Denmark in Africa – A continent on its way*[15] as "the natural benchmark for the work of the [Africa] Commission."[16] The strategy was very much directed towards private sector growth, noting that "increased economic growth based on the private sector will be absolutely essential if the coming youth cohorts are to be able to contribute to development and see their hopes for the future fulfilled. Massive investments will be required for an increase in productivity and competitiveness. Good governance, increased regional integration and access to the rich countries' markets will be crucial if success is to be achieved. In this context, agriculture plays an important part as the majority of the African population is employed in this sector. The promotion of employment in agriculture and its complementary occupations, especially in the rural districts and the smaller towns, will be crucial to both poverty reduction and stability in many African countries."[17]

The new emphasis was not the increasing of aid for Africa *per se*, but on the increase in aid for Africa being focused on private sector development. The Africa Commission's recommendations appear – on the basis of commitments – to have had a direct impact on the scale and nature of Danish aid for Africa.

In Danida's Annual Report (2009), the commitment is expressed as follows: "In order to realise the Africa Commission's recommendations, Denmark has begun restructuring its development cooperation with the programme countries in Africa. The business sector programmes are to become larger, while other programmes are to become smaller. The present business sector programmes will be evaluated and modified in the light of the Commission's recommendations" ... "In the period to 2014, assistance to private sector development will be doubled, so that by 2014 approx. USD 374.1 million will be earmarked for this purpose annually. In the period 2010-2014, a total of USD 1.4 billion will be granted towards developing the private sector in Africa".[18]

The commitment was indeed met and the expenditure on Business Sector Programmes alone achieves the goal. Table 1 shows funding for Business Sector Programmes in Africa over the period 2005 until 2015 and demonstrates a general trend towards increasing allocations with a significant annual increase in funding coming after 2009. (Business

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13 http://www.stm.dk/multimedia/Mulighedernes_samfund__Regeringsgrundlag.pdf

14 Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Prime Minister of Denmark and Chairman of the Africa Commission: foreword to "Growth and Employment: Visions at Work", Africa Commission, August 2010.

15 Also, many recommendations of the Africa Commission were captured in subsequent strategies, in particular in the 'Strategic framework for priority area Growth and Employment' (2011-15) and also in the new strategy for Danida – 'The Right to a Better Life – Strategy for Denmark's Development Cooperation' (June 2012).

16 Kommission for effektivt udviklingssamarbejde med Afrika (Engelsk: Commission on Efficient Development Cooperation with Africa – CEDCA), Udkast til Kommissorium, 21st January 2007.

17 Denmark in Africa – A continent on its way", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2007.

18 Danida Annual Report 2009.

sector programmes are used as a proxy for the change; that is funding beyond that committed to the initiatives of the Africa Commission.) Other contributions to multilateral programmes/organisations, Danida's other business-orientated bilateral programmes as well as the Africa Commission Initiatives themselves makes this commitment well achieved.

Table 1: Disbursement to Business Sector Programmes in Africa (DKK million)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Tanzania	55	48	20	80	80	100	85	57	53	86	99
Kenya	1	20	35	27	30	35	59	92	65	48	42
Uganda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	51	65
Mozambique	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	131	44	80	78
Ghana	26	22	21	44	50	31	57	67	80	80	42
Mali	0	0	6	20	30	23	34	28	35	54	73
Total	**82**	**90**	**82**	**171**	**190**	**189**	**252**	**375**	**277**	**399**	**399**

Source: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Africa Commission as such was considered a catalyst for further increase of private sector-orientated development assistance to Africa and considerable additional disbursements were made to the five initiatives. Thereby, the combined funding level for the two areas was increased from DKK 223 million in 2009 to an average of DKK 459 million in the years 2010-2015, confirming that the level of assistance was doubled compared to prior to the launch of the recommendations of the Africa Commission. A number of other private sector support measures were additionally supported in parallel with this, for example IFC programmes and Danida's B2B programme. This is a significant increase in funding, confirming the impact on the Danish development assistance priorities.

Table 2: Disbursement to the follow-up on the recommendations of the Africa Commission (together with Business Sector Programmes in Africa) (DKK million)

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Disbursed to the AC initiatives	33	51	412	104	222	74	1	**897**
Adding BSPS (from Table 1 above)	190	189	252	375	277	399	399	**2081**
Total	**223**	**240**	**664**	**479**	**499**	**473**	**400**	**2978**

Source: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The influence of the work of the Commission was also highlighted by a number of stakeholders consulted by the Evaluation. Klaus Aagaard Bustrup (Africa Commission member and former Chairman of the Danish Board for International Development) noted, for example, that "creating the Africa Commission was important for Danish development politics". He also emphasized that the recommendations had long-term influence and also made a "clear footprint in the Government's Development Political Priorities for 2016".[19] Whilst, no new Africa strategy as such was prepared, Danida's new development strategy *'Freedom from Poverty, Freedom to Change'* published in July 2010 does make specific mention of the recommendations of the Africa Commission and how these are to be integrated into Danida's work.[20] The Evaluation's conclusion, therefore, is that the Africa Commission did make a contribution to the scale and nature of Danish development policy towards Africa, which is reflected in the steadily increasing scale of and funding for Business Sector Programmes in Africa, continued funding to other Danida supported private sector development projects and organisations as well as the additional funding to the five initiatives.

2.2 Contribution to international development policies

The Africa Commission had the broader goal that their recommendations should influence the international development agenda for Africa. The Evaluation notes that this agenda has been continually evolving – both before and after the Africa Commission presented its recommendations. This chapter explores the relevance and the extent to which the Africa Commission recommendations contributed to influencing (refocusing) international development policies. The Evaluation has assessed these aspects by examining other documentation and sources relating to the themes considered by the Commission and included it its recommendations and through interviews with key informants.

The plan for contributing to the international policy agenda was – firstly – meant to be implemented by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs itself through 'public diplomacy', including participation in conferences and meetings[21]. The Danish MFA joined meetings such as the annual meetings of the World Bank, Africa-EU high-level meetings and the UN High Level meeting on the Status of the MDGs in 2010. While it is clear that the goal has not been to bring attention to the Africa Commission per se, this also means that it is hard to find evidence demonstrating that the policy recommendations influenced international development policies. Only in one strategy, one of the initiatives – the African Guarantee Fund – is mentioned, namely the Africa-EU partnership strategy[22], as a part of the programme.

Secondly, it was also intended that the policy agenda should be pursued by the Joint Support Secretariat Office based in Addis Ababa. However, as far as the Evaluation could ascertain, the Secretariat did not undertake any such activity and it was probably not realistic to expect such a secretariat to carry out such a task. The Commission members

19 Interview, 16th December 2016. This was a clear objective of the Africa Commission; "Formålet er derfor ikke alene at gøre dansk bistand mere effektiv, men at sætte et dansk fingeraftryk på den internationale bistandsindsats" (Kommission for effektivt udviklingssamarbejde med Afrika (Engelsk: Commission on Efficient Development Cooperation with Africa – CEDCA), Udkast til Kommissorium, 21st January 2007).

20 The Right to a Better Life: Strategy for Denmark's Development Cooperation, August 2012.

21 MFA Resolution: Opfølgning på Afrika Kommissionens anbefalinger: Det bilaterale og det internationale spor, 19th August 2009.

22 Joint Africa EU Strategy Action Plan 2011-2013.

also committed to furthering the agenda but it has not been possible to find evidence showing any effects of this, for example on the Pan-African development agenda.

In order to assess the degree to which the recommendations of the Africa Commission contributed to the global and African policy discussion on development, the Evaluation has undertaken a mapping of key policy statements and developments in areas relating to the ten recommendations, both before and after the launch of the recommendations (see Annex 3). This mapping put into a time context the recommendations of the Africa Commission by developing a timeline that records the key points with respect to development internationally around the issues raised by the Africa Commission's 10 policy recommendations and how these issues evolved both before and after the report was published.

The mapping reveals that a number of other relevant strategies and policy papers were launched in the same period as the Africa Commission recommendations. Before its launch, other initiatives included the UN's "Growing Inclusive Markets (GIM) Initiative", The World Bank's "The Private Sector as a true partner in development" and OECD's "Promoting Pro-Poor Growth: Private Sector Development". Moreover, the Africa Commission was preceded by the "Commission for Africa" from 2005 (the so-called "Blair-Commission"[23]). In 2009, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 64/134 proclaiming the Year of Youth.

After the Africa Commission's launch, significant policy initiatives include the formulation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Evaluation notes that a number of the targets for SDG 8 are directly relevant to the Africa Commission's recommendations. These include commitments to sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7% gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries (SDG 8.1); achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors (SDG 8.2); promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services (SDG 8.3); and by 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training (SDG 8.6).

This timeline indicates that the 10 policy recommendations were highly congruent with international policy discussions both before and at the time of the Commission, although they are not particularly innovative. The Evaluation considers that this congruency makes it difficult to assess the specific contribution made by the Commission without explicit references (in documents or attributable statements) indicating such.

