

BRIEF 1: HOW IS TEAM EUROPE DELIVERING ON ITS HEALTH COMMITMENTS?

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Two years have passed since the last European Union (EU)-African Union (AU) Summit took place, a moment where European and African leaders agreed on a joint vision for a renewed partnership. This joint vision identified health as high priority. Whilst it is still too early to fully capture the impact of different health initiatives announced at the Summit, we consider it important to take a closer look at how they are being designed and operationalised to ensure that effective development cooperation principles are being respected. The lack of publicly available information made this exercise challenging.

With that objective in mind, Global Health Advocates (GHA) has developed a series of three policy briefs¹, based on analyses of official European Union action documents, literature reviews, information gathered during relevant events, and informal exchanges with relevant stakeholders².

As the EU has framed its Africa-Europe Investment Package as forming part of its Global Gateway Strategy to be implemented through a Team Europe (TE) approach, we dedicate the first brief to the understanding of these concepts and the health commitments announced during the EU-AU summit, in particular the five regional health Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs).

In our second brief, we take a closer look at how TE is engaging with African partners and how it could best support African health sovereignty and equity.

In our third and final brief, we delve into the challenges and opportunities of working in a TE approach to deliver health for all, and also question how accountable it truly is.

Through this policy brief series, we have identified four key elements to ensure the success of the health TEIs. Firstly, Team Europe will need to ensure that its health priorities are in line with those of African partners. Secondly, TE must be able to allocate sufficient financial resources to deliver on its commitments, in a coordinated and effective way. Thirdly, it must communicate and share timely information about the initiatives and their impact, to demonstrate the added value of such an approach. Finally, TE must be able to keep global health high in its agenda, with equity at its core.

INTRODUCTION

The Team Europe approach was initially born in the context of the EU's COVID-19 response to support partner countries to address the pandemic. **The rationale of the Team Europe (TE) approach is to pool together resources and expertise from the European Union (EU), its Member States (MS) and its development financial institutions (DFIs), to have transformational impact.**

Team Europe created a new political momentum, highlighting the importance for the EU and its MS to work better together through enhanced coordination and complementarity in their development cooperation. With the creation of the TE, joint programming became the 'preferred approach'. This preference was included in the EU's development cooperation instrument, the NDICI – Global Europe regulation³, which was being finalised when the new approach was adopted and became a guiding principle in the Multiannual Indicative Programmes (MIPs). The Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs) are the translation of the TE approach into practice. As of January 2024, the EU had established 168 different TEIs, the majority of which are developed at country level (132), while 32 are regional and 4 are global⁴.

The Team Europe approach is also the main implementing path of the Global Gateway Strategy (GG). Health has been identified as one of the key areas of partnership under this strategy, and Africa its main destination, with a package worth at least €150 billion announced during the 6th EU-AU Summit to support the common EU-AU ambitions.



The first brief provides an overview of the health commitments announced during the EU-AU Summit, with a particular focus on the five health regional Team Europe Initiatives. In this document, we seek to explain how these TEIs were designed and what EU actions have been put forward since the Summit to translate the commitments into actions.

HEALTH COMMITMENTS FROM THE 6th EU-AU SUMMIT

The 6th EU-AU Summit took place in Brussels in February 2022, after having been postponed several times due to the pandemic. **During the Summit, EU and AU leaders agreed on a joint vision for a renewed partnership, in the form of a final Summit declaration⁵, which identified health a high joint priority and included a commitment to support “full-fledged African health sovereignty”.**

A GG investment package of at least €150 billion – half of the total amount GG aims to mobilise – was announced to support the common EU-AU ambition for 2030. The overall package for Africa is broken down into several packages.

| THE HEALTH PACKAGE ⁶ | |
|---|--|
| Short-term actions: COVID-19 pandemic response | |
| Vaccine roll-out | At least €425 million |
| COVID-19 digital certificates | €15 million (from EU budget) |
| Long-term actions: Supporting better health care beyond the pandemic | |
| African pharmaceutical manufacturing | €1 billion (from the EU budget + Member States) |
| Strengthening health systems and pandemic preparedness | €1.15 billion (from the EU budget, to be enhanced by further funding from Team Europe) |
| Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) | €60 million (from the EU budget, to be enhanced by further funding from Team Europe) |

