

THE ROLE OF PRACTITIONERS' NETWORK MEMBERS IN SCALING UP GLOBAL GATEWAY INVESTMENTS AND THE 360° APPROACH

Ahead of the Global Gateway Forum 2025
Brussels, 9-10 October 2025

The Practitioners' Network for European Development Cooperation (PN) brings together 26 public development organisations from 21 European countries and the European Commission and is an important part of Team Europe. The PN plays a key role in enabling Global Gateway investments through the 360° approach, ensuring development impact by linking infrastructure investment with policy dialogue, technical and public sector expertise, and social and environmental sustainability measures. They help ensure projects are sustainable, of high quality and locally owned. As the leading network of technical cooperation agencies, the PN plays a pivotal role in ensuring that Global Gateway delivers on the public-policy objectives of both the EU and its partner countries. This paper highlights their added value in the Global Gateway ecosystem and presents recommendations based on observations from two Flagship projects – the Lobito Corridor and MAV+ (Manufacturing and Access to Vaccines, Medicines and Health Technologies in Africa).

THE KEY ROLE OF PN MEMBERS

Technical Cooperation

PN Members are key players in the successful implementation of Global Gateway, through their engagement in Team Europe Initiatives and through Team National. Drawing on extensive sectoral expertise, PN Members contribute technical knowledge in areas such as climate and environment, gender equality and human rights, governance, local economic development and enabling business climates as well as digitalisation, energy, and social sectors. They help translate broad policy objectives into concrete project design, ensuring that Global Gateway investments are inclusive, context-specific, aligned with EU values, standards and policy priorities, as well as partners' interests, and long-term development goals, especially the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Context knowledge

With longstanding presence in partner countries and with their extensive networks, PN Members bring deep knowledge of local contexts and dynamics. This enables them to anticipate challenges, engage effectively with authorities, civil society, private sector, academia and other stakeholders, and ensure Global Gateway initiatives reflect investment opportunities and align with national development agendas. Their country-specific expertise helps deliver Global Gateway investments that are both legitimate, sustainable and impactful.

Monitoring and Learning

PN Members provide tools and systems to monitor project outcomes and impact, assess risks, and integrate lessons learned. Their focus on accountability and learning ensures continuous improvement, helping to strengthen the effectiveness and impact of Global Gateway projects while also informing future initiatives.

THE LOBITO CORRIDOR

From 10–12 September 2025, ten Members of the Practitioners' Network carried out a **fact-finding visit to Democratic Republic of Congo–DRC (Lubumbashi) and Zambia (Ndola and Lusaka)** to explore opportunities and challenges along the Lobito Corridor. The Lobito Corridor is a major infrastructure and transport initiative in Africa designed to connect the Atlantic port of Lobito in Angola with the mineral-rich regions of Zambia and the DRC. The delegation met EU institutions, national authorities, civil society, training institutions and European and local private sector actors, focusing on accelerating infrastructure, job creation, skills development, local and value addition in the mining sector, with the aim of identifying how PN members, as Team Europe, can support the corridor through the Global Gateway 360° approach.

KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- **Beyond Critical Raw Materials:** The corridor is already a crucial economic development zone, with potential to further driving integration, jobs, renewable energy infrastructure, and agriculture, with benefits for local populations and Europe.
- **Regional coordination gaps:** Cross-border alignment is weak due to differing national ambitions, fragmented transport and logistics systems, and unclear roles for institutions like the Lobito Corridor Transit Transport Facilitation Agency, creating uncertainty for investors.
- **Integrated transport system:** The Lobito Corridor is a transport network that combines both rail and road infrastructures. An integrated rail–road system needs to be ensured in order to have more efficient connections with other corridors and to foster broader socio-economic development, diverse market needs, market access and employment.
- **The need for a cohesive European architecture:** Development actors, EU and financial actors often operate in silos and at the country level rather than regionally. A shared strategy, cross-border coordination and pipeline of bankable projects are needed to coordinate European investments in the region.
- **Urgency vs. long-term vision:** Rapid development along the corridor is expected, with or without European involvement. Only with a clear long-term strategy that delivers tangible imminent results can the EU assert its leadership amongst global actors.
- **Challenges:** Energy deficits, weak regulatory standards, infrastructure bottlenecks, limited industrial capacity threaten sustainability and access to finance, illicit financial flows as well as tax revenues from the mining sector, which according to the Mining Act must be used for the local development of the corridor and do not reach the communities in the corridor.
- **Private sector engagement:** Large companies are involved, but European MSMEs are largely absent; stronger conditions and value-chain development are needed.



