Key Messages

**African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)**

**Continental Workshop on the Voluntary National Reviews for the 2023 HLPF and the
Domestication of Agenda 2063**

Durban, South Africa[1]
15-17 March 2023

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[1] The three-day technical workshop was organised in Durban for national representatives of 26 African countries
with the participation of UN and AU organs alongside youth and civil society representatives.

Alignment and domestication of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and AU Agenda 2063

i. Progress is ongoing in many African countries to imbed coherent national strategies for the effective and coordinated implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

ii. To enhance domestication and localisation of both agendas, alignment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national develoment plans (NDPs) and frameworks needs to be legislated and combined with an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF), which is necessary to ensure availing resources for the SDGs and Agenda 2063 programs at national and subnational levels.

iii. Despite the negative impact of the COVID-19 crisis on progress towards the SDGs in many African countries, implementation efforts are ongoing, including re-prioritisation of some Goals, and alignment of NDPs with both Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063.

iv. The African Union, UN agencies and development partners are urged to continue strengthening institutions and human capabilities for better planning, monitoring and evaluations of both agendas.

v. Developing more disciplined and systemic approaches to risk mitigation and management is key to ensuring that the journey towards achieving the SDGs and Agenda 2063 is maintained with little to no negative impact.

vi. Fragility, conflicts and political transition in some African countries impeded national abilities to conduct Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and align NDPs with the SDGs and Agenda 2063. These countries, as well as least developed countries, need further capacity building support to domesticate and plan for implementing both agendas in tandem.

Significance of VNR and VLR processes

i. The VNR exercise serves as an increasingly inclusive, whole-of-government, whole-of-society, evidence-based process led by the Government, aligning national data sets with the global SDG indicator framework.

ii. To accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 through effective stocktaking and reporting through the VNR process, efforts need to be more adequately resourced, in both financial and human capital terms.

iii. The VNRs conducted by African countries contain valuable information, data, lessons, and examples of policies for accelerating implementation and increasing resilience.

iv. The process of conducting a VNR can increase collaboration, knowledge sharing, peer learning, and South-South cooperation to build and strengthen the national capacities of African countries; provide momentum for continued reporting that increases comparability and consistency of the VNR reports.

v.   Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) can support stronger institutional and governance frameworks and effective national-to-local implementation of the SDGs.

vi.   Countries are encouraged to set up national mechanisms to consolidate contributions from VLRs into their national reporting, and to support designing the VNRs and VLRs as an interconnected stakeholder engagement mechanism.

Implementation of CEPA Principles for Effective Governance of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063

i.   Governments in many African countries are undertaking efforts to integrate institutional frameworks for monitoring and evaluation of progress towards both agendas that can support good governance and sound policymaking principles.

ii.   As called for in SDG 16, countries are taking steps to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, to anchor development efforts and build resilience towards future shocks and vulnerabilities.

iii. Countries called for further capacity building initiatives, including on the principles of effective governance for sustainable development (CEPA principles) and institution building at national levels.

Monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063

i.   Countries can improve policies and programs through effective monitoring and evaluation; however, most countries are challenged with timeliness in data collection and publishing due to resource constraints, and there is a need for technical and financial assistance to align the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 within the NDP, supported by an INFF.

ii.   Data sharing needs to be prioritized, especially from national statistical offices, with meaningful efforts by Governments to build capacities for subnational implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

iii. Experimental data, and data from non-traditional sources, are often used to show progress in areas where there are data gaps, or to complement data from the Agenda 2063 framework.

iv.   Governments are encouraged to establish a central data review body or process that can decide the best data sets to use in terms of relevance, timeliness, and quality.

v.   African countries are encouraged to benefit from the APRM governance assessment reviews and continental workshops on VNRs, and to minimize reporting fatigue through use of integrated tools and processes for monitoring and evaluation of both agendas.

vi.   The AU efforts to enhance monitoring and evaluation of the first-ten-year implementation plan (FTYIP) of Agenda 2063 are significant to assess relevance and effectiveness of the agenda over the past ten years. AU organs and regional economic commissions need to provide their inputs to the FTYIP evaluation and undertake

special studies, amongst others, to assess emerging impacts of Agenda 2063 FTYIP implementation.

vii. Successful monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 requires strong political will and commitment, mobilization and commitment of all actors at all levels, synergy of monitoring and evaluation mechanism at all levels, quality and continuous dialogue with partners, alignment of national budgets with planning and programming, and support for national statistical systems.

Progress towards SDG 6 (water) SDG 7 (energy), SDG 9 (industry, infrastructure and innovation), SDG 11 (sustainable cities) and SDG 17 (partnerships)

i. Vulnerability to climate change and environmental disasters is a concern of some African countries. International and continental actors and organs are encouraged to utilize VNRs to sustain financing for water, infrastructure and energy sectors and provide further technical assistance to African countries to enhance resilience to climate change and disasters.

ii. The adoption of INFFs and strengthening of domestic resource mobilization capacities have proven to be efficient in some African countries, with a focus on revised tax structures, streamlining of tax exemptions, and prevention of revenue loss, supported by green financing, FinTech/digital finance, and diaspora bonds.

iii. African countries' abilities to generate renewable energy resources and provide basic services, i.e., access to safe drinking water and affordable energy, require further support from continental and global partners. The second-ten-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 (STYIP) will prioritize the "water-energy-infrastructure" nexus to provide basic services for African citizenry.

The role of youth, women, and civil society organizations for promoting the principle of leaving no one behind (LNOB)

i. Localization and domestication of both Agenda 2030 and 2063 requires political and administrative buy-in and ownership that supports government officials to undertake a stronger role at local levels, and engages citizens to raise awareness and advocate for both agendas' rationale and significance for community development.

ii. Engaging and empowering youth and civil society organizations through multi-stakeholder forums and activities that support their positive role in the localization and implementation of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 can also help to implement national programs.

iii. Countries are encouraged to develop inclusive policies to ensure that women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, and people living in vulnerable situations are not left behind in efforts to implement both agendas.

iv. Improving the quality of education, supporting local communities, and fostering national health insurance systems in Africa are key to empowering civil society groups and suporting their incluson in partnerships for sustainable development.

v.   Conducting an analysis of the Multidimensional Poverty Index can serve as a useful exercise to enhance gender inclusion in the implementation of NDPs and nationnal and local programmes.

vi.   Instability and lack of security have negatively affected the LNOB principle in Africa, especially with regard to internally displaced persons.

vii.   Countries are encouraged to improve good governance practices, including accountability, full access to information and effective institutions; create educational programs that raise awareness of the SDGs at the local level, especially in rural areas; and decentralize economic opportunities for youth to nurture LNOB practices.