The Package mentions a total contribution of at least €2.65 billion to health. Although additional contributions from other TE will need to be factored in, if it is compared to the total investment package of €150 billion, **the total initial amount allocated to health – less than 2% – is very low, particularly considering it was announced during a pandemic.** In addition, **the package is surprisingly vague** when it comes to specifying how much money would be coming from the EU budget, and how much would be provided by other TE members, **making tracking and accountability highly challenging.**

AN OVERVIEW OF THE FIVE REGIONAL HEALTH TEIs

Five health regional TEIs have been announced for the African continent. While two of them were explicitly mentioned in the GG health Africa-Europe investment package, the other three were merely hinted at in the document, coming under support to strengthening health systems and pandemic preparedness, and have not yet been officially launched.

| FIVE REGIONAL HEALTH INITIATIVES |
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| 1- MAV+ (Manufacturing and Access to Vaccines, Medicines and Health Technology Products in Africa) |
| 2- SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Sub-Saharan Africa) |
| 3- One Health (Sustainable health security using a One Health approach) |
| 4- Digital Health (Digital Health for Health Systems Strengthening and Universal Health Coverage) |
| 5- PHIs (Public Health Capacity - Support to Public Health Institutes) |

The table below provides an overview of these TEIs, with their overall objectives, their launch dates, members and partners involved, the budget allocation with a breakdown of EU's contribution (when available), and the different modality tools to implement them. Information was taken from the TEI tracker, as well as from EU action documents contributing to these initiatives.

| Name | Overall objective | Launch date | Members | African Partners | Full funding | EU funding | Modality |
|-------------------------|--|---------------|--|--|---------------------------|---|---|
| MAV+⁷ | To increase equitable access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential vaccines, medicines and health technologies for all Africans. | May 2021 | Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, EIB | African Union, Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), African Medicines Agency (AMA), African government and national regulatory agencies | €1.3 billion ⁸ | Not available | Policy dialogue, technical assistance, blending and guarantees, loans, grants |
| SRHR⁹ | To advance the SRHR agenda in the SSA region, with a particular focus on adolescent girls and young women. | December 2022 | Belgium, Czechia, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden | West African Health Organization (WAHO), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Southern African Development Community (SADC) | €1.786 billion | 12,4%, with €60 million from 2023-2027 budget | Policy dialogue, technical assistance, advocacy, and social accountability |

Brief 1 - How is Team Europe delivering on its health commitments?

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| One Health¹⁰ | To strengthen existing health security and research structures for pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response and for tackling AMR in Africa, using a multi-level, interdisciplinary One Health approach. | March 2024 (foreseen) | Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, AFD | Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), West African Health Organisation (WAHO), African public/scientific institutes | €391 million | 38% | Policy dialogue, technical assistance, financial instruments |
| Digital Health¹¹ | To accelerate health systems strengthening and the achievement of universal health coverage through digital health initiatives. | March 2024 (foreseen) | Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, AFD | Not available | Not available | Not available | Policy dialogue, technical assistance, investment (loans, guarantees) |
| PHIs¹² | To contribute to population's health and wellbeing via the provision of multiple public health services by performant schools of public health and public health institutes. To enable a comprehensive support to public health institutes and public health policies through their key core functions and attributes for a transformative impact on beneficiaries. | March 2024 (foreseen) | Belgium, Czechia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, AFD | Not available | Not available | Not available | Technical assistant (twinning, expert exchange), policy dialogue |

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE HEALTH TEIs

The regional health TEIs share a common feature: they are all regional in scope, but they have a multi-level approach, at continental, sub-regional, national, and community levels.

These TEIs are supported by Member States, with a selected few engaged in all five (Belgium, France, Germany and Spain), while other smaller MS join specific initiatives. **Member State membership in the TEIs is voluntary, dynamic, and evolving. It is still unclear today what the implications for TEI members are in terms of budgetary contribution outside of the EU budget¹³.**

Each TEI is first designed as a concept note and further developed with the elaboration of what the EU calls 'Joint Intervention Logic' or JIL, which provides the common frame to keep the initiative together. Each TEI is broken down into different pillars, with a definition of the expected outcomes and impacts, as well as how different TE members will contribute to its realisation.