The Evaluation has also attempted to assess the extent to which changes in international development policies could be contributed to by the Africa Commission's policy recommendations by seeking the views of the Africa Commission members as they reflect back over the seven years since they made their recommendations. What was clear from the

23 Many of this commission's recommendations were taken forward by the G8 at a meeting in Gleneagles in July 2005, and in other major African and international commitments made in 2005.

interviews was that the Africa Commission was seen as being very specific in its focus on youth unemployment, and did not play a significant role in influencing international development policies in any other area. An example of this can be seen in the interview with Robert Calderisi[24] (Member of the Africa Commission and former World Bank Country Director for Central Africa) who stated that he "was impressed by the diversity of membership of the Commission – even broader perhaps than the Blair Commission four years before… As for its impact, I doubt that any of us expected the Commission to have much effect on international aid policy or on the priorities of African governments in general. It came at a time of intense debate about the directions Western aid should take and, frankly, African governments had enough on their minds to listen closely to what individual donors – even one as generous and principled as Denmark – were saying about broad issues affecting the continent…"[25]

Although the intended focus was private sector, growth and Africa's participation in globalisation, youth became prominent in the report of the Africa Commission entitled: "Realising the potential of Africa's youth" and several African members of the Commission the Evaluation spoke to highlighted this as its main focus. Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas (Africa Commission member and Secretary-General of the ACP Group of States and former President of the Economic Community of West African States), for example, noted that "youth unemployment was – and remains – one of the most important challenges facing the continent. The Africa Commission was on to an important issue in youth unemployment. 10 years ago its importance was not so widely recognised, but now everyone understands its importance to peace and stability".[26] The reorientation was also expressed by Dr. Kaberuka who explained that: "the focus of the Africa Commission was on how can we work with the private sector to create employment for youth?"[27]

However, despite this overall relevance, it has not been possible to identify references to the Africa Commission's recommendations amongst other initiatives launched at the same time. In 2011, the African Development Bank and other organisations represented on the Commission initiated the Joint Youth Employment Initiative for Africa. Broader political endorsement for the initiative was also obtained through the AU Summit in Malabo in July 2011 and the 12th ILO African Regional Meeting in October 2011. However, the background documentation makes no reference to the Africa Commission's recommendations as a sensible starting point for the work of the new initiative and does not appear to view the new initiative as a natural extension of the work of the Africa

24 Mr. Calderisi also acts as World Bank Spokesman for Africa, Manager in the Institutional Change and Strategy Department and as Chief of the World Bank Regional Mission in Western Africa.
25 Email communication from Robert Calderisi, 9th January 2016.
26 Telephone conversation on 22 January 2016.
27 Telephone conversation on 25 January 2016.

Commission[28], although it is not unlikely that the overlapping membership may have inspired discussions.

A visioning workshop on the Joint Youth Employment Initiative held in Addis Ababa in February 2012 and involving all five stakeholders was asked to consider, *inter alia*: how the initiative connects to what individual organisations were doing and how the initiative could build on existing initiatives. However, despite the presence of staff of the Joint M&E Unit expected to "follow up on the recommendations of the Africa Commission", no mention of the Africa Commission or its recommendations appears in the workshop report. The level of political ownership of the Pan-African institutions of the Africa Commission's recommendations and initiatives seems marginal.

However, Denmark made it clear that it expected a "coalition of the willing" to come together to address the challenges the Africa Commission had identified. Denmark undertook to provide funding for the initial implementation of the initiatives. Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen noted that there was an expectation that other partners would join in the continent-wide roll-out of the initiatives. Indeed, he urged "bilateral and multilateral partners and donors to join in Africa's effort to realise the potential of its youth".[29] In an interview, Dr. Donald Kaberuka also expressed that "the achievement of the goals of the Africa Commission required a broad coalition to be formed – not just Denmark alone – but it failed to gain adequate traction amongst other stakeholders".[30]

The overall conclusion is that the Africa Commission's policy recommendations were relevant and timely, and that the discourse and debate which they engendered certainly increased knowledge and understanding of the challenges of youth unemployment facing Africa, but the Evaluation did not find any evidence of specific contributions to changes in international development policy.

2.3 Contribution on national development policies of Africa countries

The recommendations were also meant to influence the national development agendas. As expressed in a joint article by Prime Minister Fogh Rasmussen and Former President Kikwete: "A new approach to development is therefore needed. We must have a renewed international emphasis on improving the competitiveness of the African private sector. Pouring aid money into the continent is not sustainable or helpful in itself. Africa and its

28 The initiative originated from the African Development Board's Board of Directors' decision at its 2010 Annual Meetings to tackle the growing youth unemployment crisis in the continent. This was the subject of a recommendation to the Bank for the Medium-Term Strategy 2008-12. The Initiative was also in line with the commitment made by the African Heads of State at the 17th Ordinary Session of the African Union (Malabo, July 2011) to ensure the creation of employment for accelerating youth development and empowerment within the framework of the Youth Decade Plan of Action 2009-18. http://www.ilo.org/global/meetings-and-events/regional-meetings/africa/arm-12/reports/WCMS_165140/lang--en/index.html

29 Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Prime Minister of Denmark and Chairman of the Africa Commission: foreword to "Growth and Employment: Visions at Work", Africa Commission, August 2010.

30 Telephone conversation on 25th January 2016. Although a coalition between Denmark and the African Development Bank was formed to help implement two of the major initiatives of the Africa Commission (the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa and the African Guarantee Fund).

partners should focus on reducing the costs of doing business by combating corruption, adding more and better post-primary education and skills training based on private sector demand, providing access to investment capital, better energy supply as well as basic infrastructure."[31]

The Commission's recommendations were to be taken forward through participation in a number of high-level meetings, and also at country level, where the intention was to include the recommendations of the Africa Commission towards "the development of a new strategic framework for future interventions for development of the private sector in programme cooperation countries".[32] This was to take place through the high level consultations in all Danida programme countries. Moreover, as already noted, there was an effect in the Danish country programmes as there were more and larger business sector programmes.

The Evaluation has been unable to document any specific contribution to the formulation or amendment of the development policies of African nations arising from the policy recommendations of the Africa Commission. One member of the Africa Commission, Ms. Diogo (former Prime Minister of Mozambique) informed that the Africa Commission's recommendations inspired positive changes in their national educational system but other members interviewed could not cite any specific examples. Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro explained that she would have liked to have seen more ownership by the [African] governments and to have a "mechanism where governments took it on as their own baby". She also pointed out that there seems to have been a missing operational level in the African countries in which ministers should have been involved and that the recommendations should have been presented to government cabinets so that, for example, they could have been used the information to strengthen their national youth policies.[33] There is hence little evidence that the recommendations had impact on national level development policies.

2.4 Conclusions of the Africa Commission's contribution at policy level

The Evaluation concludes that the Africa Commission participated in the wider debate on the role of development aid and the need to bring the private sector more into play to ensure more and better employment for Africa's youth. The Africa Commission did extend the debate in Danish development policy as to whether private sector development should be one of the focal points for Denmark's international development aid and its recommendations did lead to a significant increase in Danish funding for private sector development in Africa.

With respect to bringing about a refocused international development agenda, the Africa Commission's recommendations were in congruence with the ongoing debate, and timely

31 More than aid money, Africa needs enterprise", Jakaya Kikwete and Anders Fogh Rasmussen, 9th February, 2009, http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/Opinion/2009/0209/p09s02-coop.html

32 MFA Resolution: Opfølgning på Afrika Kommissionens anbefalinger: Det bilaterale og det internationale spor, 19th August 2009.

33 Interview, 17th February 2016.

when it came to bring the issue of placing youth employment on the agenda, although maybe not to the extent that it had hoped. There is limited evidence of effects on the national development strategies at country level in Africa and that the Commission members actively engaged with national and international partners in the public and private domain in Africa to promote a refocused agenda for international development cooperation with Africa, as the commitment in the earlier mentioned "Copenhagen Statement" stipulated.[34]

34 The Evaluation found a range of different reasons expressed during interviews as to why this might have been:
- The change in focus in the international development agenda following the 2011 election of a new Danish Government: Dr. Lauritz Holm-Nielsen, Africa Commission member and former Rector of Aarhus University) commented that "the change in government during the work of the Africa Commission led to a far more inward looking government, which was less interested in international development and became bogged down in other issues".
- Different priorities and interests (seen from a Danish and African perspective): Dr. Greg Mills (Director of the Brenthurst Foundation and an Africa Commission member) felt that the timing was simply wrong: most African countries were on the "upturn of a commodity-driven economic boom, and thus saw no need to change track on their overall economic policies and governance regimes." The apparent dichotomy that we have identified between the main interests of the majority of the Danish African Commission members that we have spoken to (increased private sector development) and African Africa Commission member's main interest (addressing youth unemployment).

