# Towards an integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 – ensuring synergies by learning from practice

# CONTENTS

# ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| AAAA | Addis Ababa Action Agenda |
| AIDA | Accelerated Industrial Development |
| APRM | African Peer Review Mechanism |
| AU | African Union |
| AUC | African Union Commission |
| AUDA-NEPAD | African Union Development Agency - New Partnership for Africa's Development |
| CAADP | Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme |
| CAP | Common African Position |
| CHRAJ | Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| DFA | Development Finance Assessment |
| DIHR | Danish Institute for Human Rights |
| DRM | Domestic Resource Mobilization |
| EAC | East African Community |
| ECOSOC | Economic and Social Council |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment |
| GGA | Good Governance in Africa (GIZ Sector Network) |
| GIZ | Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit |
| GPSDD | Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data |
| HLPF | High-level Political Forum |
| HPPII | Harambee Prosperity Plan |
| IAEG-SDG | Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators |
| INFF | Integrated National Financing Frameworks |
| IPPN | Integrated Policy Practitioners' Network |
| ISCS | International Civil Society Centre |
| KNBS | Kenya National Bureau of Statistics |
| KNCHR | Kenya National Commission on Human Rights |
| LDC | Least Developed Country |
| LNOB | Leave No One Behind |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goal |
| MoI | Means of Implementation |
| NDC | Nationally Determined Contribution |
| NSO | National Statistics Office |
| ODA | Official Development Assistance |
| OHCHR | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| PACJA | Pan African Climate Justice Alliance |
| PARIS21 | Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century |
| PIDA | Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa |
| REC | Regional Economic Commission |
| RISDP | Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan |
| RMS | Resource Mobilization Strategy |
| SADC | Southern African Development Community |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SIDS | Small Island Developing State |
| UN | United Nations |
| UN DESA | United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| UNDS | United Nations Development System |
| UNECA | United Nations Economic Commission for Africa |
| USD | United States Dollar |
| VLR | Voluntary Local Report |
| VNR | Voluntary National Review |

# 1. INTRODUCTION

For the past six years, African countries have advanced in their pursuit of sustainable development in line with the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, endorsed in 2015 by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. The 2030 Agenda provides a foundation for adjusting development planning, strengthening institutional capacities and guiding financial investments towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the same time, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*, endorsed in 2013 by the African Union (AU) member states, has gained further traction and plays an increasing role in national development efforts, often supported by regional multilateral organizations.

*The global 2030 Agenda and the continental Agenda 2063 overlap in many areas but have distinctive features which place different challenges and opportunities to African countries.*

While much has been written in the past years to explore and stress the potential synergies of these two international agreements, this has mainly been done from an aspirational perspective.

*The practical implications of planning for, implementing and accounting for these two agendas in a complementary manner still remain largely unexplored.*

Aiming to close this gap, this study collects emerging practices and solutions to ensure sufficient linkages between both agendas at the country level, as a critical avenue to ensure that international support is directed towards greater synergies.

*En route to 2023, when the mid-term of the 2030 Agenda implementation phase and the completion of the first Ten-Year Implementation Plan for Agenda 2063 coincide, this study intends to provide new evidence and pertinent guidance for more integrated processes.*

Especially in the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts, working towards sustainable development has become even more urgent for developing countries.

For the African continent, recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic translates into a window of opportunity to move forward with continental and global agendas. Indeed, the current pandemic and the multiple crises emerging from it exacerbate the need for African governments and societies to invest their capacities and resources in an increasingly efficient and effective manner. This, in return, allows for high and palpable returns in terms of people, planet, peace and prosperity, along with partnerships.

*A key enabler will be to strengthen the focus on synergies between continental and global development objectives as benchmarks for recovery and progress from national to local levels.*

This would necessarily require a consistent single approach led by governments with sufficient institutional and operational capacities to integrate international goals and targets in their national development planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and accountability mechanisms.

In this context, development partners may need to review and adapt their support to the institutional preparedness and effectiveness needed to implement two international agendas for a sustainable *recover*

*better strategy.* While modest in its scope (*see text box 'Approach for this study'*), this study intends to explore these aspects and provide practical guidance as a contribution to ongoing discussions at GIZ on how to ensure synergies between continental and global agendas, under the umbrella of the Sector Network Good Governance Africa (GGA). The GGA constitutes a platform for regional thematic exchange among GIZ focal points in headquarters and country offices, aiming for knowledge exchange and identification of good-practice examples.

Specifically, the study explores the complementarity of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 from a formal perspective (*chapter 2*) and reviews practical experience from the GIZ portfolio and other actors on how to ensure coherence and integration of the agendas at country and local levels (*chapter 3*). Furthermore, it identifies emerging good practices around a series of key dimensions (*chapter 4*) and clarifies entry points for international support towards a more coordinated and coherent implementation of both agendas led by African countries and regional platforms (*chapter 5*).

**APPROACH FOR THIS STUDY**

To explore synergies between the continental and global agendas from both conceptual and practical perspectives, this study has relied on an extensive desk review of various dimensions related to country-level implementation and stakeholders involved. This has included a total of 43 Voluntary National Reviews submitted by African Union (AU) member states between 2019 and 2021, as well as ongoing analytical work of specialized organizations on aspects such as human rights, inclusive SDG data and governance mechanisms. For practical insights, a total of ten institutions shared their experiences, which included in-depth interviews with 15 representatives (*see annex 1 for more details*). Between September and December 2021, this study has benefited from generous feedback both from GIZ and external partners supporting African countries in achieving sustainable development.

As key messages, this study highlights the following:

**1** **The 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063** are highly complementary at the strategic and thematic level. However, planning, implementation and reporting are conducted in a separate manner, thereby posing essential challenges to African countries often lacking sufficient institutional, human and financial capacities.

**2** **Emerging practices** – drawn from 43 Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and specific project experiences – show manifold opportunities for African countries to ensure synergies and avoid an excessive burden on limited capacities. Options range from efficient mainstreaming and stronger statistics systems to comprehensive financing and innovative partnerships, among other aspects.

**3** **Based on these opportunities**, development partners should adjust their programs to support national and subnational government and non-state capacities for integrated development planning, implementation and reporting in line with continental and global frameworks. At the same time, they should expand platforms and opportunities for in-depth knowledge sharing and continuous networking among African stakeholders, among others.

Indeed, continuous learning – shared by all global, continental, national and subnational stakeholders – should be at the heart of future integrated planning for the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In this line this study intends to contribute a mapping of existing practice and recommendations for further action. Drawing on hands-on experience from diverse angles, this study has benefitted from the generous inputs and valuable insights from GIZ partners throughout the African continent, specifically from Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda.

# 2. COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN THE GLOBAL 2030 AGENDA AND THE CONTINENTAL AGENDA 2063

## 2.1 BRIEF COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW

The UN 2030 Agenda and the AU Agenda 2063 are vital strategic frameworks for pursuing and achieving sustainable development in African countries. Although they have been approved in separate multilateral contexts and offer specific sets of goals, targets and indicators, both contribute substantially to the overarching paradigm of sustainable development in all relevant social, economic, environmental and governance dimensions.

*They have distinct strengths which might further propel African sustainable development, providing opportunities to raise the bar even beyond the current global ambitions enshrined in the SDGs.*

That said, the global and continental agendas follow distinct structures and timelines. While the former pursues sustainable development over a medium-term period of 15 years from 2015 to 2030, the latter establishes a framework for 50 years from 2013 to 2063. Agenda 2063 is implemented through ten-year plans with dedicated flagship projects, while the 2030 Agenda lacks a phase-based approach.

In terms of structure, the following table provides a summary showing similarities and differences. The 2030 Agenda is intrinsically principle-driven (*for more details, see section 2.3*), while Agenda 2063 offers more opportunities to reflect on specific sector-level themes through the so-called priority areas. With less detailed reference to environmental and climate aspects, the development vision spelled out in Agenda 2063 is more focused on social and economic aspects. At the same time, Agenda 2063 includes a stronger strategic view on good governance, peace and security, and features cultural dimensions which are largely absent in the 2030 Agenda.

Particularly in relation to the monitoring framework, Agenda 2063 is slightly more detailed than the 2030 Agenda and formulates 20 goals compared to 17 SDGs, 256 targets compared to 169 SDG targets and 248 indicators compared to 231 unique indicators of the SDG indicator framework.

**Figure 1: Comparison of monitoring frameworks for Agendas 2030 and 2063**

| Agenda 2063 | 2030 Agenda |
|---|---|
| 7 Aspirations (prosperity; integration; good governance; peace and security; cultural identity; people-driven development; Africa as a global player)[1] | 5 Ps (people, prosperity, planet, peace and partnerships) |
| 20 goals | 17 SDGs |
| 256 targets | 169 targets |
| 39 Priority Areas | n/a |
| 248 indicators | 231 unique indicators |

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1    Original formulation of Agenda 2063: A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development; An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance; An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law; A peaceful and secure Africa; An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics; An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children; as well as Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner.

## 2.2 POLITICAL CONTEXT

Over the past decade, development policies have become increasingly comprehensive and ambitious, aiming to raise the bar for all countries to achieve sustainable development in all dimensions: people, planet and prosperity, peace and partnerships. For AU member states, this provides continuity to positive, albeit mixed outcomes and results regarding the Millennium Development Goals and an increased sense of pan-African ambition to strive as a continent at all levels, from economic to political, to social and cultural. This vision of Africa's Renaissance is part of the strategic and political reinvigoration of the African Union and other regional integration processes since the beginning of the century, showcasing the political will and capacity of the AU's 55 member states to join forces and build a common future as a continent. Previous examples are AU-led regional initiatives or building blocks such as the already concluded Lagos Plan of Action, the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and the Accelerated Industrial Development (AIDA), among others.

**These ambitions are condensed in Agenda 2063:** The Africa We Want,[2] endorsed by the Heads of State and Government as part of the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration of the AU in May 2013 and further operationalized in a First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (2013-2023),[3] adopted by the AU policy organs in June 2015. The latter constitutes the primary planning and execution document clarifying goals, priority areas, targets, indicative implementation strategies, monitoring and evaluation measures as well as flagship projects.

Importantly, Agenda 2063 and the first implementation plan precede, and to a certain extent inform, the global arena of development policies articulated through the 2030 Agenda adopted in September 2015.

*Indeed, the political process of designing and adopting Agenda 2063 constituted an essential avenue to ensure African priorities are incorporated in the 2030 Agenda, particularly through articulating the Common African Position (CAP) on post-2015 development.*

Within the 2030 Agenda, this is reflected in the interchangeable paragraphs 42 and 64 "reaffirming the importance of supporting the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the programme of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), all of which are integral to the new Agenda."[4] It is therefore no surprise that there is an advanced degree of consistency between respective target and indicator frameworks, which will be explored further in section 2.3 below.

Implementation, however, follows distinct international and national dynamics, leading to a certain imbalance in the prioritization of the respective agendas. At the global level, the main mechanism for follow-up and review is the annual High-level Political Forum (HLPF) held at the United Nations, with in-depth preparations guided by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and informed by Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) submitted by member states. The extensive number of VNRs – as vehicles between global agendas and national processes – demonstrates not only the commitment of national governments, but also increasing visibility and peer pressure among these to effectively work towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at national and local levels. In most cases, the VNR preparation process has entailed increased coordination with national and international stakeholders.

On many occasions, bilateral donors and multilateral organizations have mobilized financial resources and technical support for 2030 Agenda planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting. On the other hand, Agenda 2063 is less explicit regarding national-level implementation and particularly country reporting on progress made. The First Ten-Year Implementation Plan provides a tool for regional-level planning, including a formulation of 15 flagship projects, but is not prescriptive on country actions to achieve the 20 goals and 256 targets. While African countries have started to integrate the Agenda 2063 framework in their national

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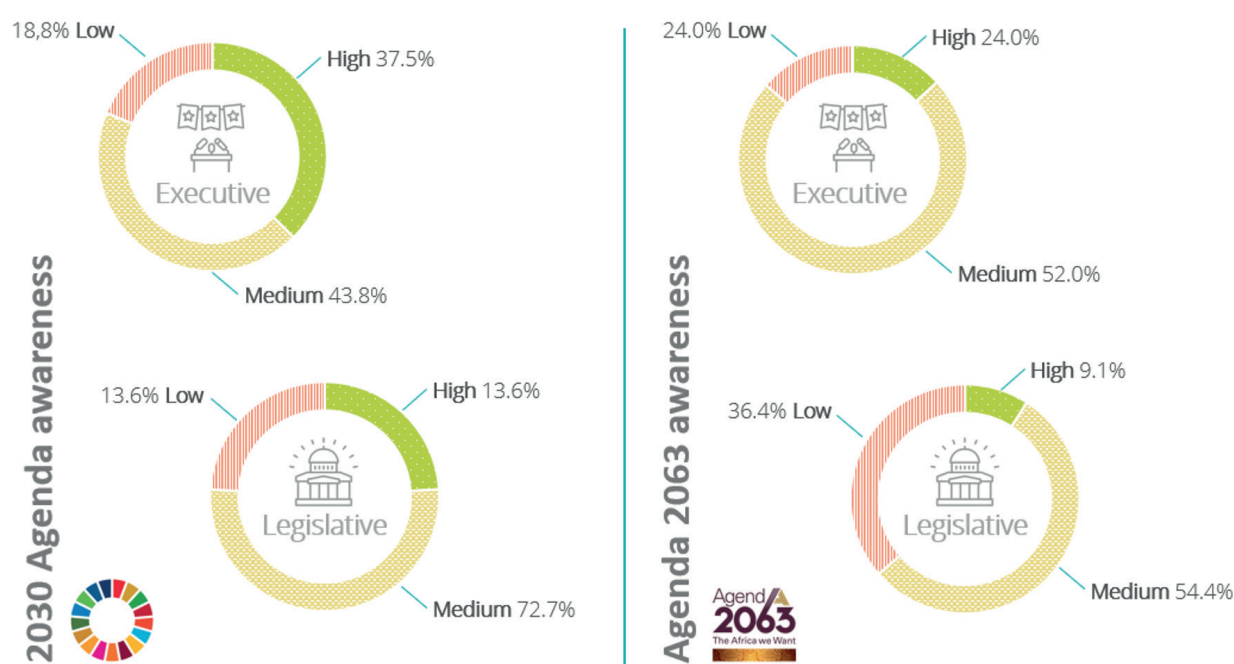2    African Union: Agenda 2063 – The Africa We Want

3    African Union: First Ten-Year Implementation Plan of the Agenda 2063 (2013-2023)

4    United Nations: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

development planning, international support is often limited, and dedicated resources remain scarce compared to the relatively ample support to the 2030 Agenda implementation provided by United Nations organizations and other international development partners.