For the scope of this brief series, GHA analysed the EU action documents adopted up until January 2024, and which contribute to TEI implementation. So far, there are 6 actions¹⁴ linked to the implementation of regional Sub-Saharan Africa MIP, and 3 actions¹⁵ implementing national MIPs that have been identified as contributing to regional health TEIs. The most advanced TEI is the MAV+, and the majority of these actions are linked to its implementation.



MANUFACTURING AND ACCESS TO VACCINES, MEDICINES AND HEALTH TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS IN AFRICA (MAV+)

The MAV+ TEI was the first of these five TEIs to be launched, announced by Ursula von der Leyen at the World Health Summit in May 2021. It was partly a response to the inequality in the distribution of medical countermeasures (MCM) during the COVID-19 pandemic, an inequality the EU played an important part¹⁶ in fuelling. With Africa importing 99% of its vaccines and calling for a boost in manufacturing to reduce its dependency on other countries, **TE members saw an opportunity to demonstrate solidarity to African partners by launching an initiative to support manufacturing and access to MCM.** The MAV+ has become the most important and most politically visible TEI, not only for the health sector but more generally, and it has been promoted in recent years as the main EU initiative in global health.

MAV+ has 3 key dimensions - supply side, demand side and enabling environment - revolving around 6 different work streams. The initial financial commitment was €1 billion (as of February 2024, the EC was promoting the €1.3 billion figure), from the EU budget and European DFIs, to be enhanced by Member State contribution.

A Member State official shared with GHA that there was some confusion at the beginning, with African partners initially understanding that this announcement consisted of new and fresh funds, while in reality, most of the contributions consisted of already existing projects or funds previously pledged, but not yet disbursed. **Such a 'misunderstanding' is indicative of the lack of African partners' involvement in the initiative's design.** Presently, the detailed breakdown of where funding for MAV+ is coming from and where it is going, is not publicly available.

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At EU level, as of January 2024, there were 4 regional and 3 national actions contributing to the implementation of MAV+. The total funds allocated from the EU budget for these actions currently amount to €296.5 million. They include support to the Partnership for African Vaccine Manufacturing (PAVM), the WHO technology transfer hub, the African Medicines Agency (AMA), as well as targeted support to 6 partner countries including Senegal, Ghana, Rwanda, South Africa, Nigeria, and Egypt.



SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (SRHR)

The SRHR TEI was first mentioned during the EU-AU summit investment package and officially launched in December 2022¹⁷ **and it aims to advance on a shared EU-AU commitment to achieve SRHR for all.** An EC official shared with GHA that the SRHR JIL was designed based on literature reviews, studies commissioned by Sweden (one of the leading MS for this initiative) as well as a workshop that was held in Brussels. The EC shared that, from the mapping done in 2022, there are over 170 projects contributing to the SRHR TEI and, according to an EC action document, the combined indicative contribution amounts to €1.78 billion. **The EC recognises that most of the projects were already ongoing when the TEI was created, while a selected few were created afterwards.** These projects include both EU funded (should amount to 12.4%) as well as TE member funded projects, at both national and regional levels. Unfortunately, this mapping of projects that contribute to the TEI is not made public, so it is difficult to know what type of projects are being implemented. The first action under the current MIP to support this TEI was adopted in 2023 (€20 million).



SUSTAINABLE HEALTH SECURITY USING A ONE HEALTH APPROACH (ONE HEALTH)

Although the One Health TEI has not been officially launched, the first action under this TEI was approved in December 2023 (€30 million). **It does not create a new project per**

se but expands an ongoing EU Project – EBO-SURSY11 (Capacity building and surveillance for Ebola Virus Disease). The EC document is somewhat confusing, since it first mentions EU financial contributions account for the “Commission’s ongoing and planned contributions”, which leads the reader to believe the project EBO-SURSY11 could be considered as an action contributing to this TEI. However, the document then goes on to say that “this action will be the first under the framework of the regional TEI on health security/One Health”, which is somewhat contradictory, since it first stated ongoing EC contributions had been considered when calculating its combined indicative financial contribution.

CONCLUSIONS

The Africa-Europe Investment Package was one of the key deliverables of the EU-AU Summit that took place in February 2022, and included a specific health package to be implemented through a Team Europe approach. Although GHA welcomes the priority given to health during the Summit, it is disappointing that less than 2% of the €150 billion Global Gateway package has been allocated to health. Furthermore and two years after the Summit, the fact that three out of these five initiatives have not been officially launched is regrettable.

