

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
25 April 2025

Original: English

Economic Commission for Africa
Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
Eleventh session**Regional preparatory workshop for African voluntary national reviews and voluntary local reviews**
Kampala, 7 and 8 April 2025**Report on the regional preparatory workshop for African voluntary national reviews and voluntary local reviews: strengthening integration of and reporting on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union****I. Background**

1. With less than five years remaining until the deadline for completion of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is evident that clear, concerted measures are needed to put the world back on course. In Africa, less than 6 per cent of the measurable targets under the Sustainable Development Goals are on track to be achieved, while negative trends need to be reversed in relation to a number of other targets.¹ Against this backdrop, African States need to take bold, ambitious and accelerated transformative measures to improve development outcomes. At the same time, the continent is entering the second 10-year implementation period of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union, an agenda that captures the region's context-specific aspirations.

2. As part of the mechanisms to follow up on and review implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, African States are encouraged to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress that are country-led and country-driven. The process of undertaking a review is expected to be rigorous and based on evidence, high-quality, up-to-date and disaggregated data and the close involvement and input of national and local stakeholders, including civil society organizations, private companies, higher education institutions, young people, children and other relevant groups. The final reviews are then presented during the annual meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. A total of 10 African States are engaged in the national review process in 2025.

3. To support the review process, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in collaboration with United Nations partners (the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs) and African Union organs (the African Union Commission and the African Peer Review Mechanism secretariat) organizes an annual workshop during the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development,

¹ African Union and others, *Africa Sustainable Development Report, 2024* (Addis Ababa; Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; New York; 2024).



providing a platform for sharing region-specific best practices, success stories and common challenges and for spurring the further involvement of stakeholders, in order to enrich the voluntary national and local reviews.

4. African communities have noted the particular benefits of conducting sustainable development reviews at the subnational level, in particular at the provincial, district and municipal levels, which complement the national review process. Through engagement with numerous stakeholders on the ground, voluntary local reviews reach a grass-roots audience, which can, in turn, inform the sustainable development process and move it forward in a more inclusive manner.

5. The two-day regional preparatory workshop for African voluntary national and local reviews was hosted in Kampala. A total of some 100 participants attended the workshop in person. The deliberations and recommendations of the workshop are set out in the present report.

II. Session summaries

A. Session 1: Welcome and opening remarks

6. The opening session was moderated by an Economic Affairs Officer in the Natural Resources and Green and Blue Economy Section of the Climate Change, Food Security and Natural Resources Division, ECA, John Sloan. Opening remarks were given by the Head of the Sustainable Development Goals secretariat of the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda, Albert Byamugisha; the Director of the Office of Strategic Planning and Delivery of the African Union Commission, Botho Kebabonye Bayendi; the Senior Continental Governance Officer of the African Peer Review Mechanism, Sara Tawfik Hamouda, who spoke on behalf of the Chief Executive Officer of the Mechanism, Marie Antoinette Rose Quatre; and the Chief of the Natural Resources and Green and Blue Economy Section of the Climate Change, Food Security and Natural Resources Division, ECA, Nassim Oulmane, who spoke on behalf of the Deputy Executive Secretary (Programme) and Chief Economist of ECA, Hanan Morsy.

7. Mr. Byamugisha shared the positive experiences of Uganda in harmonizing the preparation of its voluntary national and local reviews. Uganda had launched one of the first voluntary local reviews to be undertaken in Africa and they were currently being conducted in localities throughout the country. The voluntary national and local reviews had helped the country to link global and regional goals with its own national development plan.

8. Ms. Bayendi underscored the role of Agenda 2063 in bringing the region's context-specific priorities to the fore, noting the importance of linking efforts to implement the two agendas and review progress in their implementation. It was important for African States to cooperate with one another in that connection.

9. Ms. Hamouda recognized the significance of collaboration between the United Nations and the African Union for accelerating the implementation and monitoring of both agendas. With help from ECA and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the African Peer Review Mechanism provided support at the continental level to approximately 600 national civil servants and a number of focal points for the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. It also provided the tools necessary to enhance incorporation of the two agendas into domestic frameworks, institutional coordination, monitoring and evaluation, and facilitated a multi-stakeholder approach to tracking both agendas.