At the national level, the political space for both agendas is influenced by relatively limited knowledge and awareness of the opportunities and implications of domesticizing international agreements. A study conducted by the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in 2020[5] stresses that awareness of both agendas is quite low in general, and Agenda 2063 appears to be the comparatively less relevant to national policies (*see figure 2*). Within the executive branch, while a third of the countries reported high awareness levels for the SDGs, only a quarter did so in the case of Agenda 2063. Among the legislative branch, high awareness levels are reported by less than a sixth for the global and a tenth for the continental agenda, respectively. According to the same study, two thirds of countries reported that campaigns to promote awareness of the SDGs while only around 42% mentioned awareness campaigns for Agenda 2063.

**Figure 2: Level of awareness of both agendas among AU member states´ executive and legislative branches**



*Based on APRM: Agenda 2063 and SDGs Implementation in Africa - Assessing Governance Mechanisms for Implementation of the African Union Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Africa (2020)*

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5    APRM: Agenda 2063 and SDGs Implementation in Africa - Assessing Governance Mechanisms for Implementation of the African Union Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Africa (2020)

In sum, a certain imbalance in the perceived momentum of the two agendas pertains. Beyond manifold limitations, at country level, the 2030 Agenda seems to be more visible, better resourced and backed by stronger reporting mechanisms.

*How can African countries use the momentum behind the SDGs to further integrate the regionally owned development framework and lever synergies and complementarities at hand?*

## 2.3 CONGRUENCE OF GOALS, TARGETS AND INDICATORS
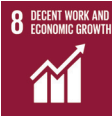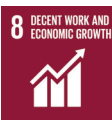
The 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 share numerous ambitions at the level of goals, while distinct thematic depths are an opportunity to raise the bar even further in terms of sustainable development.

*Broadly speaking, both agendas call for strong emphasis on social, economic and governance dimensions in ways that are highly complementary.*

Compared to the continental framework, the 2030 Agenda stands out for its commitment to fight climate change and preserve biodiversity, while Agenda 2063 entails more cultural development and self-determination elements. Taken together, both the congruence and the differences constitute advantages for African countries to transform societies and economies in ways that are sustainable and resilient at the same time.

That said, practical guidance as to how to jointly implement the two agendas has not been elaborated yet. Analysis in this area is still incipient and requires an in-depth review of how the results and indicator frameworks speak to each other. Essentially, this leads back to the question whether a coordinated implementation will generate tangible efficiencies or add burden. It is also critical to explore the different options for African countries to prioritize certain goals and targets that show a high level of congruence. While the ultimate choice will depend on the underlying national development priorities, the following paragraphs aim to show the level of congruence as a potential entry point for governments and other stakeholders to take decisions for effective and efficient integrated implementation.

**Figure 3: Linking Agenda 2063 and the SDGs**

| Agenda 2063 Goals | Agenda 2063 Priority Areas | UN Sustainable Development Goals |
|---|---|---|
| A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens. | Incomes, jobs and decent work<br><br>Poverty, inequality and hunger<br><br>Social security and protection, including persons with disabilities<br><br>Modern, affordable and liveable habitats and quality basic services | 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere in the world.<br><br>2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.<br><br>8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable Economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.<br><br>11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. |
| Well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation. | Education and science, technology and innovation (STI) driven skills revolution | 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. |
| Healthy and well-nourished citizens. | Health and nutrition | 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. |
| Transformed economies. | Sustainable and inclusive economic growth<br><br>STI driven manufacturing, industrialization and value addition<br><br>Economic diversification and resilience | 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.<br><br>9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. |
| Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production. | Agricultural productivity and production | 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. |

| Agenda 2063 Goals | Agenda 2063 Priority Areas | UN Sustainable Development Goals | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Blue/ocean economy for accelerated economic growth. | Marine resources and energy<br><br>Port operations and marine transport | **14 LIFE BELOW WATER** | 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. |
| Environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities. | Bio-diversity, conservation and Sustainable natural resource management<br><br>Water security<br><br>Climate resilience and natural disasters preparedness | **6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION** | 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. |
| | | **7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY** | 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. |
| | | **13 CLIMATE ACTION** | 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. |
| | | **15 LIFE ON LAND** | 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. |
| A United Africa (Federal or Confederate). | Frameworks and institutions for a United Africa | | |
| Continental financial and monetary institutions established and functional. | Financial and monetary institutions | | |
| World class infrastructure criss - crosses Africa. | Communications and infrastructure connectivity. | **9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE** | 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. |
| Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched. | Democracy and good governance<br><br>Human rights, justice and the rule of law | **16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS** | 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. |

| Agenda 2063 Goals | Agenda 2063 Priority Areas | UN Sustainable Development Goals | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place. | Institutions and leadership<br><br>Participatory development and local governance. |  | 16.Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. |
| Peace, security and stability is preserved. | Maintenance and preservation of peace and security |  | 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. |
| A stable and peaceful Africa. | Institutional structure for AU instruments on peace and security<br><br>Defence, security and peace | | |
| A fully functional and operational APSA | Fully operational and functional APSA all pillars | | |
| African cultural renaissance is pre-eminent. | Values and ideals of Pan Africanism<br><br>Cultural values and African Renaissance<br><br>Cultural heritage, creative arts and businesses | | |
| Full gender equality in all spheres of life. | Women and girls empowerment<br><br>Violence and discrimination against women and girls |  | 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. |
| Engaged and empowered youth and children. | Youth empowerment and children's rights | <br><br> | 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.<br><br>5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. |
| Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful co-existence. | Africa's place in global affairs<br><br>Partnerships |  | 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. |

| Agenda 2063 Goals | Agenda 2063 Priority Areas | UN Sustainable Development Goals |
|---|---|---|
| Africa takes full responsibility for financing her development Goals. | African capital markets<br><br>Fiscal systems and public sector revenue<br><br>Development assistance | 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.<br><br>17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. |



*Based on African Union (2017) Agenda 2063 –Sustainable Development Goals. Copy of mapping exercise; https://au.int/en/ea/statistics/a2063sdgs*
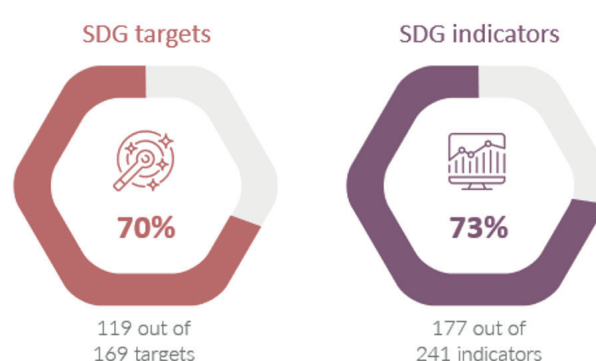
**Figure 4: SDG targets and indicators reflected in the first ten-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063**

A 2017 UNDP Africa Policy Brief found a high congruence of 89.2% between both agendas' goals. According to this analysis, only SDG 12 (Sustainable consumption and production) and Agenda 2063 goals 8 (A United Africa) and 16 (African Cultural Renaissance) are not reflected in the respective other framework. A review conducted by the AU[6] states that aspects of regional integration in goals 9 (Continental financial and monetary institutions), 14 (Stable and peaceful Africa) and 15 (African Peace and Security Architecture) are uniquely represented in the AU agenda, which translates into 75% congruence.

*While comparing goals might be useful for a general understanding of thematic coincidence, actual congruence might be better assessed at the level of targets and indicators – which ultimately guide the design and implementation of national policies and programs.*

Based on a highly granular 2017 AU mapping, the overall degree of congruence stands at 70% for SDG targets reflected in targets of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063, and 73% for SDG indicators covered by respective Agenda 2063 indicators.[7] Contrary to the UNDP analysis mentioned above, the AU mapping data for targets and indicators does not find any SDGs that could not be measured at least partially through the Agenda 2063 framework. While for four SDGs the target-level congruence is less than 50% (14, 15, 12 and 3), the complete sets of targets of six SDGs (1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 9) are fully reflected in the current Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063.

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6   AU: Linking Agenda 2063 and the SDGs
7   Following the assessment criteria used by the AU for this mapping, SDG targets are considered covered by 2063 targets even where not all indicators of the respective target are fully included. SDG indicators are considered covered by 2063 indicators even if the latter only covers partially the scope of the former, i.e., are at least thematically similar.

**Figure 5: Degree of *target*-level congruence between SDG clusters and first ten-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063**



*Based on African Union (2017) Agenda 2063 –Sustainable Development Goals. Copy of mapping exercise. https://au.int/en/ea/statistics/a2063sdgs.*
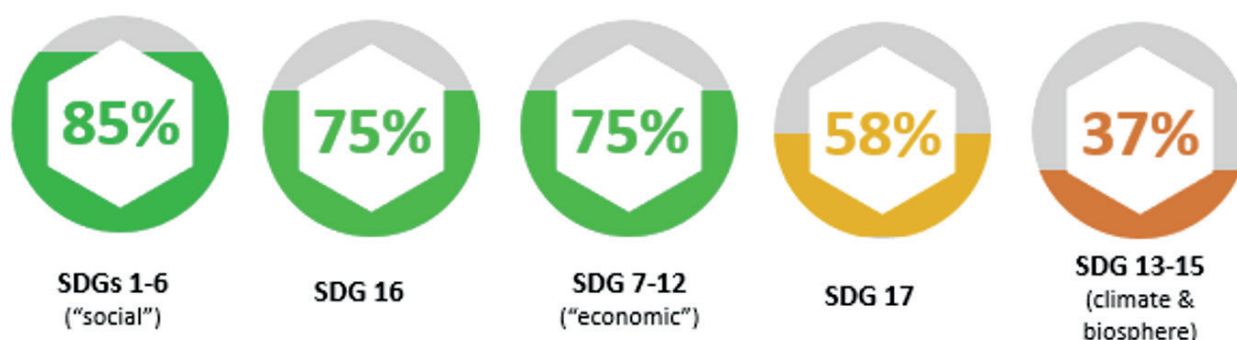
**Figure 6: Degree of *indicator*-level congruence between SDG clusters and first ten-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063**



*Based on African Union (2017) Agenda 2063 –Sustainable Development Goals. Copy of mapping exercise. https://au.int/en/ea/statistics/a2063sdgs.*
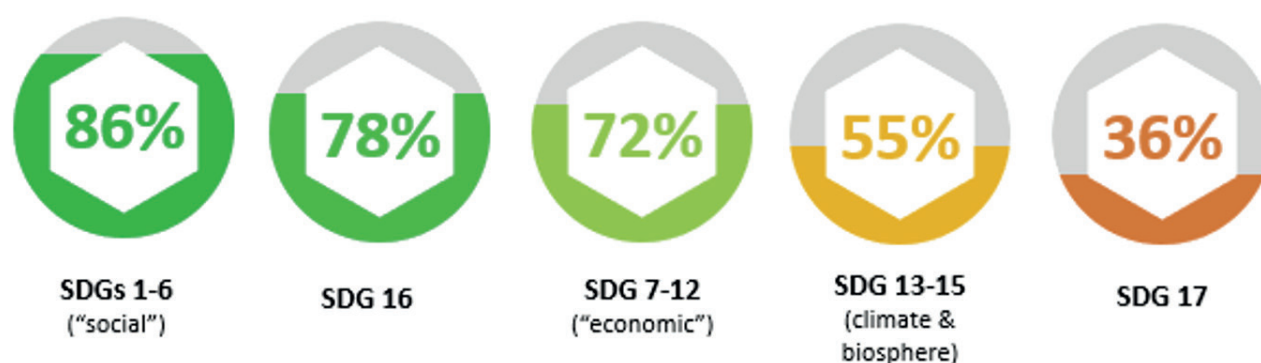
While there is no conceptual consensus on how to group the SDGs, this study embraces a pragmatic take on distinguishing among specific clusters of SDGs, namely social, economic and environment-related SDGs, in addition to the stand-alone SDGs 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and 17 (partnerships). In this line, the data from the AU mapping indicates that congruence is highest among social SDGs 1-6 (85% for targets, 86% for indicators), followed by SDG 16 (75% for targets, 78% for indicators) and the economic SDGs 8-12 (73% for targets, 69% for indicators). SDG 17 is more partially reflected in the current implementation plan of Agenda 2063 (58% for targets, 36% for indicators), which covers environment-related SDGs 13-15 to a relatively minor extent (37% for targets, 55% for indicators). Figures 2 and 3 offer more details on how the targets and indicators of different SDGs clusters are mirrored in the current 2063 monitoring framework.

The convergence of indicators from both agendas will be further detailed as part of ongoing work under the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) umbrella, specifically in support of the AU initiatives on supporting the African Statistical System to respond to data demand. This is primarily focused on full convergence, rather than partial congruence as stated above. At this stage (June 2021),[8] this initiative distinguishes four types of indicators: Agenda 2063 indicators that fully converge with 2030 Agenda indicators (44); Africa-specific indicators (12); Agenda 2063 indicators but no provision on SDGs (11); as well

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8    See presentation available at https://paris21.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/210614-STATAFRIC-%20AUC%20Initiatives.pdf

as complementary indicators from the SDGs global list (63).[9] The latter figures seem to suggest that at least from the perspective of statistical systems, full convergence at the indicator level is very limited.[10]

*In sum, the statistical congruence between the two agendas highly varies across different development dimensions. According to available data, it would be relatively easy for African states to measure and report on social and SDG-related indicators interchangeably for both agendas without duplicating efforts.*

For economic targets and indicators, the picture is a bit less favorable but could potentially be addressed by ongoing investments in statistical capacities in economic arenas, often backed by multilateral development banks. Much less congruence can be identified in the areas of climate change and biosphere (SDG 13-15) and partnerships (SDG 17) which poses the question how to increase African countries´ capacities to collect data and report on these without overburdening existing statistical systems and bodies.