3 Assessment of the Five Initiatives

As part of the Africa Commission's work, it was decided to define and design practical initiatives to ensure that the recommendations led to tangible results. In May 2009, the so-called Copenhagen Statement of the Commission announced the following: "we have decided to launch five concrete initiatives which will create growth and jobs for Africa's youth. All initiatives will be implemented jointly by African countries and international development partners, through African organisations. All five initiatives will actively promote gender equality by setting ambitious benchmarks and mainstreaming gender equality in their activities. In our individual and collective capacities, and through the institutions and networks to which we belong, we will support the implementation of these five initiatives"[35]. Therefore, five separate initiatives were formulated, with a total disbursement of DKK 897 mill:

Initiative	**Disbursement (DKK million)**
1. Benchmarking African Competitiveness – implemented by the Global Competitiveness Network of the World Economic Forum (WEF).	13
2. Access to Investment Finance and Capacity Development for Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises establishment of the African Guarantee Fund (AGF) and the associated Capacity Development Trust Fund – implemented by the African Development Bank	250
3. Unleashing African Entrepreneurship – the Youth Employment Facility implemented by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in collaboration with the Youth Employment Network (YEN)	119
4. Access to Sustainable Energy – the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (SEFA) – implemented by the African Development Bank (AfDB)	300
5A. Promoting Post-Primary Education and Research – implemented by the ILO (the Skills for Youth Employment and Rural Development in Southern and Western Africa project)	85
5B. Promoting Post-Primary Education and Research – implemented by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) ('UniBRAIN': Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation).	130
Total	**897**

Source: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Although, the post-primary education and research is defined as one initiative, it comprises two distinct tracks and, in reality, function as two separate initiatives, implemented by different partners at different locations.

35 Copenhagen Statement, 6th May 2009.

In the following sections, the Evaluation presents an overview of the evaluation findings concerning the five initiatives. More detailed findings on each initiative can be found in the Annexes 4-9.

3.1 Initiative 1: Benchmarking African competitiveness

The objectives of this initiative were to 1) Increase, sustain and improve the coverage of African Countries in the Global Competitive Index and related benchmarking reports, including the African Competitiveness Report, for a period of minimum five years; 2) Facilitate follow-up of the Global Competitive Index analyses and ensure dissemination and advocacy and ensure dissemination and advocacy of the index at country level; and 3) Ensure follow-up and pressure for reform at the highest level through the African Union Commission.

The initiative had a two-pronged approach: Firstly, to increase the number of African countries in the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index from 31 to 38 countries; and secondly to encourage policy impact through measures to engage business and government leaders in a results-based dialogue on the required reforms – with a related goal of raising public awareness about the importance of enhancing competitiveness (through media and other channels) to galvanise support for the reform process. It has now been fully implemented.

All the results defined in the agreement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the World Economic Forum have been achieved in full[36]:

- An important output of the project was that World Economic Forum's Chief Economist produced the report "Africa Competitiveness 2010: The State of Affairs", which was published and released at the 2010 UN Conference on progress in achieving the MDGs.

- Seven new sub-Saharan countries were included in the Global Competitiveness Report and Executive Opinion Survey: Angola, Cape Verde, Gabon, Guinea, Liberia, Seychelles and Sierra Leone and maintained for five years.

- The inclusion of existing 11 countries in the Global Competitiveness Report and Executive Opinion Survey was maintained for five years.

- The World Economic Forum organised in collaboration with COWI 12 workshops: national workshops in Tanzania, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Ghana, Rwanda, Uganda, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Mauritius and regional workshops in Tanzania (East African Community), Nigeria (Economic Community of West African States) and Botswana (Southern African Development Community). Each workshop was attended by between 80 and 100 participants from the private, civil and public sectors. The workshops targeted leaders from the business sector,

36 These are defined as outputs: no logical framework matrix formed part of the agreement and no outcomes or impact achievements were defined.

government and civil society, with the aim to initiate a process of review and policy reform for improved competitiveness.

Although outcomes are not specified in the implementation agreements, the Evaluation still found evidence of wider impact, which could be contributed to the initiative:

- World Economic Forum stated that the National Workshop on Competitiveness in Nigeria led to the establishment of the National Competitiveness Council of Nigeria (http://nccnigeria.org/)[37]
- World Economic Forum report continued receiving requests for national competitiveness workshops (Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, etc.)
- World Economic Forum mentioned that CNBC Africa undertook a series of debates on competitiveness (Nigeria, Rwanda) as part of the workshops[38].

Concerning **relevance**, the initiative was designed to address three recommendations of the Africa Commission (Nos. 11, 12 and 13). As can be seen, the initiative fits the recommendations extremely closely and is thus highly relevant to what the Africa Commission was seeking to achieve:

Initiative	Related Africa Commission policy recommendations
Benchmarking African Competitiveness	R11: Focus on those particular constraints that prevent African businesses from growing through exports in order to improve Africa's competitiveness in the global economy.
	R12: Promote the use of competitiveness indices as advocacy tools and ensure ownership among African governments, the private sector and civil society in the results dissemination and follow-up process.
	R13: Develop a global competitiveness index that will eventually benchmark all African countries against international standards and spur debate and action on concrete measures that African countries should implement to promote private sectorled growth.

In terms of **sustainability**, the work initiated is continued by the World Economic Forum to date and it is assessed that the support of the Africa Commission has clearly furthered the work of the World Economic Forum in Africa and it is expected to be rolled out further.

37 http://nccnigeria.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Businessday-Companies-and-Market-Page-15-April-11-2014-page1.jpeg

38 For example, a CNBC television debate involving H.E. Olusegun Aganga (Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment), Achankeng Leke (Director, McKinsey & Company), Leyla Gozo (Founder and Managing Director, LGG & Partners), Enase Okonedo (Lagos Business School, Pan-Atlantic University) and Onye Sunday (Anchor, CNBC Africa) was held as an integral element of the Regional Workshop on Competitiveness in ECOWAS at the Four Points Sheraton, Lagos, Nigeria on 28th November 2013.

In **conclusion**, the initiative was implemented in accordance with their terms of reference by both the World Economic Forum and COWI. It is however regrettable that the competitiveness review mechanism was never added to the work of the African Peer Review Mechanism, as initially envisaged under the implementation agreement with the Joint Secretariat Support Office (see Chapter 3 for further details).

Although it is impossible to assess the direct contribution of the benchmarking activities financed by the Africa Commission to increasing the competitiveness of sub-Saharan African nations, the initiative has – in the view of the Evaluation – probably had a substantial impact in bringing competitiveness higher on the agendas.

The support from Denmark allowed the inclusion of new sub-Saharan African countries and the retention of existing ones in the Global Competitiveness Report. It also significantly increased the awareness of the importance of increasing competitiveness, including through the extensive workshop programme and the 2010 Africa Competitiveness Report submitted to the MDG conference.

The importance of competitiveness as a critical element in employment creation, including for youth, and poverty reduction, has been made clear with the support of this initiative and this is now understood by most sub-Saharan African governments who watch carefully their country's changing index[39] and seek to improve their enabling environment and thus improve their ranking.

See Annex 4 for further details on this initiative.

3.2 Initiative 2: Access to investment finance for SMEs

This initiative aimed to address one of the key constraints faced by African Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), which is access to finance. The Commission established that the cost of finance is higher in Africa than any other part of the world, and very few commercial banks do small enterprise banking. To address this constraint and stimulate more lending to SMEs and reduce the (perceived or not) risk of finance institutions, the second initiative sat out to create an African Guarantee Fund that would provide guarantees to African financial institutions lending to SMEs.

The African Guarantee Fund (AGF) for SMEs was designed in a partnership between the ADB and Denmark and was initiated with funding from ADB, Spain and Denmark in 2010 with operational headquarters in Nairobi. The purpose of the AGF is to contribute to growth and employment in Africa by enhancing SMEs' access to finance through the provision of loan and equity guarantees to financial institutions for their lending to SMEs. Moreover, the AGF supports capacity development both for partner lending institutions to provide financial services to the SME market segment and capacity build-

39 For example, Rwanda (http://www.rdb.rw/home/newsdetails/article/rwanda-most-competitive-economy-in-east-africa-3rd-in-africa.html), Mauritius (http://www.govmu.org/English/News/Pages/Global-Competitiveness-Report-Mauritius-Ranks-First-in-Sub-Saharan-Africa.aspx), Ghana (http://www.ghanatrade.gov.gh/Trade-News/ghana-drops-to-114th-in-latest-global-competitiveness-report.html), and South Africa http://www.southafrica.info/business/economy/globalsurveys.htm#.VpzZ_yorLWI)

ing for SMEs to improve their business management skills, in order to enable them to become creditworthy.

The AGF started operations in 2011 and was officially launched in 2012 with an initial share capital of USD 50 million provided by the three founders. In addition, the Government of Denmark provided USD 2.8 million for initial preparatory activities, start-up costs and operational support during the African Guarantee Fund's first year of establishment.

Results are emerging and the AGF has now managed to spread operations into 35 countries and has the aim of reaching all 54 African countries in the course of 2017. The Fund has now made cooperation agreements with 62 banks, based on banks applying to the Fund for support. Overall, AGF has the goal of facilitating access for finance for 10,000 SMEs[40]. So far 850 SMEs have accessed finance. There is currently no monitoring data on how the loans have affected the SMEs in terms of growth and job creation[41]. The World Bank reportedly works with a multiplier effect of four jobs per SME supported but the Evaluation is unable to verify this.

It can be hard to assess the additionality of the operations of a guarantee fund and establish whether the lending bank would have offered the loan anyway, without support from a guarantee fund. However, in an attempt to establish the effect of the guarantee the Evaluation was provided with details on the development of the SME loan portfolios in the beneficiary banks. As depicted in the table, the details of changes in the size of the overall SME loan portfolio of some banks supported by a loan portfolio guarantee from the African Guarantee Fund over the period from the award of guarantee to December 2015 show that all the banks that have been provided with the guarantee have expanded their SME lending portfolio.