In order to deliver on the commitments made at the Summit, as we have seen, the EU has elected to design and implement five regional health TEIs. Each Team Europe Initiative should be seen as an ‘umbrella’, an overarching framework, under which there are many different projects. **While the EU is promoting TEIs as more than the sum of individual projects, with so little information available, it is difficult to grasp their added value and understand how they are more than a repackaging exercise of existing projects.**

 Despite the GG narrative of creating a partnership of equals, African partners have not been involved in the design of these initiatives. In our second brief, we look more closely at the engagement of African partners in these TEIs and how Team Europe is best supporting African in achieving health sovereignty and equity.

CONTACT

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ All three briefs can be found at GHA's website: <https://www.ghadvocates.eu/navigating-team-europe-approach-eu-au-health-partnership/>
- ² Including representatives from the European Commission, EU Member States, Africa Union, European and African Civil Society Organisations
- ³ European Union (2021) Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0947>
- ⁴ European Union (n.d.a) Team Europe Initiatives and Joint Programming Tracker. Available at: https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/resources/team-europe-tracker_en (accessed: 15 February 2024)
- ⁵ European Council (2022a) *6th European Union - African Union Summit: A Joint Vision for 2030*. Available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/54412/final_declaration-en.pdf (Accessed: 01 December 2023)
- ⁶ European Council (2022a) *6th European Union - African Union Summit: A Joint Vision for 2030*. Available at: https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/54412/final_declaration-en.pdf (Accessed: 01 December 2023)
- ⁷ European Union (n.d.b) *Manufacturing and Access to Vaccines, Medicines and health technology products in Africa*. Capacity4dev. Available at: https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/resources/team-europe-tracker/partner-countries/sub-saharan-africa/manufacturing-and-access-vaccines-medicines-and-health-technology-products-africa_en (Accessed: 15 January 2024)
- ⁸ The initial announcement was €1 billion. In its most recent press release related to this initiative (February 2024), the EU was referring to €1.3 billion.
- ⁹ European Union (n.d.c) *Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Capacity4dev. Available at https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/resources/team-europe-tracker/partner-countries/sub-saharan-africa/sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-srhr-sub-saharan-africa_en (Accessed: 15 January 2024)
- ¹⁰ European Union (n.d.d) *Sustainable Health Security – Africa*. Capacity4dev. Available at https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/resources/team-europe-tracker/partner-countries/sub-saharan-africa/sustainable-health-security-africa_en (Accessed: 15 January 2024)
- ¹¹ European Union (n.d.e) *Digital Health – Africa*. Capacity4dev. Available at: https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/resources/team-europe-tracker/partner-countries/sub-saharan-africa/digital-health-africa_en (Accessed: 15 January 2024)
- ¹² European Union (n.d.f) *Public Health Capacity – Africa*. Capacity4dev. Available at: https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/resources/team-europe-tracker/partner-countries/sub-saharan-africa/public-health-capacity-africa_en (Accessed: 15 January 2024)
- ¹³ CONCORD (2021) *Team Europe Initiatives (TEI) - first insights and questions to Member States' agencies*. Available at <https://concordeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/TEI-first-insights-and-questions-to-MS-agencies-EN.docx-1.pdf>
- ¹⁴ Documents available at EC website, under Action plans for Sub-Saharan Africa region: https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/action-plans_en?f%5B0%5D=document_title%3ASub-Saharan%20Africa
- ¹⁵ Documents available at EC website, under action documents for Senegal, Rwanda and Ghana: https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/action-plans_en?f%5B0%5D=countries_countries_multiple_%3Ahttp%3A//publications.europa.eu/resource/authority/country/GHA&f%5B1%5D=countries_countries_multiple_%3Ahttp%3A//publications.europa.eu/resource/authority
- ¹⁶ Global Health Advocates, STOPAIDS (2022) *Access denied: What happens when big pharma is in the driver's seat. Report 1: exploring EU decision making around the EU COVID-19 contract negotiations*. Available at <https://www.ghadvocates.eu/app/uploads/Report-1-1.pdf>
- ¹⁷ *European Commission* (2022c). EU and African partners launch flagship initiative to enhance sexual and reproductive health and rights, 15 December. Available at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_7738

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