*In this line, it will be critical for all stakeholders involved to understand that constraints to merge monitoring and reporting on these agendas need to consider the significant variations across thematic dimensions, and consequently invest in capacities in an increasingly targeted manner.*

## 2.4 SELECTED CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Because of their ambitious and comprehensive nature, both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 include numerous issues that are relevant beyond specific goals and targets.

*The different dimensions and themes are highly interdependent, with synergies and trade-offs to consider in many areas. From a practical perspective, these cross-cutting issues are essential to an overall effectiveness of development efforts, while also providing a normative compass for coherence and consistency in policy and implementation.*

In line with the experience and commitment galvanized in the GGA sector network with cross-cutting issues, and for the purposes of this study, we have considered the following four overarching themes: Leave No One Behind; Gender Equality; Inclusiveness; and Climate Change:

 **LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND (LNOB): Reflected in the preamble,[11] this is a core principle of the 2030 Agenda and consequently reflected throughout, particularly at the level of targets and indicators.** Explicitly based on a strong connection between development and human rights,[12] LNOB intends to combat discrimination and rising inequalities within and amongst countries. The 2030 Agenda places emphasis on LNOB as an essential pillar for monitoring, follow-up and review, requesting countries to "maximize and track progress in implementing this Agenda in order to ensure that no one is left behind" (para. 72). This has propelled extensive efforts to improve data collection and disaggregation that go beyond traditional disaggregators such as gender, geographic location and age.[13] SDG target 17.18 explicitly calls to improve countries´ capacity to "increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts". These improvements are not a technical requirement but indeed reflect the numerous human rights conventions that inform the SDGs.

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9    The respective number of indicators for each type is based on an undated draft list published at https://paris21.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Agenda%202063%20indicators%20vs%20SDGs.pdf (consulted 2 September 2021)

10   It remains unclear why the sum of indicators of these indicator types does not match the total number of indicators of neither Agenda 2063 nor the 2030 Agenda.

11   Original text is "As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind
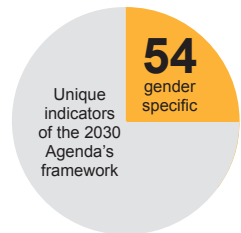
12   See for instance UNHCR: Comparative table of SDGs and Human Rights Instruments (2019)

13   As a flagship example of for operational practice on LNOB, see Leaving No One Behind - A UNSDG Operational Guide for UN Country Teams (2019)

For its part, Agenda 2063 integrates LNOB in its sixth aspiration to ensure people-driven development,[14] stating that "Africa shall be an inclusive continent where no child, woman or man will be left behind or excluded, on the basis of gender, political affiliation, religion, ethnic affiliation, locality, age or other factors" (para. 47). **However, none of the indicators of the first Ten-Year Implementation Plan requests this kind of advanced disaggregation, and where disaggregated data are measured, they tend to focus on women, girls and youth only.**

**GENDER EQUALITY:** SDG 5 intends to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls" and covers six thematic targets and three policy-related targets as means of implementation. These are largely in line with the 12 key areas of the Beijing Platform for Action.[15] Out of the 231 unique indicators of the 2030 Agenda's framework, 54 are gender specific. Of these, 14 measure progress in SDG 5 and 40 in other SDGs, mainly related to poverty, health, education, economic growth and good governance goals. That said, six SDGs are considered "gender-blind" by UN-Women, leading to a persistent "asymmetry in the global indicator framework."[16]

Unique indicators of the 2030 Agenda's framework

**54** gender specific

In **Agenda 2063**, gender equality is addressed in its sixth aspiration (people-driven development) and the related goal 17 pursuing "Full Gender Equality in All Spheres of Life" in two priority areas: "Women and Girls Empowerment" and "Violence & Discrimination against Women and Girls". The First Ten-year Implementation Plan features a total of 21 gender-related indicators in numerous targets related to poverty reduction, health, education, economic empowerment, security and good governance, among others, some of which are inspired by the 2030 Agenda's indicator framework.[17] **In terms of monitoring frameworks, gender equality plays a more limited role in Agenda 2063 (8.5% of all indicators are gender-specific) compared to the 2030 Agenda implementation and reporting (23.4% of all indicators are gender-specific).** That said, Agenda 2063 features several gender-related indicators that go beyond the scope of the 2030 Agenda, particularly in rule of law and security.[18]

**INCLUSIVENESS: Both agendas highlight inclusion and participation as key aspects for sustainable development.** The 2030 Agenda broadens the mandate for governments to ensure inclusive approaches both in terms of how goals are defined and in relation to how these are measured and accounted for ("shared responsibility"). For example, there is a strong commitment to sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, particularly to overcome income inequality (para. 27, and SDGs 8 and 9), a commitment to peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights (para. 35, and SDG 16), as well as to inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements (SDG 11). Importantly, the provisions for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda feature principles consistent with these approaches, by requiring it to "be open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people" and to "support the reporting by all relevant stakeholders". Follow-up and review should be "people-centred, gender-sensitive, respect human rights and have a particular focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind" (para 74e/f), indeed "encourage[ing] member states to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels which are country-led and country-driven" (para. 79).

For its part, Agenda 2063 also parts from the "importance of capable, inclusive and accountable states and institutions at all levels and in all spheres" (para. 3) to "establish flourishing, inclusive and prosperous societies"

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14   The full title is "An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children"

15   In sum, SDG 5 targets address the following aspects: Discrimination against women and girls; Violence against women; Harmful practices such as child early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation; Unpaid care and domestic work; Equal rights to economic resources; Use of technology; Policies and enforceable legislation for gender equality and empowerment.

16   UN Women: Turning promises into action - Gender equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2018)

17   UN Women: The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS) and Africa's Agenda 2063 (2017)

18   For example "proportion of women judges, prosecutors, etc." (indicator 6.17.1.3.1), as well as "% of law enforcement officers and judicial personnel trained to adequately deal with issues of discrimination against women and girls" (6.17.2.4.1)

(para. 8). These are both reflected in its first aspiration to achieve a "prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development." There are limited indications in terms of inclusion and participation in planning or monitoring only referring to a "sustained and inclusive social dialogue on Agenda 2063" as a way to ensure "African people's ownership and mobilization" (para. 74a).

**CLIMATE CHANGE:** **The 2030 Agenda defines climate change as "one of the greatest challenges of our time and its adverse impacts undermine the ability of all countries to achieve sustainable development"** (para. 14). Climate action is enshrined in SDG 13 which calls to "take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts".[19] SDG 13 targets relate to five areas: (1.) Resilience and adaptive capacity of all countries; (2.) the integration of climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning; (3.) education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change; (4.) climate finance mobilization, as well as (5.) capacity building for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS). Other SDGs with explicit climate-relevant targets include SDGs 1, 2, 11 and 12, while climate-related dimensions can be traced in virtually all SDGs.[20] A total of nine indicators measure progress in climate change mitigation and adaptation directly, with numerous others (significantly, SDG 7 on affordable and clean energy) covering aspects immediately relevant to climate change.

In contrast, Agenda 2063 takes a more limited approach by addressing climate change as one of the goals for its first aspiration (inclusive growth and sustainable development),[21] calling for "environmentally sustainable and climate resilient economies and communities" (goal 7). Only three indicators of the implementation plan are climate-related, focusing exclusively on resilience. Overall, climate action plays a relatively minor role in Agenda 2063. Potential trade-offs, for instance vis-à-vis its strong focus on economic progress, do not seem to have influenced the agenda design.

In sum, the 2030 Agenda has integrated the selected cross-cutting issues in ambitious and comprehensive ways at both the strategic and, importantly, operational levels.

*This creates ample potential for African countries to embed their development efforts in core commitments, particularly those related to inclusiveness, participation and non-discrimination which are also strongly reflected in Agenda 2063 and create an important enabling environment for non-state stakeholders to engage in both agendas´ planning, implementation and reporting.*

To a certain extent, the nuances underlying the integration of cross-cutting issues in the respective agendas might benefit countries trying to raise the bar for meeting these aspirations. In other words, African countries could complement the expectations of each agenda to generate a commitment which goes beyond the individual agreement, with gender equality being a powerful example where the wide-ranging 2030 provisions could be enriched by the specific approaches pursued by Agenda 2063.

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19  Importantly, the 2030 Agenda acknowledges the UNFCCC and the 2015 Paris Agreement as the primary arena and framework for climate change, thereby delegating global action to these rather than duplicating them.
20  For a comprehensive overview, see annex A of GIZ-WRI: Connecting the Dots: Elements for a Joined-Up Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement (2018)
21  The full title of this aspiration is "A Prosperous Africa, based on Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development"

## 2.5 PROVISIONS FOR DOMESTICATION IN NATIONAL CONTEXTS

International development agendas endorsed in the past years pose numerous challenges to developing countries. They are called to implement these agendas through the integration of goals and targets in national development planning, the adequate integrated financing of sustainable development, as well as stronger statistical capacities to plan, measure and report on respective indicators. At the same time, specific guidance – let alone concrete commitments to support respective capacities to plan, finance and account for results – is scarce, handing the responsibility back to individual member states and, to less extent, to regional platforms supporting countries in their domestication efforts.

The 2030 Agenda is primarily focused on national responsibilities to monitor, report and account for progress made in achieving the goals and targets through systematic follow-up and review (para. 47) - rather than focusing on guidance for planning and implementation. Hosted mainly at the HLPF, follow-up and review are anchored at global, regional and national levels (para. 73) and framed by several principles (para. 74). The latter includes a "country-led and country-driven" nature, specifically stating that "national ownership is key to achieving sustainable development, the outcome from national level processes will be the foundation for reviews at regional and global levels" (para. 74a).

*While the review dimension is a prominent feature of the 2030 Agenda, there are only limited provisions for how to integrate the SDGs into national development processes, encouraging "all member states to develop as soon as practicable ambitious national responses to the overall implementation of this Agenda.*

These can support the transition to the SDGs and build on existing planning instruments, such as national development and sustainable development strategies, as appropriate" (para. 78). At the same time, the 2030 Agenda recognizes the specific caveats of LDCs and SIDS in implementing this ambitious set of goals and consequently calls for adapted support to these in areas such as international public finance (para. 43), statistics and data (para. 76), as well as in the means of implementation of virtually all SDGs.

For its part, *Agenda 2063 affirms "our pledge [...] to immediately align and integrate Agenda 2063 in our national and regional development plans"* (p. 75) and calls to "set up an implementation, monitoring, evaluation system, underpinned by accountability and transparency, to ensure the attainment of Agenda 2063 Aspirations" by identifying national leadership and providing policy guidelines for national stakeholders for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 (p. 72p). Further details are provided in the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan which encourages member states to integrate Agenda 2063 in their national visions and plans, use the respective national planning system for the execution of Agenda 2063 and make sufficient arrangements for 2063-specific resource mobilization, among other aspects. However, the continental implementation plan remains non-prescriptive with respect to approaches required for governments to adapt the continental agenda to national contexts. Specifically, it lacks guidance in terms of policy design, statistics, governance structures, resource mobilization and, importantly, monitoring and reporting. In contrast, more emphasis is put on regional dimensions, particularly in relation to capacities and resources to be mobilized for the AU organs.[22]

*In sum, both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 are non-prescriptive in their provisions of how to implement their goals and targets at the national and local levels. While recognizing the importance of national implementation and stressing some essential building blocks in this regard, neither agreement outlines*

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22  In this line, the implementation plan details that for the implementation of the First Ten-Year Plan, "a capacity assessment and development plan is being prepared to cover some of the *AU Organs and the RECs in the first instance* and *later to the national levels*" [emphasis added].

*practical and operational implications, nor the "how-to" of achieving international goals through national and local action. That said, particularly developing countries have engaged in proactive reporting and mutual learning through the follow-up and review mechanism of the 2030 Agenda, specifically through the VNRs submitted to the annual HLPF.*

Based on the complementarities outlined throughout the chapter, there is indeed room for further practical inclusion of Agenda 2063 reporting at the country level, with high potential in terms of country ownership and operational efficiencies. Chapter 3 will look closer into the experiences and lessons learned in country-level practice of implementing the agendas in a coherent and consistent manner.

# 2.6 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND FINANCING

As opposed to previous agreements such as the UN Millennium Declaration, both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 include reflections on the financial means needed to achieve the respective goals and targets. Particularly the 2030 Agenda relates to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) on Financing for Development, also endorsed in 2015. The AAAA outlines the main financing sources (public and private, national and international) for sustainable development and calls for a revitalized global partnership further consolidated in SDG 17.

In broad terms, *both agendas offer insights into Means of Implementation (MoI) which include external support and national efforts at all levels, from financing and technology to policies and partnerships.* Consolidated assessments of financing costs and respective sources at the country and global level are not available, and at least at the UN level, financing for development is reviewed and decided upon in multilateral arenas that are separate from the 2030 Agenda.[23]

In specific terms, the 2030 Agenda puts an emphasis on "ambitious means of implementation" needed to "achieve our ambitious goals and targets" (para. 60). These MoI are spelled out in SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals) and further detailed in the 19 targets and 24 indicators of SDG 17 in relation to finance, technology, capacity building, trade and systemic issues (which include policy coherence, partnerships, and data). In addition, the 2030 Agenda establishes between two and four means of implementation as targets for each SDG – totaling 52 MoI targets throughout. These tend to focus on enabling environments, typically with respect to improved legal frameworks, policies, budgets, Official Development Assistance (ODA), technology and capacity building.[24] Importantly, these MoI are reflected in the global indicator framework of the 2030 Agenda, i.e., they are measurable and monitored in global and national reporting.

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23  Forum on Financing for Development, on the one hand, and High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, on the other. Both are held annually under the auspices of ECOSOC but involve different stakeholder and follow distinct strategic and political dynamics.

24  For instance, means to implement SDG 5 (gender equality) include reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources (target 5.a), use of enabling technology to promote the empowerment of women (5.b), as well as adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels (5.c).