40 AGF Annual Report, 2014.

41 It is probably not realistic to expect that this sort of data can be collected as it would be unusual and burdensome for banks to collect such data about their clients and hence unlikely that this can be done.

Table 3: Change in SME lending portfolio size from the point when the guarantee was provided until December 2015:

All figures in USD	Dec-14	Dec-15	AGF Guarantee
BGFI Madagascar	1,617,900	3,128,969	2,500,000

	Aug-13	Dec-15	AGF Guarantee
Commercial Bank of africa (CBA) - Kanya	1,900,000	4,500,000	1,000,000

	Dec-12	Dec-15	AGF Guarantee
OIKO Credit - Various Countries in Africa	631,456,000	822,866,000	10,000,000

	Dec-13	Dec-15	AGF Guarantee
Focus Financial Service - Zambia	5,457,800	50,396,800	10,000,000

	Dec-13	Dec-15	AGF Guarantee
Zambia National Commercial Bank (ZANACO)	8,148,230	9,972,590	2,500,000

	Dec-13	Dec-15	AGF Guarantee
Orabank Group - Various Countries	9,222,570	12,953,479	20,000,000

	Dec-13	Dec-15	AGF Guarantee
Ecobank - Cameroun	27,991,303	31,157,094	7,500,000

Source: AGF.

The AGF is expanding rapidly and has reportedly achieved an overall guarantee portfolio in three years that it took a similar fund 20 years to achieve in terms of the size of the portfolio. The African Guarantee Fund plans to originate guarantee deals for USD 200 million in 2016: 50% loan guarantees (individual and portfolio), 10% equity guarantees and 40% bank fund raising guarantees and is expecting a default rate of 1.77%. As at the end of 2015, the African Guarantee Fund had treasury assets of USD 53.8 million and was achieving a return of 2.3%.

The African Guarantee Fund also operates the Capacity Development Trust, which provides capacity building to participating financial institutions to correctly assess the risk of lending to SMEs, and to effectively manage SME loan portfolio. The Capacity Development Trust also provides support to improve SME business management and governance capability, as this is also critical to the success of the guarantee scheme. The

Trust provides capacity building assistance to SME Business Development Support companies and to SMEs themselves. Improved business management and governance among the trained SMEs makes them less risky in the eyes of the participating financial institutions. This in turn builds confidence among participating financial institutions to lend to SMEs. The Trust funds up to 50% of the total eligible costs of an approved capacity development project with the beneficiary funding the other half.

There is significant donor interest in contributing with funds. As of April 2016 the Nordic Development Fund has also become a shareholder in AGF, with the establishment of a Green Guarantee Facility. The Nordic Development Fund will contribute EUR 6 million in equity and an additional EUR 1.6 million in grant support for Capacity Development[42]. Discussions are underway with Canada who is considering to provide USD 1.5 million as a contribution to the trust.

It is still early days for the AGF in terms of having a wider impact, but given that the existence of such a fund is innovative and – if it continues on the current path – it is likely to see good results and hence see both expansion and replication, and may in that sense have a transformative capacity. It should be mentioned that the AGF won the African Banker Award for Financial Inclusion in 2013, and is as such already regarded as a role model in its field.

The AGF is in the process of setting up a monitoring framework, which will be important when seeking to demonstrate results and how the AGF may contribute to changing bank behaviour. A baseline survey has been launched to obtain the initial values of the indicators, and the plan is to set realistic targets for the indicators once the baselines are known. The baseline survey is reportedly ongoing, and results are expected in May 2016.

Concerning **relevance**, the establishment of the African Guarantee Fund is in line with the Recommendations 14 and 15 of the Africa Commission and is therefore deemed relevant, as demonstrated in the chart below:

Initiatives	Related Africa Commission policy recommendations
Access to Investment Finance for SMEs	R14: The financial sector in African countries must scale up access to finance, in particular investment finance, for SMEs and develop the necessary capacity. For their part, African governments, supported by international development partners, must provide a predictable regulatory framework, facilitate capacity development of financial institutions and enterprises, and provide effective market based instruments that increase access to investment finance.
	R15: African governments must facilitate a better business environment for small enterprises. This requires basic infrastructure (which may be financed through aid and publicprivate partnerships), the registration and protection of property rights, a less burdensome regulatory framework, and incentives, rather than punishment in the form of extra costs, for businesses that formalise their operations.

Concerning the **sustainability**, the significant additional funding from other donors increases sustainability prospects and outreach potential to many more SMEs. At the

42 http://www.africanguaranteefund.com/

level of operations, prospects seem good; At the level of the intermediary banks, the fact that the guarantee provision is accompanied by technical support and capacity building is promising for strengthening their operations and orientation towards the SME target group; At the enterprise level, findings on longer term effects remains to be collected once the monitoring framework is in place. The ultimate sustainability goal is for the African Guarantee Fund to becoming a self-sustaining market-oriented entity and only when this is achieved can the real sustainability of the initiative be assessed.

In **conclusion**, the AGF is on a promising path towards achieving its goal of easing access to finance for greater numbers of SMEs. It has seen a great number of banks interested and there is continued new finance coming from donors.

The challenge for the African Guarantee Fund will be to maintain its focus on becoming a self-sustaining market-oriented entity whilst gradually expanding its portfolio to embrace banks in the lower performance tiers (with the inherent increased risk) and in countries with an overall greater risk. This is necessary to achieve its impact goals, but will require careful balancing with its self-sustainability goal.

See Annex 5 for further details on this initiative.

3.3 Initiative 3: Unleashing African entrepreneurship

The Africa Commission wanted together with the International Labour Organisation to develop packages of assistance to young existing and potential entrepreneurs complementing entrepreneurship training with advisory services, mentorship, and access to finance for both rural and urban entrepreneurs. The initiative was designed with five inter-related and complementary components, based on the immediate outcomes of the project: The first component worked to improve the entrepreneurship culture and perception of entrepreneurship with a view to motivate youth to engage in gainful enterprise initiatives and create awareness among young women and men about the merits of entrepreneurship; the second component sought to introduce entrepreneurship education in national curricula, train teachers to conduct entrepreneurship training and, in turn, train a large number of students; the third component supported capacity building of youth employment policy-makers and promoters to be in a better position to make evidence based decisions to improve resource allocation and programme design; the fourth component worked to strengthen youth organisations to provide innovative business development services through the establishment of the 'Youth to Youth Fund' which supported small-scale youth entrepreneurship development projects; the fifth component provided capacity building for trainers in Start-and-Improve-Your-Business, business development service apprenticeship schemes and facilitated access to finance, all to enable more young women and men in establishing and managing sustainable enterprises. The initiative had a budget of approximately USD 23 million and was implemented between April 2010 and June 2015 when it was completed.

Concerning the **results of the initiative**, the project reports impressive achievements. It was however not validated by the independent ILO evaluation. The scope of the current assessment would only consider – in reasonable depth – one component as a sample of the programme namely "entrepreneurship education" (Immediate Objective 2)[43]. However, reported achievements across the project include: that 65% of youth have improved attitudes towards entrepreneurship among young women and men[44]; concerning the results of entrepreneurship training, a mini survey in Uganda revealed that 98% of the students that joined the training showed interest to start a business after completion; a number of impact evaluations were undertaken and policy papers and policy influence plans formulated to assist stakeholders in advocating for policy change; all the funded projects under the Youth to Youth fund delivered their outcomes and outputs at satisfactory level and further replication of innovative approaches is reportedly taking place; and concerning the business training, an impact survey on the Start-and-Improve-Your-Business training program conducted in 2013 showed that 56% of the trainees started their own business (the project estimates that more than 40,000 businesses were developed) and an impact survey established that 67% of the participating youth reported to have improved revenues and 70% have improved profitability.

Concerning the entrepreneurship education, the planned achievement was to have the entrepreneurship education curricula amended in at least two countries. The project reports that the curriculum was developed and rolled out for Senior 5 & 6 in Uganda and for primary/secondary level in Tanzania (although another place in the report it says that the plans for roll-out have been completed). The Evaluation found, however, that the implementation in Tanzania has not progressed beyond the piloting stage, which may call into question the quality of the project reporting. The project furthermore reports to have trained almost 4,000 teachers against the planned 5,000 and at the end of the project about 147,000 students had been reached.

Concerning **relevance**, the initiative was designed to address two recommendations of the Africa Commission (Nos. 16 and 17). As can be seen the initiative fits the recommendations closely and is thus highly relevant to what the Africa Commission was seeking to achieve. Given that this (and the Skills for Youth) initiatives were the only initiatives that directly target youth unemployment, its relevance to the recommendations of the Africa Commission is high.

43 As agreed in the inception report, a sampling approach would be applied for the Youth Entrepreneurship Facility.

44 However, the indicator for "Increase in the share of young people that consider starting their business as a livelihood strategy of choice" was measured through a proxy of the percentage of youth attending SIYB who subsequently prepared a business plan. The proxy is assessed as unsuitable for what it was expected to measure as preparing a business plan is usually a part of the programme.