10. The Chief of the Natural Resources and Green and Blue Economy Section of the Climate Change, Food Security and Natural Resources Division, ECA, commented on the strong participation of African countries in the voluntary national review process and the growing role of voluntary local reviews in capturing and proposing solutions to the region's development challenges. Such energy reflected the region's history of cooperation and creation of Africa-centric approaches to its own development, which was a process that ECA had supported.

B. Session 2: Lessons from the 2025 voluntary national review process to date

11. Ms. Hamouda moderated the session, which included presentations on experiences to date in the 2025 voluntary national review processes. Presentations were given by the Senior Economist of the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development of Eswatini, Nonhlanhla Shongwe; the Director of the United Nations Agencies Department of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning of the Sudan, Ibrahim Omda Tomas; the Assistant Director of the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President of Nigeria on the Sustainable Development Goals, Yahaya Umar; an Economist of the National Planning Department of the Ministry of Finance, National Planning and Trade of Seychelles, Shirin Pillay-Laporte; and the Acting Head of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division of the African Union Commission, Charles Wangadya.

12. During the presentations, participants drew attention to persistent challenges in collecting and analysing timely, high-quality and disaggregated data, in particular at the local level, which was further hindered by limited awareness among stakeholders.

13. They noted that countries were making progress in encouraging stakeholders, including local governments and entities and representatives of civil society and the private sector, to engage with the voluntary national and local review processes. Inclusivity remained a challenge, however, in particular with regard to full engagement with marginalized groups. Representatives of Nigeria and Seychelles shared best practices in promoting awareness at the subregional level of the Sustainable Development Goals within the voluntary national review process.

14. Participants highlighted some successes in integrating voluntary local reviews into voluntary national reviews. In addition, they identified conflict as a major obstacle to achieving development goals. Insecurity and instability had obstructed voluntary national and local reviews in some subregions.

15. The following recommendations resulted from the discussions:

(a) Efforts to achieve the Goals should be adapted to local contexts, as a means of ensuring that the reviews were meaningful and people-centred;

(b) Stronger partnership frameworks and multi-stakeholder platforms should be developed, with a view to overcoming many of the challenges that had been discussed;

(c) In the light of lessons learned from experiences during the first 10-year implementation period of Agenda 2063, there is an urgent need for high-quality, harmonized data systems throughout the continent, for enhanced policy coherence and for strengthened government commitment and accountability mechanisms;

(d) In the case of the Sudan, priority must be given to the provision of capacity-building and improved economic opportunities in the post-conflict era.

C. Session 3: Statistical tools to assist in the voluntary national review process

16. An Economic Affairs Officer of the Development Planning Section of the Macroeconomic Policy, Finance and Governance Division, ECA, Oyebanke Abejirin, moderated the session. Presentations were given by the Executive Director of the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, Chris Mukiza; Technician at the National Directorate of Socioeconomic Studies of the Ministry of Planning of Angola, Hamilton Fernando; Consultant of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century, Festus Odingo; and Ms. Hamouda. The issues raised during the presentations and discussions, along with the recommendations that emerged as a result, are summarized below.

17. During the presentations, participants drew attention to the need for strengthened coordination among stakeholders at the national and subnational levels, which could help to ensure data consistency and the effective integration of data into the voluntary national review process.

18. Reference was made to the principles of effective governance for sustainable development, which provided useful guidance for countries to address institutional fragilities resulting from such shocks as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

19. Participants stressed that investments were needed in statistical capacity-building, in particular at the local level, through training, institutional reform and adequate financing.

20. Participants also highlighted that long-term strategic planning and early warning capabilities were crucial for national development processes and that foresight and scenario planning tools could be adopted to support those capabilities.

