



THE AFRICAN CAPACITY BUILDING FOUNDATION | FONDATION POUR LE RENFORCEMENT DES CAPACITES EN AFRIQUE

Securing Africa's future through capacity development  
Assurer l'avenir de l'Afrique en renforçant les capacités

# Capacity Imperatives for the SDGs



In line with African Union's Agenda 2063





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## Foreword

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Life has improved for many Africans in the past 20 years. But there is a growing sense that progress was slower than it could have been and that a business as usual approach is not likely to lead to achievement of the African Union's Agenda 2063 or the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To determine what African countries need to do to promote inclusive, sustainable development within the context of the SDGs, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) led a ground-breaking exercise that analyzed the region's capacities.

This report identifies the capacities that African countries need in order to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the SDGs to build economies that can sustain their development aspirations. It identifies areas for strengthening capacity and capacity-enabling approaches for a range of stakeholders, including international partners. It offers policymakers a new approach to development—one that puts Africans in the driver's seat. And it shows how countries can improve people's lives in ways that are consistent with the ACBF vision of an Africa capable of achieving its own development.

The report describes a new, more holistic, comprehensive, and coordinated approach, one that involves multiple stakeholders, including intended beneficiaries and the private sector. The approach seeks to reenergize Africans with the spirit of working together toward collective prosperity, a common destiny under a united and strong Africa, by building a set of transformative capacities that reinforce a new sense of identity and create a new culture of self-determination and results.

The key message emerging in this report is that limited human and institutional capacity will constitute a major obstacle to successful

implementation of the SDGs. Implementation agencies, sectors, and ministries often lack people with the skills needed to achieve results, and public resource allocation to build capacity is often inadequate, unpredictable, and irrational.

Among the main findings of the analysis:

- A lack of good data undermines countries' capacity to establish baselines, track performance indicators, and reinforce evidence-based policymaking.
- Most government institutions perceive the SDGs as a medium to high opportunity for infrastructure development, agricultural development, and industrialization and for the development of value chains, markets, and small and medium-size enterprises.
- African countries favor using budget support grants disbursed and managed within their own systems—an idea that bilateral partners have not fully warmed to. There is a dichotomy between what African development partners identify as priorities and what these partners are prepared to support. This exposes the challenge of ownership of the development agenda by African countries.
- More Africans and their governments now believe that the SDG agenda will advance more successfully if it is funded principally by domestic rather than external resources.

Among the key capacity development messages:

- More Africans need to receive basic and advanced training, including in critical thinking, strategic planning, results-based management, resource mobilization, and coordinating capacities. Also important is advanced training in program development and implementation and in risk management and mitigation.



- Africa's transformation agenda requires strong leadership and political vision; effective regional, subregional, and country institutions; competent staff; and inclusive multistakeholder collaboration. Four sets of capacities need strengthening: operational capacity for organizations; change and transformative capacities; composite capacities (planning, facilitating, managing, and financing); and critical, technical, and sector-specific skills.
- As a follow-up to the findings in this report, there is a need to prepare regional and country capacity development plans to address the needs identified as critical for implementing the SDGs.

In pursuing this agenda, the ACBF proposes to support more countries in conducting in-depth assessments of national capacity imperatives for implementing the SDGs. In the spirit of regional integration, it will support each regional block in carrying out a comprehensive skills audit to identify deficits

in the number of professionals required to promote an effective change and transformation agenda. It will mainstream the needed shift in mindset and move the discussion of readiness and transformation to the top of policy debates. It will emphasize the need for a new tripartite discussion platform for academia, the private sector, and governments on education and employable skill priorities. And it will, through joint partnerships, institute an SDG capacity-strengthening program for African countries. Our mission is to build strategic partnerships, offer technical support, and provide access to relevant knowledge for capacity building in Africa. This report helps achieve that mission by providing countries with a comprehensive set of capacity development priorities for meeting the continental development goals in a way that benefits all Africans.