Initiative	Related Africa Commission policy recommendations
Unleashing African Entrepre-neurship	R16: Increase the focus on young entrepreneurs, both women and men, as drivers of change. Such a renewed focus should be reflected in policy dialogue, poverty reduction strategies or other development plans, and medium-term and annual budgets.
	R17: African governments together with stakeholders, including the private sector, schools, universities, civil society, and youth organisations, must promote entre-preneurship as a viable, propoor development strategy, given that most new jobs are being created through small enterprises and self-employment. In particular, the development of comprehensive programmes directly aimed at encouraging young entrepreneurs to set up and grow viable businesses, including facilitating access to start-up capital, should be considered.

On **sustainability**, it assessed that the main sustainability achieved at beneficiary level is for the people trained and doing business. There seem to be some inertia at institutional level and only Uganda seem to have been successful in institutionalising entrepreneurship education (also supported by the entry of a new donor). Possibilities that this may also be achieved in Tanzania exist, but probably only if further external donor support is received to support the process. The ILO is currently considering how this can be remedied.

In **conclusion**, the YEF project had a complex project design, which may have created unnecessary challenges for the project. The Danida 2009 Desk Appraisal of the project concluded, inter alia, that "the level of ambition of the proposed Facility is high. Perhaps too high given the level of funding anticipated. Certainly, six components[45] in three countries for USD 23 million over two years appear too complicated and too thinly spread." The Evaluation would agree with that finding. According to the results framework of the project, much has been achieved, which was confirmed by the ILO evaluation. Some results reporting seem less solid and the current assessment has not been able to verify the overall effectiveness of the initiative, based on the available reports. A simpler, more focused design might have ensured more long-term sustainability and more solid results for replicability.

See Annex 6 for further details on this initiative.

3.4 Initiative 4: Access to sustainable energy

Together with the African Development Bank, the Africa Commission wanted to address the African energy deficit as the Commission envisioned that renewable energy production and energy efficiency can potentially contribute considerably to sustainable growth and job creation. The initiative planned to stimulate and expand the emerging market for sustainable energy, primarily in rural areas, by strengthening the role of SMEs as producers, distributors, suppliers and consumers of decentralised and climate-friendly energy.

45 Later reduced to five components.

Hence, the initiative has the development objective of supporting sustainable private-sector led economic growth in African countries through the efficient utilization of presently untapped clean energy resources and has been designed to operate under three components (with Ministry of Foreign Affairs supporting Components 1 and 2 only):

- Component I: Project Preparation Grants – seeks to support bank lending to renewable energy and energy efficiency projects by financing the sponsors' cost of project preparation from pre-feasibility to project closure. The window provides cost-sharing grants and technical assistance to private project developers/promoters to facilitate pre-investment activities for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. Grant funding targets development activities for projects with total capital investments in the range of USD 30-200 million[46].

- Component II: Equity Investments – will provide equity finance and technical assistance for project preparation and business operations through investment in a private equity fund. The Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa co-sponsored the Africa Renewable Energy Fund; a Pan-African Private Equity Fund solely focused on small/medium (5-50 megawatts) independent power projects from solar, wind, biomass, hydro as well as some geothermal and stranded gas technologies. Investment decisions are the sole responsibility of Africa Renewable Energy Fund's Fund Manager – Berkeley Energy Africa Ltd. – subject to the terms of the Africa Renewable Energy Fund agreements, with the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa Secretariat's role mainly as providing general oversight to fund implementation as well as collaboration on project identification.[47]

- Component III: Public Sector Activities – will support activities, especially those of the public sector, that create an enabling environment for private investments in sustainable energy in Africa. This component also focuses on mini-grids, with earmarked support from DFID.

Concerning **results**, it is still very early days, so there is not much to show yet. The Project Preparation Grant facility suffered slow progress due to a range of issues (project selection, problems faced by private sector beneficiaries when utilising African Development Bank procurement processes, internal African Development Bank resource management and mobilising African Development Bank task managers to make use of the facility). According to the Mid-term Review of the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa, "project implementation is moving at a slow pace, but in the right direction" and that there is a need to "bring in new [human] resources and restructure Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa's operations to focus on implementation".[48] So far 13 projects have been approved and 49% of the funds are committed but only 3% of the funds have been disbursed, leaving 48% of the funds uncommitted[49].

46 The range was originally USD 30-75 million, but this was expanded when the multi-donor agreement was entered into.

47 Financing private projects in Sub-Saharan Africa sized between USD 10-80 million across mature technologies (such as solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal) only.

48 Presentation of the Mid-term Review team to African Development Bank 29th January 2016.

49 Ibid.

The Africa Renewable Energy Fund manages the investment funds and is operated by the fund manager, Berkeley Energy Africa Ltd. It has raised its planned maximum investment capital of USD 200 million with funding from Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa, and many other co-investors. The Fund has committed 24% of its available resources, disbursed 16% and 60% remains uncommitted[50]. According to the mid-term review team "Berkeley Energy adds value through professional upstream project preparation, project management and financial modelling".[51] The Evaluation also learned that expected results show that the amount of megawatts is anticipated to exceed targets whereas job creation targets are unlikely to be met directly – although jobs will indirectly be created through access to more reliable energy, increasing productivity and competitiveness of affected enterprises.

This initiative was designed to address two recommendations of the Africa Commission (Nos. 18 and 19). As can be seen the initiative fits the recommendations closely and is thus highly **relevant** to what the Africa Commission was seeking to achieve:

Initiative	Related Africa Commission policy recommendations
Access to Sustainable Energy	R18: Increase production, distribution and productive use of electricity and other forms of energy in a cost-effective and climate friendly manner. This need has to be addressed at the regional, national and local levels. In communities with limited access to energy, the need can be met by an efficient utilisation of local and renewable energy sources.
	R19: The private sector, in particular SMEs, must play an important role in the provision of energy services at the local level. Their potential should be utilised by stimulating and expanding the market for decentralised, renewable energy services.

With respect to **sustainability**, the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa is the African Development Bank's only dedicated renewable energy instrument and, provided it operates efficiently in developing its project pipeline from approval through implementation, it should attract further donor finance and its future as a trust fund should be assured. The sustainability of the private sector projects initiated by the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa depends upon their ongoing profitability – but the high level of due diligence research and technical support they receive maximises their survival prospects. The Africa Renewable Energy Fund has likely long-term sustainability because of its anticipated return on funds.

In **conclusion**, the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa is assessed to be an important structure to achieve the goal of stimulating and expanding the emerging market for sustainable energy, by strengthening the role of small- and medium-sized enterprises in delivery and productive use of energy. The initiative has raised interest and investment from other donors, from development finance institutions and private sector investors in investing in small-scale renewable energy. The upscaling of Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa to a multi-donor arrangement brought in, not just new finance, but a new and more directed agreement requiring more effective management and control and more

50 Ibid.
51 Ibid.

stringent oversight. The Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa has experienced some teething problems and still needs to improve its operational efficiency, but overall it is assessed as a very promising initiative.

See Annex 7 for further details on this initiative.

3.5 Initiative 5a: Promoting post-primary education and research (Skills for youth)

The initiative sought to increase opportunities for young women and men to find gainful and productive employment through strengthening formal and informal systems of technical and vocational skills provision. The project "Skills for Youth Employment and Rural Development in Western and Southern Africa" was designed to meet this objective and implemented by ILO in Benin, Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe. The project operated with two main activity areas. Firstly, the introduction of the ILO's Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) methodology, which supports local economic development in a number of rural communities, with skills development in specific sectors including apiculture, aquaculture, dairy, horticulture, cattle rearing, piggeries, poultry, and solar marketing/green jobs. Secondly, the so-called Quality Informal Apprenticeship programme was introduced to upgrade training delivery through systems of informal apprenticeship in sectors such as arts and crafts, catering, carpentry and joinery, clothing, hairdressing, home décor, motor vehicle mechanics, upholstery, plumbing and welding.

The project reports impressive **results** in terms of exceeding output targets. These include about 12,000 jobs created (against a target of about 9,000), about 7,500 trained under the informal apprenticeship programme (against a target of about 5,200), about 4,000 master crafts persons trained (against a target of about 2,700) and more than 3,500 partners trained. While this should indicate that the capacity of rural community groups to identify local economic opportunities has been increased, the evaluation has not been able to find evidence indicating that the goal of enabling public and private training institutions to better deliver demand-oriented services to rural, informal economies has been achieved.

The goal of enhancing the capacity of stakeholders and institutions at the national level to apply tools, methodologies and strategies developed under the program for broader out-reach may be underway to be achieved in Zimbabwe where the approach is captured and budgeted in the National Budget for 2016[52]. There is no evidence of any continuity in Benin and Burkina Faso at institutional level.