21. The following recommendations resulted from the discussions:

(a) Citizen-generated data could be leveraged as a complementary source for reporting on progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, supported by clear guidelines and validation processes;

(b) Such tools as the strategic planning and foresight toolkit and the social equity toolkit of the African Peer Review Mechanism could be useful in supporting the review process at the national level;

(c) The digitalization of statistical systems should be promoted to improve the accessibility and quality of statistics and the monitoring of progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

D. Session 4: South-South cooperation on voluntary national reviews

22. An Economic Affairs Officer at ECA, Mr. Sloan, moderated the session. Presentations were given by the Resident Coordinator for Mauritius and Seychelles, Lisa Singh; the Director General for Coordination and Monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals of Benin, Anicet Camille Sevoh; the Director of the Directorate of Development Planning, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs of the Gambia, Ibrahima Kinteh; the Principal Planning Analyst at the National Development Planning Commission of Ghana, Daniel Amofa; and the Regional Representative of the East Africa Regional Office and Representative to the African Union of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Marcel Akpovo.

23. During the presentations, participants noted that government engagement with communities – such as forums on the Sustainable Development Goals, outreach and support activities – had been essential in supporting their involvement in the review process.

24. Participants reviewed South-South cooperation focused on capacity-building for voluntary national reviews, such as that facilitated by ECA in 2025 to support the Philippines, Seychelles and Uganda. They noted that countries, such as the Gambia and Nigeria, had also been connecting with each other more informally to share lessons in support of their voluntary national reviews, including the twinning initiatives launched between localities in Ghana and South Africa.

25. In order to ensure that all partners were included in sustainable development processes, participants stressed that the private sector also needed to become involved in the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development.

26. Participants observed that South-South partnerships could also help to identify specific needs, such as data and financing gaps, and to address such needs through mutual expertise.

27. Participants noted that there were positive examples from the region of voluntary national review processes that were embedded in a human rights-based approach and were people-centred and gender-sensitive. It was also noted that countries in the region had lessons to share on linking budgeting with local and national planning processes to achieve the Goals.

28. The following recommendations resulted from the discussions:

(a) Voluntary national and local reviews need a combination of top-down and bottom-up coordination and engagement, to strengthen government engagement in the review process;

(b) ECA should continue to support South-South collaboration focused on capacity-building for voluntary national reviews, which should be scaled up and expanded across countries and localities undertaking reviews;

(c) Countries should engage more with domestic partners, with a view to enabling civil society groups to take charge of the voluntary national review process;

(d) ECA should continue to use the integrated planning and reporting toolkit to support States in identifying specific needs and in reporting on progress towards Agenda 2063 in the voluntary national and local reviews;

(e) Positive examples of voluntary national review processes that are embedded in a human rights-based approach and are people-centred and gender-sensitive must be better communicated.

E. Session 5: Welcome and introduction to voluntary local reviews

29. The Chief of the Urbanization and Development Section of the Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division, ECA, Atkeyelsh Persson, moderated the session. Opening statements were delivered by the Chief of Staff of the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and Acting Director of the Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division of ECA, Aboubakri Diaw; the Chief of the National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch of the Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Amson Sibanda; the Coordinator of the Sustainable Development Goal Localization and Local Governments Team, UN-Habitat, Martino Miraglia; and the Lead of the Sustainable Development Unit of the

Directorate General for European and International Affairs and Sustainable Finance of the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security of Italy, Mara Cossu.

30. The Chief of Staff of the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa underscored the urgent need to translate global development aspirations into tangible local action, stressing that sustainable development did not occur in policy documents but in everyday decisions and practices within communities. Six in ten Africans were projected to live in cities by 2050,² a demographic change that represented not just a challenge but also a strategic opportunity to reshape development outcomes through localization. Voluntary local reviews were essential instruments that functioned as mechanisms for local reflection, transformation and accountability.

31. The Chief of the National Strategies and Capacity-Building Branch of the Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs spoke about the growing global momentum to undertake voluntary local reviews, a movement with collaboration and partnerships at its heart, with more than 300 reviews completed globally and more than 50 completed in Africa. The reports were very useful for development planning and should be viewed as dynamic tools that informed policy design and helped to accelerate transformative action on the ground.