Prof. Emmanuel Nnadozie  
*Executive Secretary*  
*The African Capacity Building Foundation*

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## Executive Summary

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In September 2015, world leaders adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 targets. Also referred to as "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," these goals and targets apply to all countries. Through these goals the world's governments have committed to mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities, and tackle climate change while ensuring that no one is left behind. In identifying continental priorities for the SDGs, Africa undertook an internal process of broad consultation across the continent that culminated in a Common African Position (CAP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (AUC 2014). The CAP articulated six pillars drawn from the aspirations, goals, and priorities of the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063: structural economic transformation and inclusive growth; science technology and innovation; people-centered development; environmental sustainability, natural resources, and disaster management; peace and security; and finance and partnerships.

Africa's engagement with formulating and negotiating the SDGs was informed by these aspirations and accounts for the complementarity between the SDGs and Agenda 2063, an indigenous continental strategic development framework. While the SDGs call on governments to ensure that "that no one is left behind," Agenda 2063 aims "to optimize the use of Africa's resources for the benefit of all Africans," among other guiding principles. The SDGs and Agenda 2063 share the common goal of achieving inclusive socio-economic development. AU member states are therefore expected to "domesticate" these frameworks by anchoring implementation in nationally tailored policies and programs (particularly within national development plans and strategies). The intention is to

strengthen mechanisms and capabilities for achieving and sustaining the goals of both frameworks. In addition, incorporating the frameworks in national priorities and plans fosters stronger ownership, builds effective alliances and partnerships, and promotes rational use of resources.

### Purpose of this report

This report analyzes the capacity dimensions and imperatives for achieving the SDGs within the context of Agenda 2063. This focus recognizes that capacity remains the critical missing link for fulfilling the development agendas of most African countries. The objective of this report is to identify, map, and analyze the key capacity dimensions that are important to address and enhance national capabilities for implementing the SDGs in Africa. The exercise views the SDGs as a unique opportunity for governments to redirect investments in economic development, inclusive growth, and mechanisms to sustain achievements. The "Capacity-for-what?" question was framed fundamentally as well as strategically:

*What capabilities need to be in place to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the SDGs to build economies that can sustain the development aspiration of AU member states?*

The dimensions of this capacity challenge were explored in two ways:

- Indicative capacity scoping and generic mapping of the convergence of capacity imperatives for the SDGs and Agenda 2063.
- Identifying areas for capacity strengthening and capacity-enabling approaches for stakeholders, including international partners.



The study that informs this report was carried out in 11 countries (Algeria, Cameroon, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, and Zambia) drawn from the five regions of Africa and representing different economy sizes, languages, and access to the sea. It included an extensive literature survey supplemented by questionnaires administered to respondents and participants drawn from government departments, the private sector, civil society organizations (including youth and women groups), faith-based organizations, and international development partners. The study recommends a multidimensional perspective and capacity lens for viewing achievement of the SDGs within the context of Agenda 2063.

The work was performed in collaboration with the African Union Commission and other key organizations, including the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the African Development Bank, and the UN system in Africa.

### **Main challenge facing Africa**

A key message of this report is that limited human and institutional capacity in Africa constitutes a serious obstacle to implementation of national development goals. Implementation agencies, sectors, and ministries often lack people with the skills they need to achieve results, and public resource allocation decisions are not always coherently determined. Most African countries lack the political will to see national development strategies through to the end, involve too few nonstate actors in decisionmaking, fail to fully engage youth and women in implementing actions related to the SDGs, and rely too much on foreign financial support and technical assistance. Very little research addresses development challenges on the continent, while the alignment and harmonization of planning and budgeting instruments with the priorities set forth in national development plans is limited.

Some of the key messages emerging from the study

- Developmental goals like those articulated in the SDGs and Agenda 2063 need

to be integrated into both national development plans and shorter term expenditure frameworks. That is where implementation of development projects actually takes place, as is evident in countries' budgeting and expenditure patterns.