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

The Team Europe Initiative MAV+, launched in 2021, has mobilised nearly €2 billion for 88 projects to boost local vaccine and medicine manufacturing in Africa. MAV+ is funded by the European Commission, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden and includes other financial partners such as EIB, AFD, Proparco, KfW, DEG and BIO. The technical implementation is led by a consortium of three PN members – Enabel, Expertise France, and GIZ – while other PN Members, such as Sida, also contributes to the initiative's implementation through complementary support and expertise. Their work strengthens the Global Gateway 360° approach, ensuring that projects are context-specific, sustainable, and aligned with partner country priorities.

KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- **Limited access to health products:** Weak demand forecasts, unpredictable procurement, and fragile social protection links reduce investor confidence and access to health products for vulnerable populations.
- **Financing gaps:** DFIs remain risk-averse, offering limited tailored instruments and often overlooking affordability considerations.
- **Private sector under-engagement:** European and African companies are insufficiently integrated into strategic decision-making and in operational initiatives at all levels.
- **Market uncertainty:** Risk perception, lack of predictable demand and procurement commitments undermines private investment.
- **Coordination gaps:** Efforts remain scattered; stronger alignment is needed across PN Members, EU Delegations, and African authorities, in particular at country level.
- **Workforce development:** Skilled personnel remain scarce in some countries; sustained training with adequate infrastructure at regional and national levels is essential for long-term resilience.



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KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. STRENGTHEN TEAM EUROPE COORDINATION AND THE 360° APPROACH

What can the European Commission do?

In an increasingly complex and fragile world, it is paramount to further support the collaboration between and coordination of PN, EDFI, JEFIC, Export Credit Agencies (ECAs) and other key European, global and local partners actors to combine private and public investments in fragile and complex contexts.

What can PN Members do?

PN Members should map ongoing and planned projects and use the Network to connect actors across Team National Initiatives before and after approval of funding. This helps to identify overlaps and complementarities, ensuring development effectiveness through the division of labour based on each actor's capacities. By improving information sharing and alignment, PN Members help create coherent pipelines, reduce duplication, and support proposals that are more sustainable and effective, reinforcing the broader Team Europe approach across Global Gateway and its 360° approach and through the Investment Hub.

2. ENSURE A CLEAR REGIONAL AND CROSS-BORDER APPROACH

What can the European Commission do?

Strengthen the existing architecture to reach a higher impact at a regional level, beyond national approaches, particularly in the areas of demand coordination and regulatory harmonisation. This approach ensures EU interventions are coherent, mutually reinforcing, and visible beyond individual country initiatives, strengthening the overall impact of Team Europe.

3. LINK INVESTMENT WITH ENABLING CONDITIONS

What can the European Commission do?

The EC should embed enabling environment components such as regulatory reform, demand coordination, skills development, reducing inequalities, environmental, social and governance standards, public financial and economic management, and fiscal and financial risk assessments into every Global Gateway project.

What can PN Members do?

PN members, with their technical expertise and local presence, can operationalise these aspects to ensure projects are sustainable and inclusive. Beyond targeted flagship support, PN members also strengthen the broader policy ecosystems – regulation, institutions, and markets – that create the conditions to unlock and scale up multiple investments.

4. ATTRACT AND ENABLE PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT

What can the European Commission do?

The EC should provide a coordinated, regional investment offer, signal opportunities through mechanisms such as the Global Gateway Investment Hub, and engage early with development actors, DFIs, PDBs, ECAs, and other financial partners.

What can PN Members do?

PN Members have the mandate, presence and expertise to support this by connecting local and European financing and private sector actors, and advising on the enabling environment, identifying business cases, enabling public-private partnerships, and value-chain development. This combination reduces uncertainty and encourages long-term, development-oriented investment.

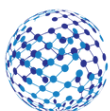
5. BALANCE URGENCY WITH LONG-TERM TRANSFORMATION

What can the European Commission do?

The European Commission should concretise what EU and Global Gateway have to offer for European companies and EU Partner Countries in building critical infrastructure and skills. It should also set out long-term strategies for flagship initiatives so that quick wins contribute to a transformative vision, not just short-term gains.

What can PN Members do?

PN Members should ensure that their expertise and local presence are used to support the European Commission in grounding these strategies and initiatives in local realities and development priorities.



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