32. The Coordinator of the Sustainable Development Goal Localization and Local Governments Team of UN-Habitat noted that multilevel governance, coordination and forward-looking urban planning were essential for addressing inequalities in the region, in particular in the face of climate vulnerability and an urban population that was expected to double by 2050, the majority of which would be composed of people under 25 years of age. Voluntary local reviews were an essential tool for advancing resilience and inclusive governance, enabling meaningful community participation and harmonizing local and national budgets. ECA and its partners played a crucial role in empowering local governments, by equipping them with the necessary technical, financial and institutional support to fulfil their mandates to ensure sustainable development.

33. Ms. Cossu reflected on the long-standing support of the Government of Italy for initiatives that helped to adapt efforts to achieve the Goals to local contexts, referring to partnerships with African countries and multilateral institutions to facilitate mutual learning and dialogue. A voluntary local review was no longer viewed as a technical report but as a means to undertake broader planning and policy development. Italy continued to support capacity-building, knowledge-sharing and cooperation through global and regional platforms to advance the implementation of both agendas.

F. Session 6: Introduction to *SDG Localization Module 2: Planning for Change with the SDGs*

34. The presentations, which were given by the Task Manager for Administration and Finance of United Cities and Local Governments Africa, Baraka Marandu, and the Partnerships and Project Officer of the Sustainable Development Goal Localization and Local Governments Team of UN-Habitat, Claudia García Zaragoza, were focused on the guide entitled *SDG Localization Module 2: Planning for Change with the Sustainable Development Goals*³ and,

² See UN-Habitat, *Analysis of Multiple Deprivations in Secondary Cities in Sub-Saharan Africa* (London, Cardno, 2020).

³ UN-Habitat and United Cities and Local Governments (Nairobi and Barcelona, Spain, 2024).

in particular, on the six steps for strategically aligning efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals with national planning processes.

35. During the presentations, participants noted that localization fostered ownership, inclusion and accountability, that 65 per cent of Sustainable Development Goal targets required local implementation and that a bottom-up approach could ensure that the Goals were relevant to people's daily lives. The enablers of successful localization included: legal and institutional frameworks that empowered local authorities; capacity-building for local governments; data systems and indicators to guide decision-making; and financing mechanisms, including fiscal decentralization.

36. Participants stressed the importance of engaging with stakeholders, including representatives of government agencies, target communities, the private sector, civil society, infrastructure departments, academia and community-based organizations, in the development of local strategies.

37. The following recommendations resulted from the discussions:

(a) Vulnerable populations and informal workers must be included among the stakeholders whose engagement is sought in the development of local strategies;

(b) Tools developed by ECA, UN-Habitat and other partners, such as the *Africa Voluntary Local Review Guidelines*⁴ and the action-oriented voluntary local review methodology,⁵ must be employed to facilitate the preparation of reviews and assist local governments in preparing their reports;

(c) A comprehensive policy framework needs to be developed with partners and political leaders to address the issue of informal settlements in Africa.

G. Session 7: Sustainable Development Goal strategic planning cycle: from assessment to budgeting and from monitoring and evaluation

38. The session was facilitated by an Associate Expert of the Sustainable Development Goal Localization and Local Governments Team of UN-Habitat, Pietro Ceppi. Mr. Marandu gave a presentation on assessment and budgeting, and Ms. Zaragoza gave a presentation on monitoring and evaluation. The Principal Planning Officer of the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralization and Rural Development of Ghana, Carl Quist, presented a case study to illustrate the strategic planning cycle.

39. Mr. Quist stated that initiatives to attain the Sustainable Development Goals were integrated into local governance in Ghana through the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralization and Rural Development, with clear roles for regional and district assemblies, exhibiting the importance of multilevel governance. Ghana had important programmes that contributed to local and national development and to the achievement of the Goals.

40. As part of an interactive exercise, participants worked in small groups and drew upon their own experiences to assess local needs, identify priority Goals and propose strategic actions. The discussions were a dynamic format for peer-to-peer learning, and participants exchanged best practices in the use of effective planning tools, community engagement strategies and budgeting approaches undertaken in their local contexts.

⁴ UN-Habitat, United Cities and Local Governments and ECA (Nairobi; Barcelona, Spain; Addis Ababa, 2022).