**Figure 7: Means of implementation in comparison**
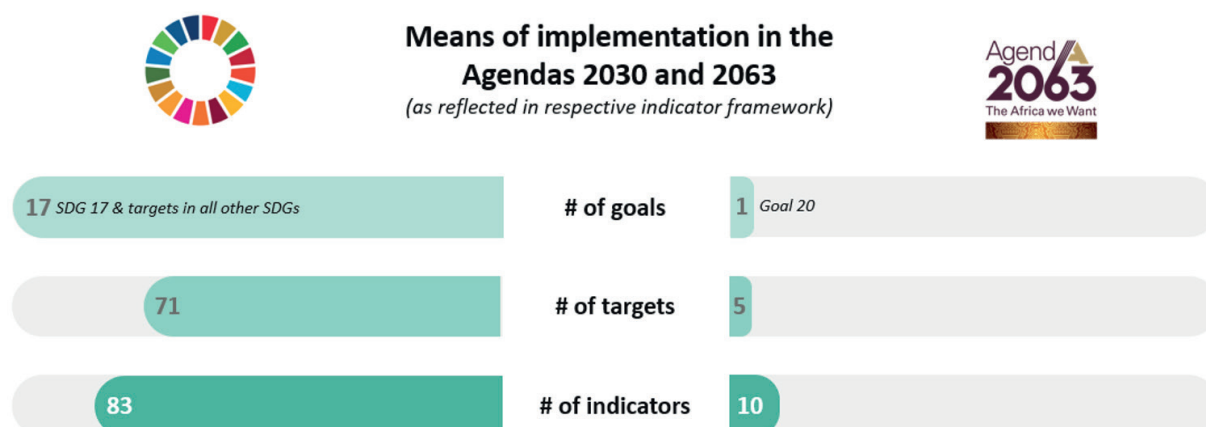


For its part, Agenda 2063 aspires that "by 2063, Africa shall be a prosperous continent, with the means and resources to drive its own development" (para. 10). Therefore, Africa´s own resources to finance its development will be a critical enabler for implementing its goals (para. 74). Specifically, the agenda calls for collective action to "strengthen domestic resource mobilisation, build continental capital markets and financial institutions, and reverse the illicit flows of capital from the continent" (para. 72o). In terms of agenda design, instead of being mainstreamed across different goals, financing constitutes one goal (goal 20) and remains relatively limited to three priority areas: (1.) domestic resource mobilization, (2.) African capital markets and (3.) development assistance.[25]

Operationally, the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan features a resource mobilization strategy (RMS) which, among other aspects, establishes that domestic resource mobilization (DRM) should contribute at least 75% to 90% of the financing of Agenda 2063 on average per country. This should be complemented by external financing mechanisms such as foreign direct investment (FDI), ODA, financial cooperation from emerging development partners such as BRICS countries, the Arab world, diaspora remittances and savings. The RMS also builds on an improved access to the international financial markets – which are summarized in the five targets and ten indicators of goal 20. Beyond financing, other means of implementation, for instance in terms of policy, legal and regulatory environments, are mentioned in passing but not included in the 2063 indicator framework.

In sum, the 2030 Agenda offers detailed and measurable guidance on a wide range of means of implementation which by themselves reflect globally agreed benchmarks on financial, technical, policy and regulatory contributions all partners should mobilize at all levels. Agenda 2063 takes a narrower avenue by focusing almost exclusively on African and domestic financing without offering clear guidance on the enabling environment.

*Potentially, African governments might benefit from merging both approaches by committing to national and Pan-African responsibility to finance their countries´ development, as outlined in Agenda 2063, and strategically using all available international and national sources in a comprehensive manner, as proposed by the 2030 Agenda.*

Importantly, countries around the world and specifically African countries have started to conduct comprehensive Development Finance Assessments (DFA) and to design Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFF). These are deemed essential to tap into and further mobilize all relevant financing sources needed to achieve

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25  There is an explicit commitment to reducing aid dependency (para. 72o and target 20.3), but the role of development assistance is still reflected in the three priority areas of the goal 20 mentioned above.

national development goals and targets guided by international agreements. INFFs tend to feature SDG Budgeting exercises which help mainstream international goals and targets in public financial systems. To the author's knowledge, there are no experiences with "2063 budgeting" documented yet. Current exercises could, however, technically be used for Agenda 2063 as well, in order to ensure further synergies and efficiencies in terms of financing, as countries are required to adjust their country systems – including the financial and budgetary ones - accordingly. In principle, depending on the characteristics of each country's systems, this could be done in ways that ensure finances are directed to the targets of both agendas in complementary ways. Experiences with and outcomes of these will be further discussed in the next section.

# 2.7 MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING

Compared to previous global agendas such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), recent years have seen numerous innovations of how countries are expected to translate international agreements into national action and report on outcomes and results achieved. The fact that both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 feature comprehensive indicator frameworks showcases this shift towards measurability as a corner stone of effective implementation. It also entails a commitment to accountability and learning which countries have increasingly engaged in over the past years.

**Figure 8: 2030 Agenda follow-up and review mechanism**
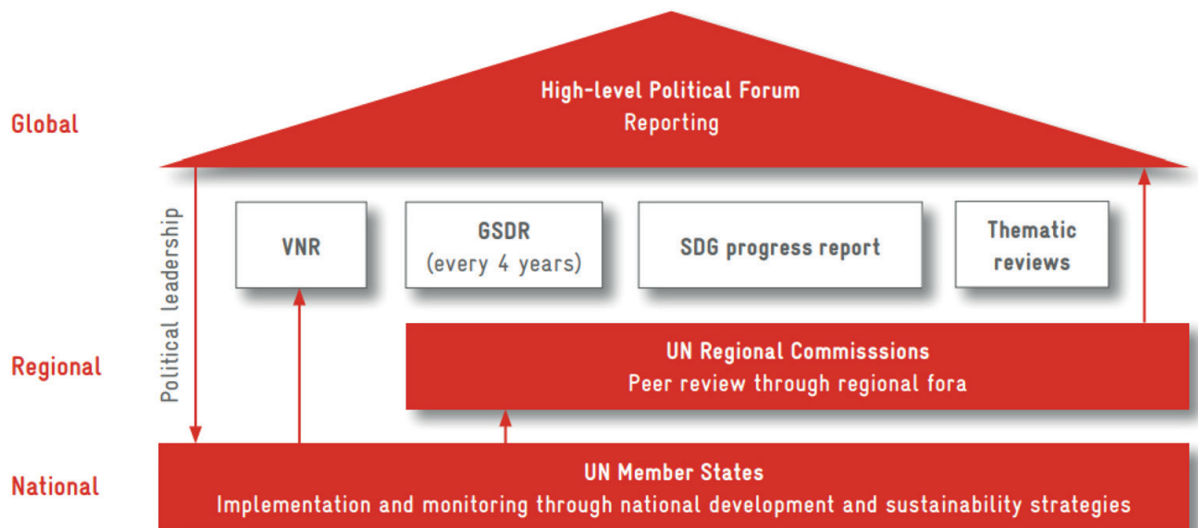


The 2030 Agenda includes clear provisions for follow-up and review with a clear lead role for governments by stating that "our Governments have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review, at the national, regional and global levels, in relation to the progress made in implementing the Goals and targets over the coming fifteen years" (para. 47). This should be based on "quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data" (para. 48). In this line, the 2030 Agenda recognizes the need to support the development of statistical capacities of developing countries as a key avenue to ensure evidence-based policymaking and accountability (among others, para. 76).

Countries are called to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels which are country-led and country-driven" (para. 79). Indeed, the overall reporting system at the national level is expected to meet the overall principles of the 2030 Agenda, especially regarding inclusiveness, LNOB and multi-stakeholder engagement,[26] for instance "draw[ing] on contributions from indigenous peoples, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders"(idem).

National experiences are expected to feed into each other through "peer learning, including through voluntary reviews, sharing of best practices and discussion on shared targets" (para. 80), for which numerous formats have emerged at regional and global levels, such as the GIZ-facilitated Partners for Review Platform and the G20 Voluntary Peer Learning Mechanism.[27] The state-led reviews – indeed, the VNRs – are embedded in an overall follow-up and review architecture which involves regional and global levels, with the annual Global SDG Reports provided by the Secretary-General (para. 83), regional reports such as the Annual Africa Sustainable Development Reports (para. 80) and thematic reports prepared by Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) functional commissions and other forums being among the most prominent ones (para. 85).

**THE SUCCESS OF THE VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS (VNRS)**

Among the factors driving the momentum of the 2030 Agenda, the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) have become a highly visible aspect of country commitment to achieving the SDGs. The VNRs are a cornerstone of the wider system of follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda under the umbrella of the annual High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), for which UN DESA has developed voluntary common reporting guidelines, along which technical support is provided, particularly through regional platforms. Often, the VNR process itself becomes a critical opportunity to further dialogue and engagement of multiple national stakeholders in development policies. By 2021, i.e. after the first five HLPFs and despite virtual fora in 2020-2021, a total of 168 countries have submitted at least one VNR, or 87% of all United Nations member states. Despite manifold criticism regarding quality and inclusiveness, among others, this is a unique achievement for a strictly voluntary reporting mechanism in the UN context.

Based on these mandates, *there is an extensive system supporting countries in their follow-up and review at the global and regional levels* which includes, apart from the HLPF itself, practical support in terms of VNR guidelines and technical back-up provided by UN DESA, regional forums for sustainable development hosted by the respective UN economic commissions, as well as numerous annual reports authored by the Secretary-General. It is therefore not surprising that between 2016 and 2021, a total of 247 VNRs have been submitted to the yearly HLPF, showcasing the energetic response of countries to report on progress in implementation and results achieved.

Of these reviews, 67 have been presented by AU member states, with an increasing tendency, peaking in 2020 when more than a third of all VNRs originated in the African continent.[28] *Indeed, for 2022, it is expected that of all scheduled 46 VNRs, African countries will submit almost half (22), vividly reflecting the critical importance of VNRs for AU member states to share their achievements and challenges in sustainable development; indeed, 40% of all AU member states have announced a VNR for that year.* However, the current focus of VNRs is almost exclusively on monitoring with limited use of evaluation, a critical component for continuous evidence-based learning, adaptation and accountability. The 2030 Agenda calls for follow-up and review to "be rigorous and based on evidence, informed by country-led evaluations" (para 74.g), which will "require enhanced capacity-building support for developing countries, including strengthening of national data systems and evaluation programs" (74.h). Yet, there is no further political commitment nor operational

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26  Indeed, these mandates seem to have contributed to deepening related national and local processes of engaging with non-state players, as stated in GIZ/Partners for Review: Engaging non-state actors and local authorities in SDG follow-up and review (2021a)
27  For more details on the G20 VPLM, see OECD: G20 contribution to the 2030 Agenda – Progress and Way Forward (2019)
28  Per years, African countries submitted 10/42 total VNRs in 2021, 16/47 in 2020, 16/47 in 2019, 11/46 in 2018, 8/43 in 2017, and 6/22 in 2016

orientation on how to integrate evaluative approaches and methodologies into national, regional and global follow-up and review, nor on how to internationally support the required capacities in these areas.

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**CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM**

The African Union has prioritised citizen engagement as part of its institutional reform agenda with the aim to foster systematic citizen participation across AU Organs and Institutions and realize the vision of an "integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens" (Agenda 2063). AUDA-NEPAD is currently developing a dedicated citizen engagement platform to enable citizen groups to actively engage in and contribute to policy making processes, which will specifically target vulnerable and marginalized voices in formal policy processes on the continent. The platform will provide key data on Agenda 2063 implementation and be deployed to aggregate citizens´ voices and inputs towards the 2nd Ten-Year Implementation Plan. Innovative dialogue formats with decision makers and interested citizens will further contribute to bringing AU policies and their impact closer to the population.

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In comparison, Agenda 2063 provides a less ambitious mandate for reporting and accountability which is primarily enshrined as one of the action lines, specifically to "set up an implementation, monitoring, evaluation system, underpinned by accountability and transparency, to ensure the attainment of Agenda 2063 Aspirations", by, among other elements, "providing broad policy guidelines that would be adopted/adapted by national, regional and continental stakeholders with respect to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063" (under the auspices of the AU Commission) and "leveraging the strengths of the RECs [Regional Economic Commissions] as the focal points for coordinating the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 at member states' level" (para. 72p). *The First Ten-Year Implementation Plan delegates monitoring and evaluation to African governments who should use existing national planning systems* and develop their own "policy guidelines on the design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation by various stakeholders".

In this context, evaluation remains particularly relegated to national systems without further commitment nor guidance on how to strengthen respective capacities, policies and systems, neither on how to include evaluative approaches and methodologies in country-level planning and reporting exercises. Regional Economic Commissions are encouraged to "organize annual forums for Member States to review regional implementation performance on Agenda 2063 and report annually to the AU Assembly on regional implementation, monitoring and evaluation of The First Ten Year Plan." While the preamble of Agenda 2063 pledges to "hold [..] ourselves and our governments and institutions accountable for results", there are only limited concrete approaches, channels and tools to do so when implementing the continental agenda, achieving its goals and targets, and even less on how to conduct evaluations on these. AUDA-NEPAD is currently preparing the second continental report to be launched at the 2022 AU Head of States Summit. This report is also expected to inform the upcoming Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 through identification of continental and regional gaps and opportunities. AUDA-NEPAD also maintains an online data base on aggregate and individual progress made by AU member states on the Agenda 2063 aspirations and goals.[29] So far, however, countries do not publish national reports on the Agenda 2063 implementation in a regular manner, as there are no formal requirements, incentives or forums for publicly reporting on national implementation of Agenda 2063 specifically.

Overall, advanced multi-level reporting mechanisms and tools are available for the 2030 Agenda with country-led VNRs as the most visible element. The reporting architecture for Agenda 2063 is still emerging and concentrated on the continental level while country-level reporting is not yet available.