- Capacity challenges are likely to be encountered in harmonizing policies for implementing national development plans, the SDGs, and Agenda 2063. Information sharing and coordination across government departments and along the lines of stakeholder platforms and joint coordination forums would lead to more harmonized programming and implementation and reduce the risk of duplication.
- The key capacity challenges in implementing the SDGs include lack of a conducive policy environment, low levels of soft skills (such as leadership and strategic planning), weak institutional capacity in SDGs and Agenda 2063 coordinating bodies, inadequate data, and limited human resources. To be ready to implement national development plans, the SDGs, and Agenda 2063, countries will need to craft tools for integrating the SDGs into national development plans, involve key stakeholders, mobilize adequate financial resources, and strengthen the capacity of national statistical agencies.
- There was near unanimity by stakeholder respondents on the need for capacity strengthening in information and communication technology and in monitoring and evaluation.
- Respondents in government coordinating departments and sector ministries believe that there is inadequate capacity within government departments to implement the SDGs, both in soft skills and in hard sector-specific skills. A comprehensive multisector approach to strengthening capacity is thus vital.
- While the participating government coordinating departments do not perceive ensuring the participation of the private sector to be a major challenge, some in the private sector and other stakeholders hold a different view about the adequacy of governments' consultation. The govern-



ment departments do recognize the need to increase private sector participation, however, acknowledging that the successful implementation and sustainability of development programs rests on the full participation of stakeholders, including potential beneficiaries, academia, innovators, local communities, entrepreneurs, the business community, industrialists and manufacturer, financiers and investors, service providers, and women and youth groups.

- Government coordinating departments all identified the need for basic training in critical thinking, strategic planning, results-based management, and resource mobilization and coordinating capabilities. Some respondents also identified the need for advanced training in program development and implementation and risk management and mitigation. Government departments were unanimous in identifying shortfalls in transformational leadership, change readiness, innovativeness and inventiveness, and use of information and communication technology.
- Despite the wide understanding that women and youth have to be fully engaged in achieving the SDGs, they are not adequately involved in high-level national SDG planning and decision-making mechanisms or in coordination of SDG implementation. Few if any lead roles have been allocated for women and youth.
- On external funding from development partners, responses were mixed. While some governments see a major role for external finance, others see a more limited role. Increasingly, African governments have come to believe in a central role for their own resources, supplemented to a limited extent with external funds.
- Not all African governments see the SDGs as an opportunity to involve the private sector and other relevant stakeholders. Additional efforts are needed to shift perceptions of the SDGs from solely a socioeconomic and developmental responsibility of government to citizens to an opportunity to engage private business in achieving the goals. The SDGs need to be presented and pursued as an opportunity for a mutually beneficial partnership for development among multiple stakeholders. This calls for innovative thinking around stakeholder involvement, structuring socioeconomic and developmental objectives in a way that will attract private firms that are willing to invest some of their own resources if they stand to make a reasonable return.
- The private sector, too, needs to reorient its thinking. Businesses still see their involvement in development largely in the context of their corporate social responsibility activities. Instead, they need to see the SDGs as a business opportunity that reconciles the objectives of their core business activities and the developmental aspirations of the communities in which they live and do business. Africa's development partners have already made this shift in orientation, seeing development cooperation as a way to create business opportunities for the private sector in their own countries. Africa's private sector needs to do the same.
- The inadequate attention in African countries to innovation may be impeding achievement of the SDGs. The failure to follow up on policies to develop needed skills with policies to retain scarce skilled personnel is a case in point. Countries lack skilled personnel who can adapt quickly to change and think innovatively to address the developmental and socioeconomic challenges they face. Africans need to commit to think and act differently in how they approach development issues and to embrace change readiness.
- To take advantage of the opportunities presented by the SDGs, countries should set up country-led coordination units at the ministerial level, along with working groups or forums to engage development partners, setting out a clear division of labor.
- There is a dichotomy between what African countries identify as their priorities and what their development partners are prepared to support, exposing the challenge of ownership of the development agenda. Whereas African countries generally favor budget support grants that are disbursed and managed within their own systems, bilateral partners have not



yet warmed to this approach. The same can be said for concessional public funding grants, concessional loans, and aid for trade arrangements.