⁵ See UN-Habitat and United Cities and Local Governments, *Action-oriented Voluntary Local Reviews: a Methodology for the Partners of UN-Habitat* (Nairobi, 2024).

41. In the ensuing interactive discussions, participants drew attention to the cross-cutting nature of budgeting and financing and to essential role played by data in informing policy and budget decisions and in ensuring strengthened accountability and policy coherence. They also noted that the partnership between ECA, UN-Habitat, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme had been essential in building local capacity to adapt efforts to achieve the Goals to local contexts across the continent.

42. The following recommendations resulted from the presentations and from the interactive discussions:

- (a) Action plans for the Goals should be developed to help to define robust financing strategies;
- (b) Local monitoring and evaluation could help to identify inequalities to ensure that no one is left behind;
- (c) United Nations partners should continue to support members of ECA in scaling up voluntary local reviews by contributing financial and technical support.

H. Session 8: Exhibition of displays on Sustainable Development Goal localization experiences

43. The Chief of the National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch of the Division for Sustainable Development Goals, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, moderated the session. Representatives of national and subnational authorities in eight African States⁶ and of one local government association⁷ were present. During the session, the following served as trainers and facilitators: a Social Affairs Officer of the Urbanization and Development Section of the Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division, ECA, Lusungu Kayani; Mr. Marandu; the Partnerships and Project Officer and the Associate Expert, both of the Sustainable Development Goal Localization and Local Governments Team, UN-Habitat; and a Sustainable Urban Development Specialist in the Sustainable Development Goal Localization and Local Governments Team, UN-Habitat, Sophie Heuser.

44. Representatives of local and national governments or organizations showcased their Sustainable Development Goal localization journeys. The session provided an opportunity for peer-to-peer learning, networking and discussion among local and national government representatives, experts and other stakeholders. Participants were allocated exhibition spaces in which to display the central aspects of their localization approaches, in particular the ways in which they had aligned their policies and plans with the Sustainable Development Goals; their findings and achievements, including chief outcomes, best practices and success stories; their selection of local data and indicators, indicating the ways in which they collected and used data to track progress with attaining the Goals and the main indicators used; challenges and lessons learned; and innovative solutions and future plans for further Goal localization. Participants interacted, formed connections and networks, and asked questions about each other's journeys.

⁶ Djibouti, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Africa, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

⁷ South African Local Government Association.

45. During the presentations, participants reported that:

(a) Lusaka City Council had used voluntary local reviews to monitor progress in the attainment of Goal 11 and improve the housing and facilities in informal settlements, along with piloting spatial data applications for urban planning;

(b) Dire Dawa City Administration, Ethiopia, was making use of localized indicators and stakeholder participation, and called for enhanced monitoring and evaluation capacities and increased funding channels;

(c) A local government in the city of Djibouti had integrated urban resilience into municipal planning and had pioneered localized dashboards for data visualization and decision-making;

(d) Addis Ababa City Administration had undertaken alignment of the Goals through strategic city planning and interdepartmental cooperation, while also implementing forward-looking plans that involved improved data systems and stakeholder engagement;

(e) The Ministry of the Interior, Tunisia, had developed a locally validated indicator set aligned with national and global frameworks, had promoted Goals 5, 7, 11, 13 and 17 through such projects as the Femmedina Inclusive City Programme, a waste-to-energy project in Sousse and integrated waste management in El Guetar, and had invested in decentralized cooperation and innovation despite facing institutional capacity gaps;

(f) The Government of Nampula Province, Mozambique, was making use of participatory local planning and disaggregated data, with a focus on climate resilience, economic inclusion and local ownership;

(g) The National Association of Municipalities of Mozambique had mapped national indicators and trained representatives of municipal governments in localization, had promoted access to justice, women's participation and digital services and had faced challenges relating to data reliability and institutional coordination, while making plans for the first voluntary national review for Maputo, for digitalized public services and for peer-to-peer exchanges;

(h) The Ministry of Environment and Ecological Transition, Senegal, had focused on climate-related measures pertaining to the Goals, including green spaces and infrastructure improvements, while also advocating cross-sector partnerships and stronger governance frameworks;

(i) Mutare City Council, Zimbabwe, was making use of participatory budgeting, engaging with young people and strengthening links between national development strategies and local measures relating to the Goals;

(j) Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality, South Africa, had prioritized gender mainstreaming and environmental sustainability, and had linked its voluntary local review findings to long-term urban development and service delivery;

(k) Zanzibar Planning Commission, United Republic of Tanzania, had aligned local area strategies with the Goals while looking towards partnerships for support on data and capacities;

(l) South African Local Government Association wished to highlight the role of national associations in supporting the localization of the Goals across all the country's municipalities and advocated standardized monitoring and evaluation systems and multilevel governance collaboration.