Concerning **relevance**, the linkage between the Africa Commission's recommendations and the foci of the two components (rural development and informal apprenticeship) seem less than direct. During the various meetings of the Africa Commission there was continuously reference to the importance of vocational training and skills development

52 The 2016 National Budget Statement, "Building a Conducive Environment that Attracts Foreign Direct Investment" Presented to the Parliament of Zimbabwe on 26 November 2015.

and this is captured in minutes of the meetings[53]. The Commission's recommendations focus on the need to make formal education more relevant to private sector employers' needs: it is hard to see a direct relevance link between that goal and the final initiative that was developed with its focus on rural development and informal apprenticeship without a formal, institutional anchoring. Clearly, there was a desire to have a private-sector-driven approach to vocational training and the engagement of private sector stakeholders is commendable but the Evaluation does not assess that this implied a parallel system rather than strengthening the existing, formal TVET system.

Initiative	Related Africa Commission policy recommendations
Promoting Post-Primary Education and Research	R20: Focus on and invest in post primary education, better considering the requirements of the private sector, so Africa can become globally competitive.
	R21: Enhance investment in secondary education, specifically within technical and vocational training and skills development for young women and men. The Africa Commission recommends the expansion of the Education for All Fast Track Initiative to include post primary education, including technical and vocational skills development as part of a comprehensive approach to education for all.

The initiative had no orientation with regards to the expansion of the Education for All Fast Track Initiative to include post primary education. This goal was reemphasized in the approval documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs[54], but the implemented initiative was not designed to meet the goal of this recommendation.

In Zimbabwe, the final evaluation assessed the **sustainability** and stated that there was a commitment of USD 500,000 by the Government of Zimbabwe, which was hoped could ensure the continuation and further consolidation of the programme. The Evaluation can confirm that it is captured in the 2016 National Budget of Zimbabwe[55], but so far there is no evidence that the funding has materialised. At the same time, a National Skills Development Policy has been formulated for Zimbabwe but so far there is little evidence that the approaches and methodologies introduced by the initiative have been included. Otherwise, the initiative does not appear very sustainable.

53 Minutes of the meeting, Second Meeting of the Africa Commission, Addis Ababa, 20 November 2008.

54 Opfølgning på Afrikakommisionens anbefalinger – det bilaterale og det internationale spor, 17. August 2009.

55 In the 2016 budget statement of Zimbabwe, the Government commits to supporting an initiative by the ILO, expressed as follows: "Furthermore, the International Labour Organisation is supporting youth sponsored centres. The support targets youth training in business project management, business projects identification and marketing. Government will complement this effort through allocating USD 75,000 per administrative district" (The 2016 National Budget Statement, "Building a Conducive Environment that Attracts Foreign Direct Investment" Presented to the Parliament of Zimbabwe on 26th November 2015). This should reportedly be a continuation of the TREE programme. As there are 59 districts in Zimbabwe, this commitment amounts to USD 4,425,000 but the implementation has not, to the Evaluation's knowledge, started yet.

In **conclusion**, the project has exceeded the set targets and a large number of beneficiaries have been reached but the indicators and monitoring framework was not very helpful in assessing the wider effectiveness, especially in terms of institutionalization and creating models for wider replication. It is questionable as to whether the design of the initiative met the expectations of either the members of the Africa Commission or the Danida Board and its relevance therefore also comes into question.

See Annex 8 for further details on this initiative.

3.6 Initiative 5b: Support to Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation

The UniBRAIN initiative aimed to link university education, research and business in sustainable agriculture to promote innovation and produce graduates with entrepreneurial and business skills and research-based knowledge that is relevant to the development of African agriculture and agro-businesses. The UniBRAIN program was implemented by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa and its partners[56] and had a three-pronged approach:

- Development and implementation of collaborative programmes between universities, research institutions and the private sector which foster innovation and lead to the commercialisation of agribusiness innovations.[57]
- Development and implementation of improved and better contextualised BSc and MSc teaching and learning that takes advantage of various approaches and tools and creates agribusiness graduates with the potential to become efficient entrepreneurs being produced by tertiary educational institutions.
- Facilitating exchange of experiences and sharing of resources and knowledge between universities, research institutions and private enterprise to raise awareness and realise the potential of such collaboration to drive positive change with a view to scale-up and replicability.

Concerning **results**, the Evaluation assesses that progress and achievements have been slow – and this probably reflects the complex design and the over-optimistic projections of how rapidly self-sustainability of business incubators could be achieved as several reviewers have pointed out. The majority of activities are orientated towards and implemented through support of incubators, hosted by universities. The incubators have each adopted somewhat different approaches and definitions of what constitutes incubation by developing business models based on a mix of traditional business incubator func-

56 These include ICRISAT Agri-Business Incubator (ABI), African Network for Agriculture, Agro forestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE), and Pan African Agribusiness and Agro Industry Consortium (PanAAC) and Sub-regional research organisations including ASARECA, CCARDESA and CORAF.

57 Both the September 2011 Appraisal of the Project Document and Danida board comments when approving it stress that in an African context it would be important to interpret innovation in a broader sense to also include adaptation of technologies.

tions and accelerator services, value chain development interventions, and elements of franchising, centres for technology dissemination and outgrowing schemes.

A report[58] commissioned by the MFA reflected on incubator experiences within UniBRAIN's two main objectives: a) their efforts to support commercialization of agribusiness innovations and b) their effort to support tertiary educational institutions to produce efficient entrepreneurs. The report concluded that "activities related to the first main objective – commercialization – have not been initiated during the timeframe of the first study, and activities in relation to the second objective – curriculum change – has only to a very limited degree been initiated". The current evaluation concurs that this still is the case.

Possibly the greatest achievement is the success in branding "the UniBRAIN model": it is now well known across Africa. An inherent problem though is that the model is open to such broad interpretation that there is lack of clarity amongst everyone we have spoken to as to what exactly the model is. The well-known brand may per se lead to replication of the incubator idea, but not necessarily while adhering to good practice principles of becoming self-sustained (i.e. self-financing) but rather as an approach to linking business and academia.

Concerning **relevance**, it can be seen the initiative fits the recommendations closely and is thus highly relevant to what the Africa Commission was seeking to achieve. It was based on a proposal developed by the Forum from Agricultural Research in Africa and thus has a high degree of local ownership.

Initiative	Related Africa Commission policy recommendations
Promoting Post-Primary Education and Research	R22: African countries and regional organisations, supported by development partners, should invest in the creation of better linkages between university education, research and the private sector in agricultural development and value chains. Such an investment should be based on national and regional strategies and funded through African organisations, with particular emphasis on promoting innovation and gender equality.

With respect to the **sustainability** of the UniBRAIN Facility, it has institutionalised itself as the African Agribusiness Incubation Network. The African Agribusiness Incubation Network is now a legal entity governed by a board of directors and is likely to continue its operations, if additional funding is identified. At the incubators level, it is clear that the prospect of financial self-sustainability of the incubators is distant and there is no clear path to its achievement. It is unclear exactly what will happen to the incubators on the finalisation of Ministry of Foreign Affairs support, but it is clear that without another external source of financial support they cannot continue at the current level of activities.

In **conclusion**, UniBRAIN has not managed to create a network of self-financing agribusiness incubators – but such a goal was probably unrealistic from the start given the

58 Final report for the study to enhance lessons learned and knowledge exchange in the UniBRAIN agribusiness innovation incubator consortia, Associate Professor Carsten Nico Hjortsø and others, August 2014.

short timeframe, the limited technical assistance and training given to the incubator staff, and the “virtual nature” of the incubation under the UniBRAIN model (which meant the primary source of income for most incubators – rental income – was not forthcoming).

However, most of the incubators appear to be offering some form of technology transfer/diffusion services to their clients. These vary in nature, but some are unquestionably helping to ensure increased competitiveness and employment opportunities in agribusiness. However, there is a real risk that – in a search for financial survival – the incubators will move into a range of income generating activities that have nothing to do with their goal as well as widening their technical scope with the risk of losing focus on what is supposed to be their core sector competence.

UniBRAIN has forged the necessary links for effective technology transfer and diffusion along selected value chains through its creation of structures, which are independent, not-for-profit and are jointly owned by universities, business organisations and national research organisations. UniBRAIN has helped in bringing the academic world and the business sector together: the first steps in an important bridge building between two very different and separated worlds. That is a significant achievement and Pan-African, regional and/or national structures may wish to support both the African Agribusiness Incubator Network and the individual incubators to continue to offer the technology development, adaptation, transfer and diffusion service to help improve the competitiveness of priority value chains.

See Annex 9 for further details on this initiative.

3.7 Summary of findings on effectiveness, sustainability and relevance

The following Table 4 summarises the Evaluation’s findings concerning the effectiveness, sustainability and relevance of these five initiatives.