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29   AUDA-NEPAD online database on progress made towards Agenda 2063

*African governments have opted to pragmatically start covering 2063-related dimensions in their VNRs. This provides an opportunity to merge reporting procedures and formats on both agendas, rather than creating parallel processes for each Agenda.*

This dynamic has been picked up by the 2017 AU-UN Joint Framework[30] to "undertake joint activities and programmes for the effective implementation, tracking and monitoring of and reporting on the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063", inter alia by supporting "institutional capacity strengthening to implement the two Agendas and ensure [joint] monitoring and progress reporting." Albeit these intentions, this has not yet led to progress in a potential single approach to country reporting on both agendas. This, in return, would ultimately meet the principle of national ownership and avoid overburdening limited country capacities to conduct monitoring and reporting on highly complex processes and a wide range of targets and indicators.[31]

# 2.8 SUMMARY OF COMPLEMENTARITIES FROM THE COUNTRY PERSPECTIVE

Summarizing the aspects analyzed in the previous sections, the following key areas of complementarities stand out as particularly relevant from the perspective of countries implementing both agendas:

- In terms of broad themes, the 2030 Agenda offers more opportunities to plan for, implement and account for **climate action and biodiversity** from a comprehensive perspective, while Agenda 2063 contributes more consistent guidance for engagement in **peace and security**, as well as **cultural development**.

- The 2030 Agenda offers in-depth guidance on **mainstreaming cross-cutting issues**, particularly in relation to LNOB and gender equality, including in relation to data and statistics, while both agendas share a high commitment to inclusiveness and participation of multiple stakeholders.

- There is an advanced degree of **thematic congruence** between the respective target and indicator frameworks, particularly in the social and economic arenas, as well as themes related to peace and rule of law (SDG 16).

- **Statistical convergence of indicators**, however, is much more limited, posing essential challenges to integrated reporting and threatening to overburden weak statistical systems.

- None of the agendas offers sufficient political and technical guidance for **domesticating global and continental goals and targets**. This leaves developing countries, and even more so LDCs, without an overarching reference and entails a lack of clarity of how to support these country-level processes.

- Aligned to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda offers an ambitious, comprehensive menu of **means of implementation**, while Agenda 2063 remains rather aspirational with limited guidance on how to mobilize resources and create an enabling environment for the goals and targets to be achieved.

- One of the strengths of the 2030 Agenda is its system for **follow-up and review** which has become increasingly dynamic over the past years, particularly through the VNRs on national implementation and its outcomes. Agenda 2063 still lacks a mechanism for national reporting, with continental reports being the primary channel so far. At the same time, evaluation remains a weak link in both agendas, creating essential voids in terms of learning and accountability.

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30  AU-UN Framework on Implementation of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 (2018) which proposes the development of comprehensive and integrated continental and national data platforms and methodologies, covering relevant indicators contained in the two Agendas, for instance through the ECA Databank and UNdata (para. 26d).

31  For more insights on the importance of national statistical capacities, see UNECA: Integrating and tracking performance on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 (2017)

▮ This also affects not only accountability dimensions but the options for countries to **learn from each other** when implementing Agenda 2063. In addition, there is a significant void of analyses of African countries´ experiences and lessons learned with planning for and implementing both agendas in a complementary way.

The next chapter will explore in more detail the opportunities to complement and mutually strengthen the implementation of both agendas, taking into account ongoing practice of GIZ programmes and other initiatives.

# 3. INTEGRATED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AND 2063 AGENDAS – EXAMPLES FROM PRACTICE

Over the past years, African countries and their international partners have worked intensely on driving national development efforts towards sustainable development and increasingly aligning these to international frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. These initiatives and experiences have not been comprehensively mapped yet, as most of existing reporting focuses on the SDGs. In consequence, reflections on how these two agendas interplay at the country level remain scarce.

This study intends to fill this gap, firstly, by screening and analyzing the VNRs submitted by AU member states between 2019 and 2021 with respect to references to integrated implementation of the continental and global agendas. Secondly, practice from GIZ initiatives with African partners to support the implementation of continental and global goals and targets has been assessed, including through in-depth interviews. Finally, a series of studies of multilateral organizations and GIZ´s own corporate publications have been used to identify solutions and lessons learned in this area.

## 3.1 AFRICAN VNRS AND THEIR REFLECTIONS ON SYNERGIES WITH AGENDA 2063

For this study, we reviewed 43 VNRs submitted by a total of 40 African countries[32] (or three quarters of AU member states) to the HLPFs 2019-2021 to assess the extent to which they reflect on synergies between the two agendas. Among African geographic regions, all Southern African countries, most of the Northern African countries, as well as two thirds of the Eastern and Western Africa countries have submitted at least one VNR. Central Africa was the least represented.

Out of the 43 VNRs, six do not make any reference to Agenda 2063, and 19 mention it in passing, mainly as an inspiration for national development planning (*see figure* 7). The remaining 18 VNRs offer more extensive insights of varying analytical depth in different dimensions of integrated implementation of these agendas. Across geographical regions, VNRs of Southern African countries tend to be most attentive to potential synergies between global and continental agendas (70% offer deeper insights – indeed none of the ten Southern African VNRs disregards Agenda 2063). In contrast, among Central African VNRs, only one in six, and among Eastern African VNRs, only two out of eight consider institutional or operational implications of implementing both agendas in complementary ways. Finally, Northern African VNRs are on average most oblivious to Agenda 2063, with three out of seven not making any reference – indeed half of the reviewed VNRs that do not mention the continental agenda at all are from the Northern African region.

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32   Three African countries submitted two VNRs in the period reviewed (Chad, Niger and Sierra Leone)

**Figure 9: AU member states´ recent VNRs and how they explore synergies between 2030 Agenda & Agenda 2063**
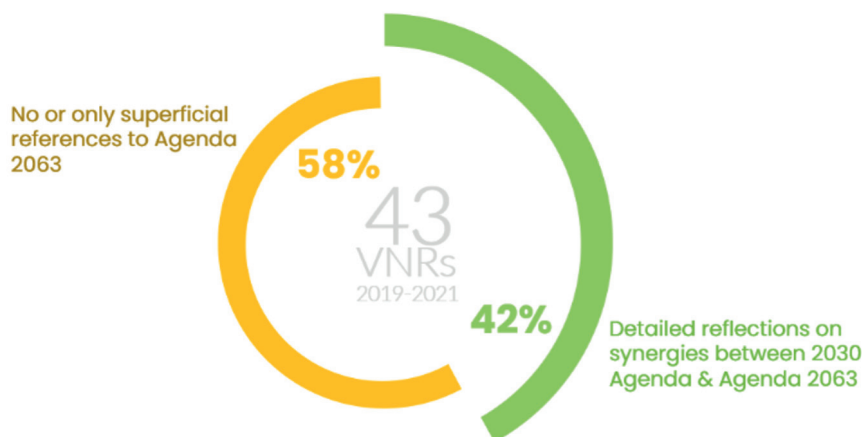


*Based on author´s own assessment based on the review of 43 VNRs submitted by 40 AU members states to the HLPFs 2019, 2020 and 2021.*

# 3.2 PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES REVIEWED FOR THIS STUDY

Complementing the analysis of VNRs submitted by AU member states, this study has reviewed a series of practical initiatives supporting critical areas of actual or potential integrated implementation. Most of these experiences are related to GIZ programs and projects that contribute to country-level multi-stakeholder alliances or regional processes and platforms.

Informed by desk reviews and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, the following experiences have been analyzed in more detail:

**Figure 10: Overview of contributing institutions and organisations**

| Lead organization | Key content of the experience reviewed |
|---|---|
| African Monitor | Support to civic voices and civil society engagement in review process in South Africa, particularly through a Citizens Report complementing the official VNR 2019 and subsequent engagements with a view to recovery from the pandemic. Experience supported by the GIZ Transformation Fund. |
| African Peer Review Mechanism | Series of workshops exploring different dimensions of joint implementation of both agendas, enabling knowledge sharing and building on countries' political commitment, but limited capacities, particularly in the public sector. |
| African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) | Continental reporting on 2063 Agenda and upcoming Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan (2024-2033), as well as new Citizen Engagement Platform capturing select data on Agenda 2063 and providing space for citizen-policy maker dialogues. |

| Lead organization | Key content of the experience reviewed |
|---|---|
| Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) | Data partnership involving national statistics offices and human rights institutions with focus on Kenya, primarily from human rights perspective and alternative data providers involved in official reporting. |
| GIZ Partners for Review | Engagement in data partnership and support to public sector (NSO) and non-state actors, particularly for citizen-generated data and data disaggregation, particularly in Ghana and Kenya (via Inclusive Data Partnership Initiative) |
| The 2030 Implementation Initiative (*Initiativprogramm Agenda 2030*) | Benin: Integrated reporting between state and civil society to improve implementation and accountability. |
| The 2030 Implementation Initiative (*Initiativprogramm Agenda 2030*) | Namibia: Integration of both agendas into Second Harambee Prosperity Plan, based on legal commitments (both agendas endorsed by parliament). |
| International Civil Society Centre (ICSC) | Process of LNOB partnership in Ghana, Kenya and upcoming in Malawi, focus on inclusiveness and disaggregation |
| Inclusive Data Partnership Initiative | Ghana: Use of human rights data as part of SDG monitoring, value of qualitative human rights data (SDG 16) for leaving no one behind |
| Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) | Support to civil society organizations in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda particularly with a view to inclusive reporting (VNR processes, shadow reports) and CSO capacity building – supported by GIZ Transformation Fund |
| United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Resilience Hub for Africa | New Guide for Integrated Planning in Africa, as well as plans for Integrated Policy Advisory Network in support of integrated planning |

## 3.3 POLITICAL COMMITMENT

**APRM ON MUTUAL LEARNING EVENTS ON INTEGRATED IMPLEMENTATION IN 2021**

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) has recently expanded its support to knowledge sharing among AU members around 2030 Agenda implementation and reporting while also discussing implications for implementing Agenda 2063. In this line, a workshop held in Djibouti in February 2021 discussed Africa's Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) in the light of both agendas. Participants identified that "integrated monitoring and evaluation tools to track Agenda 2063 & SDGs", for example, is still missing.

In another workshop held jointly with UN-DESA in Cape Town in October 2021, countries reviewed the implications of jointly implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 while recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants stressed the need for a strong public administration and effective governance, including better capacities for enhancing monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda in the post COVID-19 era. Both events showcased that there is political will to move towards more integrated implementation and reporting, which faces limited public sector capacities and missing integrated approaches and tools at the multilateral levels. These ultimately depend on a bottom-up approach with African countries pushing for a more efficient reporting frameworks integrating global and continental targets and indicators.

Based on the 43 VNRs reviewed, African countries have shown on average a fair degree of political commitment to use the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 at least as an inspiration and in many cases as a true requirement to include international goals and targets in the design, implementation and monitoring of their respective national plans. *Half of those provide deeper insights on how continental and global agendas could be reflected in national development planning and implementation. The latter are also the champions of pursuing an ambitious and comprehensive approach to linking international frameworks to their national efforts to achieve sustainable development.* These experiences will be outlined in more detail in the following section.

In cases where commitment to international agendas is high, it is often not exclusively directed to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In their VNRs, African countries refer to several other international agreements. Depending on the geographic location and the distinct country group (for instance LDCs or fragile states), these include the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Vision 2020, the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa Pathway), the Istanbul Program of Action, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, among others. The growing list of international commitments to be met in national contexts poses essential challenges to limited capacities and resources in smaller countries and fragile states, which reinforces the need to streamline and coordinate different implementation and reporting mechanisms (*see also section 3.5*).

Interestingly, *several African countries have aligned their long-term development visions to the timeframe of the continental or global agendas.* With respect to the 2030 Agenda, this applies to experiences of Chad´s Vision 2030, Comoros´ Emerging Plan for 2030, Egypt's Vision 2030, Kenya´s Vision 2030 and Seychelles' Vision 2033. Strategies aligned to Agenda 2063 timeline include Malawi´s Vision 2063 and Zambia's Smart Transformation Agenda 2064. However, this does not automatically imply that *both* agendas and their synergies are reflected in respective long-term visions and their operationalization through medium-term plans. Beyond planning only, integrated implementation seems to be more feasible in cases where institutional mechanisms are covering responsibilities related to these frameworks (*see section 3.5*) and reporting is adjusted to the interim milestones of these agendas (*see section 3.6*).

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**NAMIBIA'S LEGAL COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENTING BOTH AGENDAS**

As part of the ambitious operationalization of its second Harambee Prosperity Plan (HPPII, 2021-2025), Namibia has included the 2030 and 2063 Agendas as development reference frameworks based on legal commitments to implement both agendas which have been ratified by the national parliament. Implementation lies with a specialized task force led by the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation that is part of the working agenda of the National Planning Commission and linked to the Presidential Performance Delivery Unit. The Task Force is in charge of implementing the fifth pillar of the HPPII (International Relations and Cooperation) and specifically its goal "Enhance Economic Diplomacy for Economic Recovery." Among other aspects, this goal intends to ensure meeting national obligations towards the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. This entails the review of indicators and reporting in coordination with respective government entities.

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An interesting dimension is explored by **Tunisia (VNR 2019)**[33] which suggests that the continental framework "offer[s] vast opportunities for realizing real South-South cooperation with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda" which "aims essentially to accelerate the achievement of certain priority SDGs" throughout Africa. In some countries such as **Ghana (VNR 2019)** and **Mauritius (VNR 2019)**, there are early efforts to complement their SDG-related portfolio with the African Peer Learning Mechanism (APRM), the AU´s most visible South-South exchange mechanism which has recently started to provide mutual learning

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33   All Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) mentioned in this chapter can be consulted at the dedicated VNR website of the United Nations High-level Political Forum

opportunities for AU member states in these areas. For instance, the Ghanian National APRM Governing Council mobilized subnational structures (district oversight committees) to ensure citizens' involvement in development policies and has been instrumental to ensure grassroot validation of the country´s 2019 VNR.

While high levels of political commitment to implementing both agendas in a coordinated manner are concentrated on a few countries´ VNRs so far, it would be beyond the scope of this study to assess the underlying reasons for fragmented approaches. These might be related to missed political opportunities, limited awareness as described above (*section 2.2*), lack of capacities, including adapted statistical systems, and in practical terms, guidance on how to include references to other international frameworks in the VNRs.

The following sections will explore how African countries have reflected on key issues of integrated planning, implementation and monitoring in practical terms.