46. The following recommendations resulted from the discussions:

(a) Since peer-to-peer learning is a catalyst for action, ECA and development partners should establish a platform for regular knowledge-sharing and experience exchanges pertaining to Sustainable Development Goal localization;

(b) Given that monitoring and evaluation are critical for successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda, subnational governments should consider including in their city monitoring and evaluation plans indicators specific to the Goals, with a view to tracking progress in their achievement.

I. Session 9: Engagement of young people to support voluntary local and national reviews

47. The Executive Director of Youth Advocates Ghana, Emmanuel Ametepey, moderated the session. Presentations were given by the Youth Leaders Fellow of the United Nations Population Fund in Ghana, Bernadette Seyram Azah; a youth representative from Uganda, Kenneth Wabuteya; the President of the Uganda Youth Coalition for the Sustainable Development Goals, Aminah Nassali; and the Youth Ambassador of Junior Enterprise of Florence, Italy, Leonora Olivia Palacios Santos.

48. The following recommendations resulted from the presentations and from the ensuing discussions:

(a) Young people should be more actively involved in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, to which end they merely needed adequate engagement and support;

(b) Capacity-building, training and the use of technology and innovation to empower young people should be the first steps in the institutionalization of youth participation in the implementation of the two agendas;

(c) Institutions at all levels, including the United Nations, the African Union and national and local governments, should ensure the effective participation of young people in sustainable development, in particular by establishing meaningful spaces for such participation;

(d) Teaching about the two agendas, in particular voluntary national and local reviews, should be incorporated into academic curricula, in order to expand awareness and understanding of them in all age groups, in particular young people, and professions;

(e) Dedicated and targeted funding should be made available to youth-led organizations, in view of the need for advocacy and awareness-raising to ensure that young people are reached and participate, to the extent possible, in all aspects of voluntary national and local reviews, including in the reviews themselves, and in the implementation of the two agendas.

J. Session 10: Joint town hall meeting for stakeholders

49. The Director of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP), ECA, Karima Bounemra Ben Soltane, moderated the session. Presentations were given by the Policy and Advocacy Adviser (Africa) of Voluntary Service Overseas, Kenya, Mwangi Waituru; the Executive Director of the Reality of Aid Africa Network, Vitalice Meja; the District Planner of the Sironko District Local Government, Uganda, Fred Wozisi; and the Regional Policy Specialist for Integration of the United Nations Volunteers programme, Jean de Dieu Sibomana.

50. The following recommendations resulted from the presentations and from the ensuing discussions:

(a) Policymakers should increase the pace of progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by focusing on the Sustainable Development Goal accelerators and involving civil society more closely in their work;

(b) Policymakers should also focus on innovation and the empowerment of women and young people, among other issues that cut across all Goals, in particular initiatives – such as the IDEP Young Economists Network – that provide skills related to cutting-edge areas of artificial intelligence, data science and blockchain;

(c) Governments should invest more directly in volunteerism at the national and local levels, which can help to spur the involvement of local communities, to ensure the effective implementation of the two agendas and guarantee that no one is left behind, in particular in the light of cuts to aid and other budgets at the international level;

(d) African States and institutions should address budget issues directly with external partners at the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, including proposed reforms to the global financial architecture;

(e) Governments should, with a view to treating communities and localities as active agents of change at the centre of measures to help to put progress towards attainment of the Goals back on track, pledge to furnish local authorities with the budgetary capacity and authority that they need, with a view to helping to increase their impact and to facilitating local data collection and assessment.
