

Concept note on Workshop to promote understanding of African Union's participation in Dubai Expo2020

I. Introduction

Following the decision of the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) General Assembly in Paris, on 27 November 2013, to award Dubai the hosting rights for a Universal Exposition, the Expo2020 will be hosted by Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, with its opening on October 20, 2020. The event will run from 20 October 2020 until 10 April 2021.

In advancing the collaboration between the United Arab Emirates and the African Union (AU), the African Union Commission (AUC) has been invited by the Government of the U.A.E to participate in the Dubai Expo2020. The Government of UAE has therefore offered a pavilion free of charge to AUC, as it awaits the signing of a participant contract and finalizing the legal processes.

The Theme "*Connecting Minds, Creating the Future*", with sub-themes: Sustainability, Mobility and Opportunity has been selected by UAE for the Expo.

Connecting Minds, Creating the Future aims to move beyond a theme and towards a way of working. It emphasizes the need to move away from the silo approach towards an interdependent network committed to future generations. The primary way to keep up with a rapidly changing world is through partnerships across sectors, organizations, and geographies. The UAE has committed to a strong spirit of collaboration and co-creation during every step leading to Expo2020. The African Union has been designated by the government as a key partner and stakeholder. In the course of the preparation, an introductory workshop is proposed to advance the AU participation at all levels including, defining the objectives and deliverables expected from showcasing Africa at the Expo2020; drawing scenarios to deliver on the objectives; providing assistance in logistical, operational, programmatic, content management as well as developing the core thematic statement of the overarching African Union's participation. This first meeting will be followed by a series of co-creative participatory events that are completely responding to the demands, awaiting the appointment of the African Union Commissioner General (CG) and team for the Expo.

The workshop aims at providing AU with necessary logistical, programmatic, and thematic details in order to leverage and maximize participation in the Expo2020.

In order to ensure the full attainment of the overall goal of the Expo2020, the UAE government has committed to an exceptional event with a meaningful legacy. Due to the UAE and African Union's overlapping strategic interests and engagement, both sides are committed to work

together. Within that context, the UAE Government has further committed to providing multilayer levels of support for an enhanced and meaningful experience throughout the next two years building up to EXPO2020, and throughout the six months of engagement.

II. Overarching Objectives

- To bring together, refine, and complement participant thinking on the theme
- To support participants as they consider the particular focus and content of their own pavilion and content contributions
- To maximize the impact of Expo2020 to ensure the best and longest lasting impact

III. Workshop Objectives

- To define the overarching value added for AU and its members states in Expo2020
- To develop a deeper understanding of the primary and subthemes for Expo2020
- To develop the specific AU thematic statement
- To determine the focus and participation in AU's content and programming
- To provide information and answer any inquiries at the request of the AU
- To agree on roles and responsibilities needed to pull together the AU pavilion.

IV. Expected Outcomes of the Workshop

- Full understanding of the subthemes as well as the content and programmatic aspects for Expo2020 attained;
- First draft of the theme statement is initialized and Theme refined
- The particular focus and content of AU pavilion and content contributions is elaborated.
- The impact of Expo2020 to ensure the best and longest lasting impact is maximized
- The Participation Contract initialed
- Plot location confirmed
- Components of Africa Week explored and dates in Expo agenda proposed
- Subsidiary bodies and NGOs affiliated with African Union to participate at Expo2020 identified;
- Way forward on the implementation of the agreed upon processes outlined and understood.

V. Content of the workshop

The workshop structure will be determined in close collaboration with the appointed AU team. Possible workshop structures include a presentation by EXPO2020 on the value addition of participations with Q&A session, small working groups to understand the three related subthemes, brainstorming exercises to determine most relevant events and information, and specific AU thematic development. Overall, the content will cover the following areas:

- The framework of the three subthemes of Opportunity, Mobility, Sustainably;
- The perspectives within each subtheme that delivers Innovation, Inclusion, Understanding;
- Explore the wide diversity of participants from AU Member States, Policy Organs, Specialized Agencies, private sector, academia, CSOs, etc.;
- Explore celebrations, entertainment, and festival opportunities;
- Discuss in detail the visitor experience and how to cultivate a visitor's journey
- Review and discuss the thematic guide with guiding questions

VI. Date and Venue of the workshop

- Date: It has been agreed that the workshop takes place on 20-21 September 2018;
- Venue: The African Union Commission Headquarters.

VII. Participation at the workshop

- Visiting team from Dubai Expo2020
- AU Commission team
- Representatives of the private sector that can support the process.
- Representatives of youth entrepreneurs.

VIII. Coordinators of the Workshop

- From the Dubai Expo2020 side: Mrs. Hind Alowais, Vice President for International Participants;
- From the African Union Commission (AUC) side: Dr. Levi Uche Madueke, Head of the AU Strategic Partnerships, Bureau of the Chairperson of the AUC.