# 3.4 PLANNING AND MAINSTREAMING

*The majority of African VNRs with reference to Agenda 2063 concentrate on how continental and global agendas have been integrated in ongoing and new national development plans*, showcasing thereby the initial stage of understanding how these goals and targets can be achieved in a coordinated and complementary way. The most advanced degree of how Agenda 2063 has been included jointly with the 2030 Agenda in national planning can be found in terms of consideration of goals and indicators at the operational level.

Among the most advanced experience, **Malawi (VNR 2020)** has included indicators from numerous international frameworks, including the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, in the Monitoring and Implementation (M&E) framework of its new Malawi Vision (MW2063) "to ensure coherence in the delivery of both national and international commitments". For **Zimbabwe (VNR 2021)**, coherence is indeed a key element for its new National Development Strategy 2021-2025 and related planning processes, to be considered at three levels: horizontal (among international agendas), vertical (between international agendas and national/subnational priorities) as well as internal (between goals, targets and indicators). The ultimate challenge for African countries is to ensure that multiple international agendas can be implemented as part of nationally driven sustainable development. In this line, **Liberia (VNR 2020)** distinguishes four levels to ensure alignment and coherence between its Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (2018-2023) and international agendas: Vision and principles; goals; priority interventions; and indicators. Indeed, continental and global indicators were integrated in the National Statistical and Spatial Data System to update the national M&E Plan in 2018.

**TOOLS BY MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS TO INTEGRATE THE SDGS AND AGENDA 2063 INTO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS**

African countries can benefit from tools designed by multilateral organizations to include the continental and global agendas in their national planning. In the context of the AU, AUDA-NEPAD proposes the "Integrated Approach to Development" Tool which can collect both geospatial and attribution data for monitoring both agendas. It includes a dashboard and is available for RECs and AU member states while AUDA-NEPAD provides technical backstopping. AUDA-NEPAD has approached 11 member states to pilot this tool.

Covering wider governance dimensions, APRM´s Governance Tool simplifies data collection processes, supports a wide range of surveys and opinion polls, provides real-time data, compares historical and current statistics and generates and manages results in a timely manner. It is currently being used by 39 AU member states. For its part, the UN has developed a region-specific Integrated Planning and Reporting Toolkit (by UNECA), which has been used in six African countries. Finally, global UNDP tools are also available through the Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) as well as the Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA). According to a 2020 APRM study, however, only 72% of AU member states reported having access to at least one tool, indicating a relatively low use of these.

For its part, **Seychelles (VNR 2020)** has included all 2030 and 2063 goals in the six thematic pillars of its first National Development Strategy (NDS 2019-2023)[34] and provided further operational guidance through a strategic planning template through which Ministries, Departments and Agencies are requested to provide details of how their respective strategic plans are aligned with the SDGs and Agenda 2063. Similarly, **Eswatini (VNR 2019)** has fully mainstreamed both agendas' goals and targets in its 2017 Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth and structured its international reporting around these synergies, while **Sierra Leone (VNR 2021)** included them in the eight clusters of its Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019-2023.

Among countries with longer-term development plans needing to "trace back" international goals and targets to national priorities, **South Africa (VNR 2019)** has engaged in a detailed review of the convergence of its National Development Plan 2012-2030 with the SDGs and Agenda 2063, finding a high level of convergence with the 2063 goals and priority areas (95%) and an advanced convergence with the 2030 targets (74%). South Africa used three criteria for assessing the level of convergence focusing on impact on the respective international target or priority; magnitude of the impact; and speed of impact.

Some countries mention the existing capacity constraints to integrate international agendas in their development planning at national, sector and subnational levels. For instance, **Benin (VNR 2020)** has identified the need to create a score-based guide to identify the degree to which international targets and indicators can be included in national or subnational planning processes. **Cameroon (VNR 2019)** reports on critical resource constraints and the lack of a stable institutional framework which can effectively coordinate the planning and implementation of the continental and global agenda as part of the national development plan.

To a significant extent, these constraints directly affect the governance and institutional arrangements required for an effective integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Beyond ad-hoc formal integration in national development plans, integrated implementation in the day-to-day practice depends on usually scarce institutional capacities which already struggle with a consistent follow-up and adjustments of the national planning cycle, let alone consistent use of international results frameworks that add complexity. *For African countries, particularly those of more limited resources, it will be key to find innovative and easy-to-use approaches and tools to consecutively integrate regional and global targets and indicators into existing systems,* potentially taking advantage of ongoing processes of reform or strengthening of national development planning.

# 3.5 COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

According to the VNRs reviewed, while most countries have properly designed governance mechanisms for the implementation of SDGs, the operationalization of Agenda 2063 often lacks such structures for political and institutional support and coordination. *Indeed, only few countries can rely on institutional arrangements and coordination mechanisms for the comprehensive implementation of both agendas.* In those cases, it is embedded in existing planning systems led by ministries of development planning which connect the implementation and monitoring of international agendas with those of their respective national development plans.

This approach seems to be most advanced in **Ghana (VNR 2019)** and **South Africa (VNR 2019)** where the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 have been integrated in the national planning and implementation structures covering cabinet-level political decision-makers, director-level coordinators and, importantly, subnational governments. In both cases, these government structures are flanked by inclusive platforms involving Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), private sector, international development partners and other stakeholders. This has also triggered an increased involvement of Supreme Audit Institutions.[35]

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34  For instance, pillar 2 (People at the Center of Development) reflects SDGs 2, 4, 8-10 and 17, as well as 2063 goals 1-3 and 18

35  For a deeper review on the role of Supreme Audit Institutions in SDG-related coordination mechanisms, with experiences in Ghana, Kenya and Uganda, see GIZ/Partners for Review: The Contribution of Supreme Audit Institutions to the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (2021b)

**UNDP GUIDE AND SUPPORT FOR INTEGRATED PLANNING ACROSS SDGs, 2063 AND CLIMATE AGENDAS**

As part of an accelerated practical support to integrated planning at the country level, UNDP, in collaboration with the African Development Bank, UNECA, and AUDA-NEPAD, launched a "Guide for Integrated Planning in Africa" during the recent African Economic Conference 2021 in Cabo Verde[36]. The Guide responds to the increasing country demand to not only mainstream the SDGs and Agenda 2063, but to include international commitments in Climate Change (particularly NDCs) and Disaster Risk Reduction in National Development Plans.

The guide includes operational chapters related to implementation and reporting which might become a key reference for countries interested in moving towards more integrated approaches (module 6). UNDP is currently preparing an Integrated Policy Practitioners' Network (IPPN) which will serve as a "one-stop-shop for integrated policy practitioners, operating as a knowledge hub featuring state-of-the-art resources" for integrated planning. Building on ongoing UN processes in light of the UNDS reform, the IPPN will initially be co-led by UNDP, UNICEF and ILO. Starting in 2022, it will mobilize, high-quality expertise around the world, including African countries interested in integrated planning and reporting of sustainable development goals and targets.

In **Ghana**, the operational core is housed at the national SDGs Implementation Core Committee which has led the integration of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 into national planning and budgeting processes. At the same time, the SDGs Technical Committee oversees tracking and monitoring the nationally relevant goals and targets from both agendas, including through improved availability of accurate and timely data. Indeed, the need to enhance reporting on both agendas has been one of the drivers to adjust the implementation arrangements for both agendas, specifically to ensure efficiencies and avoid overburdening of limited national capacities, while also involving subnational actors already active in the APRM context.

Similarly, **South Africa**'s Inter-Ministerial Committee on SDGs, Agenda 2063 and Southern African Development Community (SADC)´s Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and the National Steering Committee of Director Generals track and review the progress made in the 2030 Agenda, Agenda 2063 and the SADC-RISDP. While South Africa has made important strides in aligning international goals and national planning with each other, one of its priorities is to strengthen the national follow-up and review capacities.

**INTEGRATED REPORTING IN BENIN**

Benin has presented their VNR before the HLPF in 2017 and 2018. Independent of the global Forum, both government and civil society have committed to national review. Specifically, the Ministry of Planning has committed to produce annual reports of national implementation efforts.

For 2019, the Directorate-General for the coordination and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda has prepared a detailed report reviewing the period from 2015-2019, considering the relevant policy environment, as well as achievements, challenges, and next steps. In the same vein, civil society has handed in their report as a follow-up to the 2018 shadow report that "takes stock of the reading that Beninese Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have of the achievements made by the Government". For Benin, regular reporting and continued dialogue have proven to be effective accountability mechanisms as the Spotlight Report highlights concrete examples of civil society demands raised in previous review that have been adopted by municipal government decrees.

Importantly, both Ghana and South Africa explicitly include lead international organizations in their coordination mechanisms, including the AU, the APRM, the SADC Secretariat, and the United Nations. This enables a close interaction with respective continental and global platforms housing these agreements.

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36  The guide is available online: https://ipguideafrica.org

**CITIZENS' REPORT COMPLEMENTING SOUTH AFRICA´S OFFICIAL VNR IN 2019**

In 2018-2019, CSOs gathered in the South African Civil Society Working Group on the SDGs decided to conduct a shadow report to "reflect on progress and more importantly determine how to improve delivery". In contrast to the official VNR, which the group titled a "political report [which] did not fully benefit from civil society's knowledge base and the lived realities of the people of South Africa", the Citizens´ Report focused primarily on the "how", as opposed to data only. A scorecard included dimensions such as adequate policies, legal frameworks, institutions, budgets and other areas considered critical to effective delivery on specific SDGs.

According to the African Monitor, one of the group´s lead organizations, the Citizens´ Report filled an essential void identified in many VNRs which often only reflect data tendencies without necessarily drawing on qualitative data and analysis, including inclusive evaluations and citizen-generated data (see section 3.7 below). This was also an opportunity to build capacity for "civic voice" in review processes and eventually level the playing field when discussing statistics and data with government entities leading VNRs. This process led to the creation of an "Open SDG Club South Africa" which has contributed, among others, to informing and guiding inclusive and transformative recovery from the COVID 19 pandemic through symposiums and specialized reports based on civic voices and might become an essential CSO platform for future country-led monitoring or reporting on Agenda 2063.

**Angola (VNR 2021)** and **Chad (VNR 2021)** have also identified the need to implement both agendas in a coordinated and synergetic manner. The government of Angola has created a Platform for Monitoring the Implementation of the SDGs which is expected to deepen the already existing alignment of the current National Development Plan with both agendas with a view to future reporting on prioritized international indicators from the 2030 Agenda, Agenda 2063 and SADC-RISDP frameworks. For its part, Chad launched a proper Directorate of Coordination and Monitoring of the 2030 and 2063 International Agendas which is further backed by an inclusive multi-stakeholder platform in 2019. It is set to oversee the implementation and monitoring of both agendas in a complementary way, particularly through statistical development.

# 3.6 DATA, MONITORING AND REPORTING

Given the vast range of goals and indicators to be measured and reported on for both agendas, countries are faced with the challenge to prioritize the development results set forth by international frameworks. While this is often done in the proper domestication process (*see section 3.4 above*), experience shows that *complementary monitoring and reporting on both agendas requires a careful consideration of (usually scarce) national monitoring and statistical capacities.* In this line, **Mauritania (VNR 2019)** relied on a series of criteria to decide on which specific goals the country can report. These include, among others, the alignment of common indicators for 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, as well as the availability of data to inform these indicators. Using a similar approach, **Liberia (VNR 2020)** has selected 140 indicators which can be linked from the national five-year development plan to the continental and global frameworks. An extensive VNR annex aligns specific 2030 and 2063 indicators to each other. As shown in the previous chapter (section 2.3), in broader conceptual terms, a series of indicators indeed cover numerous goals of both agendas, but only few indicators are congruent in strictly statistical terms, constituting therefore an essential caveat to efficiency in reporting.

In terms of frequency and formats for reporting on the 2030 Agenda, only a few countries have set a fixed procedure so far, and even less have come up with a consistent system used for both agendas. **Ghana (VNR 2019)**, under the lead coordination of its Statistical Service, has committed to annual reporting based on inputs

from ministries, departments and agencies. It currently covers around 80 SDG and 2063 indicators, using (a) existing data sources of the medium-term national development plan (Agenda for Jobs, 2018-2021), produced on a quarterly basis, and (b) new data from national surveys which have been updated with additional modules to enable reporting of selected indicators of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Ghana also plans to conduct a comprehensive mid-term review in 2024, i.e. mid-way through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and a year after the culmination of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063. Similarly, **Côte d'Ivoire (VNR 2019)** reports annually on the progress in both agendas as part of the regular review of the national development plan. The latter relies on an Integrated System of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of the national priorities, SDGs, Agenda 2063, and other references.

**PACJA´S PUSH FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND REPORTING IN EAST AFRICA**

Driving a new commitment to inclusiveness, the 2030 Agenda has opened new spaces for civil society to participate in development planning, implementation and reporting. It is also an opportunity for international partners to scale and adjust their support to CSOs in their role as players for sustainable development. As such, supported by the GIZ 2030 Agenda Transformation Fund, the Panafrican Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) engaged with national and subnational civil society in the implementation and reporting on sustainable development in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. This includes awareness-raising and capacity building for CSOs to participate in VNR processes and create productive relationships with policy-makers and development partners. In Kenya and Tanzania, under the lead of respective CSO platforms, SDGs Kenya Forum and Tanzania's ForumCC, these efforts have led to the drafting of shadow reports complementing and contrasting the findings of official VNRs. Moving forward, comprehensive capacity building of CSOs and other non-stakeholders might be a cornerstone for integrated implementation of the continental and global agendas in line with each frameworks' mandates for inclusive policy making and implementation.

This integrated data collection and reporting system seems to avoid additional burden and possible duplication detected by countries such as **Mauritius (VNR 2019)**. For now, this island nation reports separately on the distinct agendas, among others through a 2017 Interim Report on Agenda 2063, a VNR on the SDGs in 2019 and different reporting exercises related to the Samoa Pathway and the APRM. According to this experience, "due to limited local capacity, all these processes are at risk of remaining shallow." It is therefore key to "design a common [international] monitoring and reporting mechanism" to reduce the "burden on the limited human and financial resources of small countries such as Mauritius". This is in line with the findings of the 2030 APRM study recommending that "the AUC should harmonize and rationalize research and reporting on Agenda 2063 and SDGs across institutions at all levels (…) and align efforts towards a unified reporting system following the rules and regulations developed at the AU without exerting undue burden on Member States."