Table 4: Brief summary of effectiveness, sustainability and relevance of the five initiatives

Initiative	Effectiveness	Sustainability	Relevance to AC recommendations
Initiative 1: Benchmarking African Competitiveness	No outcome or impact indicators were defined so difficult to assess. The Evaluation was able to identify the following outputs: • Publication of the Africa Competitiveness Report 2010, released at the 2010 UN Conference on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. • Seven new sub-Saharan countries were included in the Global Competitiveness Report and Executive Opinion Survey and maintained for five years. • 12 workshops held across Africa joining leaders from the business sector, government and civil society, with the aim to initiate a process of review and policy reform for improved competitiveness. The Evaluation was able to identify the following outcomes: • World Economic Forum stated that the National Workshop on Competitiveness in Nigeria led to the establishment of the National Competitiveness Council of Nigeria (http://nccnigeria.org/). • World Economic Forum report continued receiving requests for national competitiveness workshops (Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, etc.). • World Economic Forum mentioned that CNBC Africa undertook a series of debates on competitiveness (Nigeria, Rwanda) as part of the workshops.	Continued by World Economic Forum to date. The support of the Africa Commission has clearly furthered the work of WEF in Africa and it is expected to be rolled out further.	Relevant
Initiative 2: Access to investment finance for SMEs	No quantified indicators were defined so assessing effectiveness properly was challenged. The Evaluation was able to identify the following results: • 850 SMEs have accessed finance • Cooperation agreements have been made with 62 banks in 35 countries • Great interest of other donor to contribute to the fund	Significant additional funding from other donors increased sustainability prospects and outreach to many more SMEs	Relevant

Initiative	Effectiveness	Sustainability	Relevance to AC recommendations
Initiative 3: Unleashing African Entrepreneurship	Absence of baseline data makes measuring effectiveness challenging. In addition, difficulty in triangulating the data makes it impossible to assess the validity of the findings. The Evaluation focused on Immediate Objective 2. In the Youth Entrepreneurship Facility final progress report 2015, the Evaluation found the following results amongst others: • Measured interest amongst school leavers that they intend to start a business. • Five briefing notes presented to policy makers and other stakeholders on youth employment. • Estimates that 40,000 youth businesses were started. • 67-70% of youth reported to have improved revenues and profitability.	Project closed and some continuity of initiatives, one with project funding in one country	Relevant
Initiative 4: Access to sustainable energy	No outcome or impacts indicators were defined so it was difficult to assess. A new logical framework matrix has been developed, but has not yet been reported on. From the Mid-term Review the Evaluation found the following statements on the likelihood of creating results: • Expected results show that additional Mega Watt is anticipated to exceed targets. • Job creation targets are unlikely to be met directly – although jobs will indirectly be created through access to more reliable energy.	Significant additional funding from other donors increased sustainability prospects. Innovative energy projects likely to be replicated if successful.	Relevant
Initiative 5a: Promoting post-primary education and research (Skills for Youth)	No outcome or impact indicators were defined so assessing effectiveness properly was challenged. The project reports that almost 12,000 jobs have been created for youth, informal apprenticeships have been created for youth, training of master crafts trainers, beneficiaries have participated and benefitted from crafts training and institutional partners have been trained. The Evaluation was not able to verify the validity of the project reports.	Capturing of project concept and funding intent in one national budget statement but not yet taken effect.	Marginally relevant in the form it was designed and implemented

Initiative	Effectiveness	Sustainability	Relevance to AC recommendations
Initiative 5b: Support to Universities, Business and Research in Agricultural Innovation (UniBRAIN)	According to previous reviews and project reporting, the initiative has achieved its defined performance targets. The Evaluation found that these are very broad and their achievement is unlikely to lead UniBRAIN to achieve the goal of creating a network of self-financing agribusiness incubators. The Evaluation has not been able to find sufficient evidence that pointed towards whether UniBRAIN have been able to create significant changes to improving the agribusiness curricula. The Evaluation made the following findings: • With the support of UniBRAIN (although with possible limited input) ANAFE and Natural Resource Education developed a broad-brush, generalised agribusiness curriculum guide for Certificate, BSc, MSc and PhD degree levels for use in African universities. • Although change to curriculum has not yet happened due to fixed curricular change, the universities are positive towards and recognise the need to implement changes. • UniBRAIN has been successful in branding itself and is now well known across Africa.	Sustainability dependent upon identifying donor funding to maintain UniBRAIN and its network of incubators. The incubators per se are not financially viable and have hence a low sustainability.	Relevant

The Evaluation have assessed the **relevance** of the individual initiatives in accordance with OECD/DAC's criteria, and thus in this case, relevance vis-à-vis the Africa Commission mandate and recommendations. Based on this, the Evaluation concludes that all except for one of the initiatives were highly relevant to the policy recommendations of the Africa Commission. One initiative – Skills for Youth Employment – does not appear to be fully relevant to the Africa Commission's recommendations – despite requests from the Commissioners[59] and the Danida Board that it be amended to make it more relevant. All the other initiatives are considered highly relevant by the Evaluation.

Effectiveness is measured as the ability of the initiatives to meet their objectives. However, as the quality of the project documents for the Africa Commission initiatives does not live up to Danida guideline requirements[60] the Evaluation was challenged in establishing a basis for this assessment. Especially with respect to the definition of key performance indicators, the need to establish clear benchmarks and targets for those

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59 At the Second Meeting of the Africa Commission held in Addis Ababa on 20th November 2008, the minutes of the meeting show that "several commissioners emphasized the need to focus more on technical and vocational education and training (TVET) under the education initiative and underlined the importance of taking into account the cross-cutting issues of agriculture, good governance, the civil society and gender mainstreaming in all the initiatives." Unfortunately, the Commission members' urging that greater emphasis should be placed on technical and vocational training was not reflected in the final initiatives adequately.

60 See Danida's Aid Management Guidelines at http://amg.um.dk/

indicators and the systems planned to be used to monitor performance.[61] The absence in all but one of the initiatives of clear performance indicators (with both a baseline and a target) makes the assessment of impact and/or outcome challenging. Interviews and timelines show that the projects were prepared faster than the normal procedures and requirements of Danida's Aid Management Guidelines, which is likely to have influenced the quality of the results frameworks.

Concerning **sustainability**, many of the initiatives are still ongoing and the many activities are assessed to have potential for sustainability. Three initiatives have succeeded in attracting funding from other donors, and thus ensure continued operation beyond the Danish funding period. The two initiatives undertaken in partnership with the African Development Bank (Africa Guarantee Fund and Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa) appear to have the best prospect of sustainability while two of the initiatives (Skills for Youth Employment and Youth Entrepreneurship) have closed and the evaluation find limited evidence of continuity.

3.8 Policy influence and transformative capacity of the five initiatives

Several of the initiatives have contributed with some degree of upstream policy influence. Concerning the initiative for Benchmarking African Competitiveness (Initiative 1), the Evaluation found, as mentioned earlier, evidence of wider influence, which could be attributed to the initiative for benchmarking competitiveness and as such be considered as possible policy influence and transformative capacity: this includes the establishment of the National Competitiveness Council of Nigeria, further requests for national competitiveness workshops (Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, etc.) as well as the media (e.g. CNBC Africa) picking up on the debate and undertook a series of debates on competitiveness (Nigeria, Rwanda) as part of the workshops[62].

It is still early days for the AGF (Initiative 2) in terms of having a wider impact, but given that the existence of such a fund is innovative and – if it continues on the current path – it is likely to see good results and hence see both expansion and replication, and may in that sense have a transformative capacity. It is already being scaled up as new donors are joining the initiative whereby the portfolio grows and, in turn, increases the access to finance for SMEs.

61 The use of core indicators, which could be aggregated across the initiatives to assess overall impact of the Africa Commission, does not appear to have been considered. Only one of the six initiatives (UniBRAIN) has clearly specified indicator targets and these are not entirely indicative of the expected outcome of the project. The "Benchmarking African Competitiveness" initiative does not define expected outcomes – only outputs. It is also difficult to see how the theory of change implicit in the "Skills for Youth Employment and Rural Development" could have led to the goals set in this area by the Africa Commission: resulting in an initiative whose relevance the Evaluation has therefore questioned.

62 For example, a CNBC television debate involving H.E. Olusegun Aganga (Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment), Achankeng Leke (Director, McKinsey & Company), Leyla Gozo (Founder and Managing Director, LGG & Partners), Enase Okonedo (Lagos Business School, Pan-Atlantic University) and Onye Sunday (Anchor, CNBC Africa) was held as an integral element of the Regional Workshop on Competitiveness in ECOWAS at the Four Points Sheraton, Lagos, Nigeria on 28th November 2013.

Linked to the third initiative, The Youth Entrepreneurship Facility (Initiative 3), the Evaluation notes that the International Labour Organisation has entered into a new coalition to address youth unemployment – the Joint Youth Employment Initiative for Africa, which was officially launched in 2013 by the African Development Bank, African Union, International Labour Organisation and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa[63]. There has been cooperation between YEF and the Secretariat of the Joint Initiative and the Joint Initiative Secretariat was invited to YEF events with a view to sharing lessons learned. This cooperation – which happens to be between four of the main organisations involved in implementing the initiatives – may have allowed the experience gained by the YEF to play a useful role in the development of the much broader Joint Youth Employment Initiative

The Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (Initiative 4) can be considered as a front-runner and innovative as being the first of its kind. It has attracted much additional donor funding, which can be regarded as an indicator of its transformative capacity. Moreover, the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa is well integrated into global initiatives. This includes that at the African Energy Ministers' meeting of 16th November 2012 there was an encouragement of the African Development Bank to support the African SE4All opt-in countries, through the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa". It should also be mentioned that the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa features in the UN's Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) Initiative documentation as one of the key renewable energy and energy efficiency instruments in Africa. Finally, the new President of the African Development Bank has recently launched the so-called 'New Deal on Energy for Africa and the Transformative Partnership on Energy for Africa', within which the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa is well placed to play a pivotal role[64]. The Africa Renewable Energy Fund, which manages the investment funds, has raised its planned maximum investment capital of USD 200 million with funding from Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa, and many other co-investors. In that sense it has certainly been transformative in increasing availability of funding for investment in sustainable energy provision.