- African countries need to reorient their approach to aid effectiveness discussions, using those opportunities to convince their development partners and other stakeholders to be more responsive to their priorities and preferred approaches.
- Data availability remains a critical constraint. A framework is needed to encourage synergies between data providers and data collaboratives. The number of staff in the African Union Commission Statistics Division in charge of statistical coordination in Africa needs to be increased. And countries need capacity building programs to generate a wide range of data for monitoring and evaluating progress toward the SDGs.
- To advance the transformation agenda, an African priority, African governments should collaborate with civil society organizations to establish a mutually beneficial relationship in pursuit of an agenda on which they can agree. This

means an end to the antagonism that has characterized this relationship in the past.

### **The way forward**

Drawing on the findings of the study, ACBF as the African Union's specialized agency on capacity development, will coordinate efforts to develop capacity strengthening program for African countries for achieving the SDGs within the framework of Agenda 2063. This program needs to be jointly supported by African governments, the African Union Commission, development partners, and key organizations such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the African Development Bank, and the UN system in Africa. This will include conducting a comprehensive regional and country-level skills audit to identify deficits in the number of professionals required to promote an effective change and transformation agenda. Important to this effort will be the establishment of a tripartite discussion platform comprising academia, the private sector, and governments on education and employable skill priorities.



## Chapter 1

# Introduction: New Approaches to Capacity Building in Africa

Capacity building has been high on the African development agenda. Delegates to the Third Pan-African Capacity Development Forum organized by the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) in May 2016—African ministers, heads of continental bodies, ACBF partners and board members, civil society organizations, public sector officials, and representatives of the private sector—recognized that inadequate capacity continues to constrain the continent's ability to meet its targets for socioeconomic transformation (ACBF 2016a).

Thinking on capacity development has evolved in recent decades. A key lesson is that capacity needs to be developed using local knowledge, structures, and processes, based on an approach that takes into consideration local customs and resources (UNDP 2009). Capacity investments should align with strong political ownership and leadership at the highest levels, with wide participation, transparency, and accountability. Leadership matters. Policy choices and institutional reforms determine whether capacity grows or shrinks. Grounded in ownership, guided by leadership, and informed by confidence and self-esteem, capacity development can help people, institutions, and societies perform assigned functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives. These starting points are fundamental for improving people's lives.

The Capacity Development Strategic Framework of the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has six pillars, which highlight the need for transformation:

- Leadership transformation.
- Citizen transformation.
- Evidence-based knowledge and innovation.
- Use of African potential, skills, and resources.

- Capacity of capacity developers.
- Integrated planning and implementation of results.

This transformation agenda may require investing in individual capacities, creating new institutions or strengthening existing ones, focusing on education and training, and promoting a culture of respect for individual rights and freedoms. Whatever form it takes, transformation should empower individuals, leaders, organizations, and societies. If change is not generated, guided, and sustained by the people it is meant to benefit, it cannot be said to have enhanced capacity, even if it has served a valid development purpose.

Capacity development is a perpetually evolving process of growth and positive change. At the heart of this transformation is a set of skills known as *functional capacities*. These capacities are the essential management skills that allow for planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating initiatives for transformation. These capacities are complemented by a second set of capacities, which are less tangible. They involve strengthening the generation of skills, knowledge, and expertise to bring about desired change and promote transformation.

The initiatives and approaches of the past focused on developing capacity to accomplish objectives within specific areas or sectors (good governance, human rights, political stability, peace and security). The new approaches to capacity building in Africa call for innovative, cross-cutting, multisector, and multistakeholder approaches. The shift reflects the realization that past approaches have yet to yield the desired results. Hundreds of billions of dollars spent to end poverty, disease, and underdevelopment have achieved but limited success (Matta 2005).