*Indeed, the VNRs reviewed for this exercise seem to indicate that integrated reporting on both agendas requires substantial additional investments in statistical systems and capacities across all African countries.*

While this is a challenge for developing countries in all regions, most African national statistical authorities are not able to track progress in distinct goals and targets, let alone to produce highly disaggregated data in an accurate and timely manner, as required for following up on cross-cutting themes such as LNOB and gender equality. **Cabo Verde (VNR 2021)** and **Niger (VNR 2021)** stress the existing gaps in their respective systems which the former attempts to address with an updated National Statistical Development Strategy (2017-2021) with a budget of 23 million USD. **Tunisia (VNR 2019)** is among the countries reporting consistent initiatives to achieve sufficient international support to strengthen its national statistical system to produce the data required for monitoring the implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. This includes technical assistance and cooperation by the United Nations Development System (UNDS), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and other partners such as the European Union. In the context of this review, this example stands out as it addresses statistical capacities in a comprehensive manner, i.e. looking into national plans as well as continental and global frameworks.

**THE POTENTIAL OF QUALITATIVE HUMAN RIGHTS DATA FOR LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND IN GHANA**

Human rights are at the heart and center of national development planning in Ghana but national performance in these is often difficult to capture and process, including in relation to human rights-related targets and indicators set out in both agendas. To cover this gap and with support by the Inclusive Data Partnership Initiative, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) - which encompasses a National Human Rights Institution, an Ombudsman and an Anti-Corruption Agency - conducted a mapping and systematization of the type and scope of data it produces and how these can contribute to SDG reporting. A specific finding is that human rights institutions are often well positioned to provide qualitative data which is relevant to policymaking. However, qualitative data does not find its way into formal 2030 or 2063 reporting, often geared towards quantitative data only. For instance, the CHRAJ stresses that it collects relevant data on SDG indicator 16.b.1 ("proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed"), among other data with significant potential to contribute to qualitative assessment of SDG implementation in relation to human rights. One of the current caveats, according to CHRAJ, is the "vast underestimation by NICC [the National Implementation Coordinating Committee of Ghana] of the value of the qualitative data produced by the CHRAJ for monitoring and reporting purposes, and a lack of understanding on how it can be used in SDG monitoring." In the Ghanian context, this has led to further debates of the value of human rights data as a key driver of meeting the LNOB principle, particularly vis-a-vis individuals whose rights have been or are being or at-risk of being violated.

Looking deeper into a human rights-based approach to statistics needed to leave no one behind and fight both inequality and discrimination, **Kenya** has become a leader in ensuring consistent collaboration between its National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), and the National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) through a 2017 Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen data collection, disaggregation, dissemination and analysis in light of human rights and the 2030 Agenda.[37] Supported by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and DIHR, KNBS and KNCHR joined efforts to conduct a LNOB-sensitive national census in 2019 which addressed 28 previously identified vulnerable groups, including people with disability, persons with albinism, intersex people, indigenous peoples and stateless persons.

Currently, this alliance is addressing human rights-related data gaps in relation to SDGs 10 and 16 through a two-way capacity building for (a) KNBS to use human rights standards to design and implement data collection exercises and for (b) KNCHR and other organizations – including the SDGs Kenya Forum gathering more than 350 national CSOs – to use statistical concepts and improve the quality of their own data collection exercises so that these can prospectively be integrated into official statistics. This process constitutes a vital opportunity to further guide joint planning and reporting of the continental and global agendas in compliance with international human rights standards while also meeting the LNOB principle.

Finally, only limited experience is available for local reporting on both agendas. **Uganda (VNR 2020)** has been pioneering the voluntary local reporting mechanism with the Ngora district government in the Eastern region. This 2020 VLR[38] covers both the 2030 Agenda and aspirations of Agenda 2063 as part of the district development processes feasibility studies, budget allocation and the district development plan 2015/2020. Other VLRs have been published by subnational governments in Kenya (Busia, Kwale Marsabit and Taita Taveta counties; all from 2019 and coordinated by the national Council of Governors), South Africa (Cape Town, 2019) and Zimbabwe (Harare, Victoria Falls; both from 2020), some of which were part of a UNECA

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37  DIHR/KNCHR/KNBS: Report of the Training and Stakeholder Dialogue on a Human Rights-Based Approach to SDG Data in Kenya, Mombasa June 2021 (2021)

38  Ngora District Local Government: Voluntary Local Review Report – Implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda (SDGs, Agenda 2030 & Agenda 2063)

initiative supporting VLRs.[39] From the published VLRs,[40] only the one from Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe) refers to both agendas, albeit in a merely superficial manner without any analysis of practical implications for local reporting on these complex frameworks.

## 3.7 EVALUATION

Evaluation remains a largely underused component of country level planning and implementation of development policies in general and has therefore found only limited space in the VNRs. VNRs also suffer from limited knowledge and misunderstanding of evaluation itself and the role it might play in the successful achievement of the SDGs and targets.[41] That said, *some interesting emerging experiences might – from a public policy and programmatic perspective – induce further synergies between both the continental and global agendas, building on incipient evaluation system, policies and guidance.*

One example is **Angola (VNR 2021)** which included evaluation training in its VNR process and states impact evaluations as key resource for social programs to contribute to the SDGs and specifically to the LNOB principle, i.e. "to expand and improve the collection of information on monetary and multidimensional poverty among the most vulnerable groups, including refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons." Angola constitutes an interesting case as its VNR links tendencies in 2030 goals and targets directly to government policies and programs under the umbrella of the National Development Plan. It therefore uses policy action and its contribution to the SDGs as the primary focus of evaluation.

**EVALUATIONS TO INFORM POLICY DECISION-MAKING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Among developing countries worldwide, South Africa is one of the early movers to embed evaluations in policy planning and implementation processes. The 2011 National Evaluation Policy Framework created the environment for a national evaluation system under the lead of the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, hosted at the Presidency. Government-wide procedures ensure that evidence from completed evaluations informs national planning and cabinet-level policy decision-making which is increasingly aligned with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 (see section 3.4 above).

The National Evaluation Society enables coordination and better synergies across line ministries, for which a network of evaluation champions is being nurtured. Challenges remain particularly in terms of compliance and lack of capacities at local government levels.

For its part, **Cabo Verde (VNR 2021)** has embedded evaluation in its national Monitoring and Evaluation System which covers national development strategies and implementation mechanisms. These rely on legal and institutional underpinnings which could be used vis-à-vis both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The legal environment is an essential pillar for the strength, scalability and sustainability of the national system. In similar ways, several African countries have created or strengthened evaluation lead entities and systems within the government such as Bureau de l'Evaluation des Politiques Publiques et de l'Analyse de l'Action Gouvernementale in **Benin (VNR 2020)**, the National M&E Platform of the **Gambia (VNR 2020)**,

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39  These included Accra (Ghana), Yaoundé (Cameroon), Harare (Zimbabwe), Ngora (Uganda) Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe). For more details, see UNECA: African cities and localities embark on Voluntary Local Reviews of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 (2020)

40  For a full list of formally submitted Voluntary Local Reports, see https://unhabitat.org/topics/voluntary-local-reviews (consulted 20 September 2021). Only seven out of 77 currently available VLRs come from African local governments.

41  For a global review, including several African countries, on the role of evaluation in VNRs, see IIED: Evaluation - A crucial ingredient for SDG success (2016), as well as IIED: VNR reporting needs evaluation - A call for global guidance and national action (2018)

the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System in **Kenya (VNR 2020)** – which has been further decentralized through the County Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System –, the National Monitoring and Evaluation Department of the Presidency of **Sierra Leone** (VNR 2021), Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Presidency of **South Africa (VNR 2019)**, and the National Monitoring and Evaluation System in **Lesotho** (VNR 2019). These institutional arrangements intend to support line ministries and other government entities (either vertically or horizontally) to ensure sufficient quality evaluation as part of policymaking and implementation, including policies expected to contribute to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. So far, however, the inclusion of professional evaluation bodies – considered a good practice for setting up strong evaluation (eco)systems - is incipient at best, with only Kenya's government engaging in working-level coordination with the Evaluation Society of Kenya.

In terms of specific sectors, **Egypt (VNR 2021)** refers to evaluation as a key ingredient for successful policy implementation and adaptation in the light of the SDGs, for instance with respect to cash-transfer programs, anti-corruption efforts and afforestation initiatives. While it is not immediately evident to which extent these evaluations investigated contributions to sector-level SDGs and their respective targets, it seems evident that sector-level evaluations might contribute to further accountability and learning on the relevance and effectiveness of government policies in terms of both agendas´ goals and targets. As stated by **Namibia (VNR 2021)**, this links back to the evaluability of public policies and programs, for instance through robust M&E frameworks and alignment to standards set by national M&E policies to ensure government-wide quality, coherence and consistency. In this area, one long-standing reference is **Uganda**'s National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (VNR 2020), essentially a coordination mechanism based on capacity building, quality assurance and fluid information management across sectors and government levels.

In practice, particularly with a view to smarter and more effective policymaking and implementation, *several countries have used the VNR processes to explore new ways of using flexible and adaptive methodologies as a way of integrating evaluative approaches into international reporting*. An underlying challenge is the fast pace of international reporting which tends to be contrary to the relatively slow speed of evaluative work. To address this gap, **Sierra Leone (VNR 2021)** uses solutions shared during a UNICEF/CLEAR-facilitated process to embed evaluation in VNRs, which evolved around a practical guidebook.[42] Based on the latter and supported by specialized online training, rapid impact evaluation was conducted for high-priority SDGs 4 and 16 under the leadership of the Statistics Sierra Leone in collaboration with the Ministries of Education and Justice, respectively, as well as the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development. In the context of the VNR, Sierra Leone's M&E Department recently launched a comprehensive national M&E Policy and Operational Manual to further mainstream rapid and flexible evaluation approaches across ministries, departments, and agencies. Similarly, in the context of its VNR, **Kenya (2020)** conducted rapid evaluations for health and water sector projects at the subnational (county) level with a strong capacity building component and a dedicated focus on public participation. Eventually, these evaluations did not necessarily generate immediate results for the VNR but provided a key opportunity to strengthen the national evaluation system as part of an ongoing commitment to use evaluation to report and inform national, continental and global development policies.

In sum, most institutional arrangements, policies and guidelines for evaluation in African countries, where available, focus on national development plans and increasingly focus on sector-level policies and programs, with incipient work on subnational capacities. To the extent that these policies and programs, and their respective M&E frameworks, are effectively designed to contribute to continental and global goals, evaluation might become a stronger aspect of integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

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42   UNICEF/CLEAR: Embedding Evaluation in Voluntary National Reviews in Africa - A Guide (2019)

# 4. EMERGING GOOD PRACTICES

As shown in the past chapter, over the past years, African countries have shown exceptional political commitment with continental and global agendas for sustainable development, often translated into specific updates of development plans through mainstreaming the SDGs in particular, supported by increasingly sophisticated institutional arrangements and measured as part of improved statistical systems and capacities. While these are valuable steps forward, there are critical areas less covered in currently available analyses and documentation reviewed for this study. These include financing and means of implementation supporting the achievement of goals and targets of both agendas.

African countries are quickly approaching the mid-term point of the 2030 Agenda in 2023 which also constitutes the final year of the first ten-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 and the period in which the next implementation plan (2024-2033) will be elaborated and launched. *This dynamic context might also be an opportunity to further engage in mutual learning on specific dimensions of the integrated implementation of these agendas, drawing on lessons learned with ongoing knowledge exchange around the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.*

In line with the experiences mapped for this study, the following early good practices are emerging at the strategic and operational level and might be considered particularly relevant for further learning and exchanges among African countries and their diverse stakeholders.

## 4.1 MAINSTREAMING

Since many African countries are in the process of revisiting their medium-term development plans, there is an essential window of opportunity to integrate goals and targets from both agendas in the national process of development planning and implementation. In the absence of an overarching framework for coordinated mainstreaming of the continental and global agendas, the practice so far has shown that countries need to invest in the following critical aspects:

- Consistent analysis of areas of both agendas which are *short- and medium-term priorities* feeding into national development goals, ideally using a scorecard or similar approach which reviews not only political but also institutional and operational criteria such as feasibility, financing, capacities, data availability, etc.

- Guided by emerging approaches to integrated implementation, for instance led by the AUC, identify *synergies at the target and ultimately indicator levels*, and match these with national development priorities.

- *Use processes of both new planning cycles and mid-term reviews* to integrate priority targets and indicators into the national planning system including respective results frameworks.

- Develop institutional and operational capacities and ensure corresponding financial and human resources for improved development planning. *Increasingly focus on sector and cross-sector public policies* and programs capable of addressing these goals and targets.

- *Support subnational planning*, for instance at the regional and local levels, through improved guidance, tools and capacity development of subnational authorities and all relevant stakeholders, ensuring sufficient political support, adequate visibility and opportunities for mutual learning among subnational authorities.

▐ Guide development partners towards consistent support to national and subnational efforts to mainstream both agendas in an integrated manner, with particular focus on planning, financing and budgeting, data and reporting capacities.

# 4.2 INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION

Where both agendas are implemented in an integrated manner, African countries tend to use existing institutional arrangements of national development planning rather than establishing dedicated ones. Moving forward, the following aspects might be particularly relevant for further institutional coordination of integrated implementation:

▐ *The integration of both agendas in existing institutional arrangements* should follow the overall dynamic of mainstreaming goals, targets and indicators in national, sector and subnational planning.

▐ The actual *roles and responsibilities* of development planning bodies vis- à -vis both agendas and their *synergies need to be explicit.* Potential roles might include mainstreaming, monitoring and reporting on both agendas´ goals and targets.

▐ A successful *adaptation to integrated implementation* usually requires the inclusion and/or more prominent roles of government bodies which were historically involved in development planning on occasion. This might relate to national offices of statistics and different departments of Ministries of Finance or non-executive players such as parliamentary committees and national human rights institutes.

▐ Overall, coordination for integrated implementation should be strengthened through consistent *investments in capacity development and adequate financial resources* from national budgets and international sources. Implementing both agendas might require specialized expertise in thematic and methodological terms, for both individual lead organizations (such as National Statistics Offices, NSOs) and collective efforts such as working groups dedicated to specific (clusters of) goals.