Most of the initiatives have a fairly indirect causal-relationship to generating jobs for youth and this is only to a limited extent captured in the available results frameworks. It is hence hard to access the extent to which there has been a positive influence on youth employment due to the initiatives.

As the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Unit within the Joint Secretariat Support Office (see Chapter 5 for an explanation of this structure) did not, as required by its terms of reference, "ensure systematisation of lessons learnt and knowledge sharing within the fields of the initiatives" opportunities for sharing models and lessons learned were not capitalised upon.

63 http://www.ilo.org/addisababa/whats-new/WCMS_210399/lang--en/index.htm
64 http://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/article/remarks-delivered-by-akinwumi-a-adesina-president-of-the-african-development-bank-at-the-reception-on-the-new-deal-on-energy-for-africa-and-the-launch-of-the-transformative-partnership-on-energy-for-africa-davos-switzerland-january-20-2016-15322/

4 Assessment of Programme Monitoring, Evaluation and Dissemination of Results of the Africa Commission

Besides the five concrete initiatives, the Africa Commission also recommended the establishment of an African Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Unit to follow up on the Commission's recommendations in order to ensure continued African ownership of the activities and that the initiatives maintain the Pan-African scope, which has remained essential to the Commission's work. The Africa Commission pointed to a set-up of the M&E Unit to be placed within an existing joint secretariat. The existing secretariat, located in Addis Ababa, is managed by the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). The aim of the secretariat is to facilitate institutional cooperation on shared initiatives and agendas between the three organisations as well as cooperative programmes with international partners.[65]

The objectives of the joint M&E unit were set at: (i) Ensuring and contributing to continued African ownership of the different initiatives of the Africa Commission; (ii) Further developing and disseminating the recommendations of the Africa Commission; (iii) Documenting the experiences and results gained from the implementation of the five initiatives recommended by the Africa Commission.

The 2010 Progress Report of the Africa Commission stated: "The M&E Unit has thus been established with the support of the three organisations. The unit will undertake overall monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance of the five initiatives and document the experiences and results. The unit will also further develop and disseminate the recommendations of the Africa Commission at the Pan-African level and continue discussing and representing this agenda vis-à-vis Africa's international development partners".[66]

On 21 December 2011, UNECA requested a change in the agreement signed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Danish embassy in Addis Abeba. The embassy agreed to the re-programming of funds[67]. The request came with an assurance that re-programming would not affect the expected accomplishments of the Joint Unit as defined in the Framework Agreement[68].

In 2013 and 2014, the JSSO submitted two progress reports. The 2013 report provided a good description of the five initiatives whereas the 2014 failed to address the points in

65 Growth and Employment: Visions at Work, Progress Report of the Africa Commission, July 2010.
66 Ibid.
67 The only evidence that the Evaluation has for the reallocations is the confirmation given in the Joint Secretariat Support Office's April 2014 Progress Report that funds had been re-programmed "through the request to the embassy in December 2011".
68 The UN Economic Commission furthermore stated that "I would like to assure you that the re-programming will not affect the implementation of the agreed main tasks and the delivery of the planned outputs and thereby the expected accomplishments of the Joint Unit as set out in the Framework Agreement".

the agreed tasks of the Joint M&E Unit. From the progress reports and based on interviews, it is evident the main tasks of the Joint M&E Unit as specified in the agreement with MFA were never undertaken.[69] Former President of the African Development Bank and a member of the African Commission Dr. Donald Kaberuka concluded that due to bureaucratic inertia within the "African structures" the objectives set forth for the M&E Unit in the 2010 Progress Report were not met. Additionally, Dr Asha-Rose Migiro subjoined that, in her opinion, there lacked monitoring.[70]

Individual Africa Commission initiatives were subject to monitoring by the responsible organisations and in the case of the AGF of the Board of the AGF. The Africa Commission initiatives were "backstopped" by Danish MFA units throughout their lifespans in accordance with the Danida guidelines and Denmark also funded an adviser to assist the JSSO with fulfilling their task.

Given the scale of tasks expected to be undertaken by the Joint M&E Unit the budget of DKK 6 million appears low[71]. The Evaulation concludes that sufficient resources were not prioritised to effectively implement the assigned tasks of the Joint M&E Unit, which meant a smaller scope of tasks undertaken, although it is believed that the JSSO could have argued for further funding, if deemed necessary.

Also, it seems as there was little oversight over the operations of the Unit. It was ultimately the responsibility of the Partners (the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the UN Economic Commission for Africa and the Government of Denmark) "to review and evaluate the functioning of the joint M&E unit", but the Evaluation concludes that it does not appear that this was done, and nor did they seek to ensure the tasks entrusted to the unit were undertaken.

69 The Evaluation was unable to contact Mr. Jean Ping (former Chairman of the African Union Commission and a member of the Africa Commission) hence this report cannot present his assessment as to why the Joint M&E Unit was unable to realise it's objectives.

70 Interview, 17th February 2016.

71 For example, the Global Fund to fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria in their Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit "recommends that implementers allocate five to 10% of the grant budget for M&E." It should be recognised that the tasks given to the Joint M&E Unit go far beyond M&E into significant awareness raising and dissemination activities.

5 Conclusions and Lessons Learned

The Africa Commission was established with a strong representation of high level personalities of relevant institutions related to development, youth employment and private sector development in Africa. The members and institutions involved in the Commission had the potential of influencing the broader political agenda. In other words, the composition of the Commission was favourable for its objectives.

The Evaluation concludes that the Africa Commission impacted on the Danish development agenda, contributing *inter alia* to a significant increase in the amount of Danish development funding allocated to private sector development.

With respect to bringing about a refocused international development agenda, the Africa Commission's recommendations were in congruence with the ongoing debate, and timely when it came to bringing youth employment higher on the agenda, although maybe not to the extent that it had hoped.

There is limited evidence of effects on the national development strategies at country level in Africa and that the Commission members actively engaged with national and international partners in the public and private domain in Africa to promote a refocused agenda for international development cooperation with Africa, as the commitment in the Commission-endorsed "Copenhagen Statement" stipulated. While the Africa Commission was a Danish-led and financed initiative, the expectation was that African ownership of the Commission's recommendations would derive from its African membership, which included a number of important and influential individuals. In other words, it was expected that these individuals, being party to the discussions and work of the Commission, would take forward its recommendations, but little evidence to this effect has been found. A form of operationalisation of the policy intents and follow-up would have been beneficial to secure a higher level of political follow-up by the Pan-African institutions as well as the individual members.

The bulk of the five (*de facto six*) initiatives supported were found to be relevant to the Commission's objectives and largely effective in meeting – or on track in meeting – their targeted outputs, but weak results frameworks make it challenging to assess whether expected outcomes were achieved. More significant are the initiatives that have been well institutionalized, such as AGF and SEFA, which continue to contribute to the Commission's agenda.

Sharing of lesson learned from the initiatives, potentially leading to further scaling up and replication, has been influenced by the failure of the Joint M&E Unit to perform it's stated tasks. The Joint M&E Unit being a technical unit was challenged in lifting what is in many ways a political agenda. High level political ownership of the initiatives in the implementing institutions, including oversight of the Joint M&E Unit, would have been necessary. Most of the initiatives have a fairly indirect causal-relationship to generating jobs for youth and it is hence hard to establish the extent to which there has been a positive policy change or transformative capacity concerning youth employment per se due to the policy recommendations and initiatives.

Key lessons learned

1) Strategy for follow-up on policy recommendations. The 10 policy recommendations were not accompanied with an operational plan or strategy for how they were supposed to be implemented and followed-up. Given the commitments made in the "Copenhagen Statement", a more comprehensive plan for how to pursue the recommendations of the Commission and possibly influence policies at both international level and at the national level in the African countries would be useful if a similar initiative is launched in the future.

2) Ensure political ownership. Related to the lesson learned above, ownership at political level must be ensured through encouraging leadership and active involvement of the institutions in every element of the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all initiatives, especially if they have the purpose of being demonstration models with a view to scaling up, replication and possibly deliver policy changes. Such responsibilities should not be delegated to a Secretariat.

3) Secure solid results frameworks. Danida has clear and well-considered guidelines for the design and management of its development projects and programmes.[72] Programmes/projects are designed using a clear intervention logic (the theory of change) through a proven and well-considered process of identification, formulation, appraisal, and approval[73]. Danida aid management guidelines should be followed in all cases: attempts to short-circuit the process may lead to the design of sub-standard results frameworks, making it challenging to assess the effectiveness of the projects.

72 http://amg.um.dk/en/Technical-guidelines/guidelines-for-programmes-and-projects

73 A 2006 Technical Note also provides significant guidance on the monitoring of projects and programmes. It stresses the need for programme design to include the formulation of clear indicators – with an initial benchmark starting point and a clear target – at all levels of the programme/project (impact, outcome, and output. See also "Danish Development Cooperation in a Results Perspective: Danida's Framework for Managing for Development Results 2011-2014", July 2011.

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