▐ *Subnational and local coordination should be a core element* of integrated implementation and needs to be adequately reflected in institutional arrangements both at the political and the technical levels, i.e. beyond consultative forums only.

▐ Apart from development partners providing financial resources and technical assistance, national coordination mechanisms should create *strong channels of communication and collaboration with technical arms of multilateral organizations* leading the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 planning and reporting at the continental and global levels, including UNDESA, for the former, and AUDA-NEPAD and APRM, for the latter – potentially giving formal roles to these in their respective institutional arrangements.

# 4.3 INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The continental and global agendas have created a momentum for governments to engage in innovative partnerships with non-state actors, both within existing institutional arrangements for development planning and with respect to specific thematic areas of sustainable development. Examples such as the role of CSOs in inclusive citizen data or the increasing use of private sector in economic, social and governance standards for sustainable development show that innovative partnerships are at the core of future success in achieving

continental and global goals and targets. The following areas might be particularly further invested in over the next years:

▌ Clear roles need to be established for *non-state stakeholders to become part of national institutional arrangements*, moving from consultative towards substantial participation in terms of planning, implementing and reporting for continental and global goals and targets

▌ Meaningful engagement with non-state stakeholders requires a deepening of the overall *enabling environment for different players to operate by themselves and to collaborate with the government*, for instance in design and implementation of public policies or the delivery and accountability for public services.

▌ *Innovative partnerships* depend on a continuous investment in day-to-day working relationships based on shared interests which is intrinsically dependent on a longer-term perspective of how different actors collaborate and should ideally be embedded in the nation´s vision of sustainable development.

▌ Partnerships tend to be most effective where *clear value is added to the participating stakeholders.* The experience of CSOs becoming involved in innovative data solutions reflects the potential of governments and non-state players joining efforts to cover critical gaps.

▌ Overall, contributions of non-state players might further increase and become more targeted through *dedicated awareness campaigns* sharing both agendas´ goals and targets not only among executive and legislative entities, but critically among CSOs, private sector, academia and other players.

# 4.4 FINANCING

So far, financing for development is only rarely directly connected to planning and implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. There are individual efforts in budgeting for the SDGs and similar financial planning tools, and several countries have engaged in DFAs to build future INFFs for sustainable development. However, these are focused on the 2030 Agenda with limited reference to Agenda 2063. Over the next years, it might be essential for African countries to advance in the following areas:

▌ *Financing should be fully integrated* in the institutional arrangements for implementing both agendas, ensuring a sufficiently strong joint leadership of ministries of development planning and financing.

▌ Parliaments and particularly *parliamentary committees on finance and budgets need to participate* proactively in all discussions and decision-making on development finance geared towards continental and global goals and targets.

▌ While international cooperation is set to remain a substantial source for many African countries', efforts to achieve sustainable development in line with both agendas, more comprehensive approaches to development should enable governments to *assess and take decisions on the whole range of development finance sources*, as requested by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

▌ The ongoing work on DFAs and INFFs should be used to ensure an *integral use of all available development finance sources* (including trade, remittances, among others) for the integrated implementation of both agendas. This will require further synergies among the corresponding lead government entities, particularly ministries of finance and development planning.

# 4.5 STATISTICS AND REPORTING

African countries´ capacities to report on both agendas´ indicators individually remain scarce and where progress is made, it is primarily focused on the 2030 Agenda only. Several multilateral streams have started to support national statistics capacities and have identified opportunities for aligned data collection and reporting for both agendas, albeit at a still limited scale. Based on relatively limited data availability, reporting remains challenging and so far, there is no mechanism to enable integrated monitoring on both agendas, with parallel reporting requirements overburdening many countries´ capacities. For the years to come, the following aspects appear to be particularly critical for coordinated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063:

❙ The reporting opportunities enabled particularly by the 2030 Agenda (through the VNRs) might be used primarily to deepen and accelerate capacity development of national statistical systems with a view to the *sophisticated continental and global indicators.* Short-term prioritization of indicators might be followed by broader ranges of indicators in the medium and long run, once sufficient capacities are in place.

❙ Consequently, a strong role of national statistical offices as lead entities for statistics and data-based reporting can contribute to *more effective government coordination around data*, identifying gaps and opportunities for all pillars and sources of national statistical systems, including line ministries and subnational governments.

❙ Beyond the conventional government focus, the sheer complexity of data requirements, for instance in terms of disaggregation, requires *further coordination and collaboration with non-state players* such as CSOs who can source alternative data where official data are not available at this stage.

❙ At the same, *conventional statistics players need to develop further capacities to interact* with the broader development community, particularly CSOs, human rights institutes, evaluation bodies and other organizations which can be sources of qualitative data to inform integrated reporting of both agendas.

❙ Especially with regards to human rights, such cooperation will be considerably fruitful, as the majority of SDG indicators mirrors human rights obligations and suggest disaggregation by rights holder groups – data that countries are required to collect and report as part of the *Universal Periodic Review (UPR)* under the Human Rights Council and can be referenced.

❙ Reporting on both agendas might be most efficient and sustainable if *integrally included in the existing reporting mechanisms* of development planning rather than creating additional structures and channels for data collection and reporting.

❙ African countries might need to further leverage REC-led initiatives and practical solutions to create *integrated reporting frameworks, templates and tools for both agendas*, for which the upcoming mid-term point of the 2030 Agenda and the culmination of the first ten-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063, both in the year 2023, might be important occasions.

# 4.6 EVALUATION

So far, evaluation remains a relatively minor component for the implementation of each agenda individually but has the potential to create further energy towards integrated implementation. The core interest of evaluation is focused on national, sector and occasionally subnational development policies and programs. In more advanced cases, evaluation is embedded in national M&E systems and aligned to respective M&E policies and guidelines. Based on emerging practice, African countries could make further progress to the extent that their policymaking and implementation is clearly designed to contribute to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063:

▌ Current emphasis on statistical capacities – for instance by strengthening NSOs and national statistical systems - might be extended to a consistent and *sustainable commitment to evaluation* as a key tool for evidence-based decision-making and continuous learning and adaptation.

▌ The experience so far shows that African countries might benefit from further systemic engagement in evaluation of public policies and programs to assess their contributions to the goals and targets of both agendas. This approach might entail *strengthening the national evaluation systems* and lead entities, creating the right incentives and structures for ministries, departments and agencies to adopt an evaluative culture, designing strong M&E policies with sufficiently flexible and adaptive methodologies and tools, and creating closer feedback loops between evaluation providers and consumers (i.e. policymakers, other stakeholders, etc.).

▌ The mid-term point of the 2030 Agenda and the launch of the *second ten-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 might become a critical opportunity for African countries* to deepen their interest in and expand the strategic use of evaluations. Core elements might relate to understanding the policy and program-related factors of persistent gaps at the levels of both agendas´ goals and targets, as well as lessons learned in successful implementation in areas with the most progress.

# 4.7 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The 2030 Agenda has provided a chance for many African countries to review and update their institutional and operational capacities to address cross-cutting issues, particularly in relation to LNOB and gender equality. As part of the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, there are manifold opportunities to deepen these initiatives, for instance in relation to widespread gaps on data and statistics and less sensitive planning instruments, specifically at the sector and subnational levels. African countries might want to consider the following emerging practice of operationalizing cross-cutting issues as part of more coordination implementation of continental and global goals and targets:

▌ The LNOB principle provides strong leverage for government in general and statistical offices in particular to *upgrade statistical systems and capacities* with a view to advanced disaggregation of data collection, processing and reporting. These *might benefit from closer collaboration with national human rights institutes and CSOs* which could complement and add value to government-led investment in non-discrimination policies and monitoring through increasingly disaggregated data, covering especially vulnerable groups prioritized by both agendas.

▌ Work towards greater *gender equality is a core element of the 2030 Agenda and strongly reflected in Agenda 2063*, providing opportunities for African countries to ensure that development planning is coherent and consistent with empowering women and girls and fighting gender-based violence through respective national, sector and subnational policies and better evidence-based decision-making to work towards SDG 5 and Agenda 2063 goal 7.

- *Climate action might be further integrated* not only through the respective goals (particularly of the 2030 Agenda) but also by coordinating government and other stakeholders´ initiatives around the Paris Agreement and the NDCs which are being updated in many African countries.

- Overall, despite their inherent complexity, *cross-cutting issues provide an opportunity to integrate different national, continental and global priorities* and therefore motivate governments to accelerate the shifts in development planning which are needed to achieve either agenda in an efficient and effective manner.

## 4.8 POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY

In most African countries, the COVID-19 pandemic is still unravelling with limited access to vaccines and therefore low vaccination rates, while economies are heavily affected by external vulnerabilities including the disruption of international value chains, high gas and oil prices, increasing inflation rates and an overall unstable global economic environment. At the same time, the COVID-19 crisis is also an opportunity to revise and adjust development planning in line with international commitments, while ensuring efficiency and effectiveness of public investments in recovering better. Core elements to consider from emerging practice include the following:

- Increased policy focus and evidence-based action to *protect the most vulnerable groups* as part of recovery initiatives, including through widened social protection schemes and deepened inclusiveness which are both part of the continental and global agendas and can be guided by existing operational tools and solutions, including at the level of policies and data.

- *Comprehensive use of ongoing analyses on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic* on sustainable development and specific (clusters of) SDGs, and continuous updates to inform further government efforts for national recovery and increased resilience.

- *Integration of nationally prioritized goals and targets* from continental and global agendas in national recovery plans and initiatives, ensuring sufficient capacities to monitor gaps and progress, particularly with a view to the most vulnerable population groups.

- In-depth review of *medium-term development finance scenarios as part of recovery plans* and initiatives aligned to national priorities informed by the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, using and adapting current approaches such as DFAs and INFFs.

## 4.9 MUTUAL LEARNING TO CAPTURE SOLUTIONS FOR INTEGRATED IMPLEMENTATION

The emerging practices outlined in this chapter intend to be a useful *early guidance to enable and facilitate mutual learning among African stakeholders*. In turn, future exchanges could further inform the process of capturing, validating and deepening country-level solutions. So far, analytical work on solutions for integrated implementation of the continental and global agendas is still incipient, and mostly focused on multilateral agendas. It will therefore be key to advance in a better systematic understanding of the institutional and operational capacities and processes required for African countries to achieve the sustainable development goals and targets enshrined in the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 while recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

# 5. KEY OPTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT TO INTEGRATED IMPLEMENTATION

Given capacity and resource constraints for African countries to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in a coordinated manner, international support plays an essential role for future progress in this area. Practical experience has shown that there are critical technical gaps in manifold areas, from consistent mainstreaming and financing frameworks to institutional arrangements and statistical systems. Many development partners – particularly multilateral organizations – are already providing technical assistance and initial opportunities for mutual learning, but others have yet to engage more substantially in partnerships with African countries not only around the SDGs, but also with a view to the continental aspirations and goals.

While this study has not specifically focused on development partners´ approaches and portfolio in support of the national implementation of international agendas, its findings allow for identifying concrete avenues through which international development actors – including GIZ– could support African governments and non-state stakeholders in their quest to achieve both continental and global goals and targets. These include, among others, the following key aspects:

- **Support the mapping and validation of African countries´ emerging good practice** to move towards a coherent and coordinated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. This might include continued analytical work on specific areas covering particularly those currently weakly developed (such as financing or cross-cutting issues), looking into practical solutions and enabling further exchanges among African key stakeholders.

- **Contribute to strengthening national and subnational government capacities for integrated development planning, implementation and reporting** in line with continental and global frameworks, ideally with an emphasis on improved coordination, data and statistics, LNOB and financing. This might involve process facilitation, technical expertise, and financial resources, to be coordinated through the respective lead entities for development planning, financing and statistics.

- In the area of statistics specifically, **advocate for integrated monitoring of the continental and global indicators** in existing international platforms such as the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD), PARIS21 and the IAEG-SDGs, among others. This might entail both continued work on definitions and methodologies, on the one hand, and capacity building support directed to integrated monitoring and reporting, on the other.

- With a view to the second half of 2030 Agenda implementation and the second ten-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063, both starting in 2023, **provide specialized and sustained support to country-level evaluation capacities** as a core element for accountability, learning and adaptation of policies and programs. This might include further engagement with non-traditional partners (national and regional evaluation platforms) and continued direct capacity development support in terms of government-wide institutions, policies, guidelines, tools, and other areas.

- **Increase support to African non-state stakeholders and their role in planning, implementing and accounting for sustainable development**, through capacity development, technical assistance and financial resources primarily directed to existing networks and platforms. This might relate to civil society platforms focusing on data and statistics, reporting and accountability (including shadow reports), as well as LNOB and human rights.

❙ **Support the role and capacities of national human rights institutes as key partners** for ensuring that the human rights-based approach to sustainable development, as an overarching umbrella for both agendas, is fully operationalized. This might involve capacity building, financial assistance and policy dialogue required to enable NHRIs to become guardians of an integrated implementation aligned with human rights instruments and obligations.

❙ **Expand platforms and opportunities for in-depth knowledge sharing and continuous networking among African stakeholders**, building on ongoing processes led by the AUC, APRM, UNECA and different bilateral agencies and further informed by good practice mapped as suggested above. Ideally, African regions would be enabled to share their experiences, practice and tools with their immediate peers, which might also increasingly involve regional bodies such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the East African Community (EAC).

❙ **Support African countries and their multilateral platforms in adjusting reporting mechanisms for global, continental and regional frameworks**, particularly through identifying ways of incrementally merging country reporting on 2030 Agenda (VNRs) and Agenda 2063, starting with the new Ten-Year Implementation Plan 2024-2033. This might involve additional dedicated technical and financial support to AUDA-NEPAD and the AUC, as well as deeper engagement of UNDESA as the lead entity for the VNR methodology.

❙ To adjust approaches, programs and tools, agencies might **conduct in-depth portfolio analyses on technical and financial assistance provided to the regional process**, specifically to the AUC as well as the Specialized Technical Committees and other AU organs, in order to map opportunities to ensure that external support enables further synergies between the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 at the regional and country level. Ideally, this would also imply exercises of ensuring coordination and complementarity of different development partners´ initiatives in support of the AU and its different layers.

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# ANNEX: INTERVIEW PARTNERS

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