The call for new thinking also reflects the reality of adapting to a fast-paced, technologically advanced, integrated, and globalized world that presents new opportunities and threats. The spread of smartphones and access to Internet and broadband facilities present new opportunities for training and knowledge acquisition in Africa.

Africa is better placed today than at any time in its history to embrace innovative approaches for developing its capacity to pursue and discharge its development mandate. Innovative approaches need to put capacity development on the transformation agenda that is tied to the SDGs and implementation of the priority programs of Agenda 2063.

### **Adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 and the Need for Capacity Development**

On June 20–22, 2012, heads of state and government and high-level representatives met in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with the full participation of civil society, to renew their commitment to sustainable development, which encompasses economic, social, and environmental dimensions. The conference, referred to as Rio+20, with its outcome document *The Future We Want*, set the stage for the development of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It recognized that the goals should be coherent with, and integrated into, the post-2015 development agenda and emphasized the need for an inclusive and transparent multistakeholder process. In that spirit, the United Nations General Assembly established an intergovernmental Open Working Group in January 2013 to guide the formulation of the SDGs at the global level. Similarly, in May 2013, the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government established the High-level Committee on the Post-2015 Development Agenda to oversee and guide the SDG formulation process in Africa.

Under the leadership of the High-level Committee, extensive consultations were held at national and regional levels to identify priority areas, while both reflecting the diversity of stakeholders and ensuring a

broad consensus on the post-2015 development agenda. A first outcome of the process was the identification of the sustainable development priorities in the five subregions of Africa, along with such critical common cross-cutting issues as governance and institutions, peace and security, financing, capacity development, and technology transfer. Furthermore, consolidation and extended consultation enabled African stakeholders to propose a set of 12 regional sustainable development goals (ECA, AU, and AfDB 2015):

- Goal 1: Eliminate all forms of poverty.
- Goal 2: Promote sustainable agriculture and achieve food security and adequate nutrition for all.
- Goal 3: Ensure quality, adequate, affordable, accessible, and comprehensive health services for all.
- Goal 4: Achieve universal access to affordable and quality education at all levels.
- Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and protect and empower women, youth, and people in vulnerable conditions.
- Goal 6: Ensure social inclusion and protection, including guaranteed minimum income and social security, as well as decent employment for all, particularly for youth.
- Goal 7: Structurally transform economies and attain inclusive sustained economic growth; accelerate infrastructure development, inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and access to affordable energy; and build resilient cities and sustainable human settlements.
- Goal 8: Enhance environmental quality, resilience, and protection and promote sustainable exploitation, use, and management of natural resources.
- Goal 9: Combat desertification and land degradation, mitigate drought, and promote sustainable management of land and oceans.
- Goal 10: Promote culture, research, science, innovation, and technology development.
- Goal 11: Scale up global and regional partnerships for development.
- Goal 12: Promote good governance at national and international levels.



These goals were mainstreamed in the discussions and consultations on the post-2015 development agenda at the global level. For Africa, influencing the elaboration of the SDGs is important for avoiding some of the shortcomings of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and their resultant limited impact on African people. Key among the shortcomings of the MDGs were the focus on economic growth to the neglect of inequality, inadequate attention to domestic resource mobilization in Africa's development agenda, inattention to the quality of service delivery, and a focus on outcomes with limited consideration of the enablers of development, such as institutions, infrastructure, and capacity (AUC 2014).

In September 2015, world leaders adopted 17 SDGs, with 169 targets. These goals and targets apply to all countries. Through them, the world's governments have committed to mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities, and tackle climate change while ensuring that no one is left behind.

In January 2015, African countries developed and adopted a home-grown long-term development plan called the *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want* (AUC 2015). As part of the process of identifying priorities for the SDGs, Africa developed the Common African Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (AUC 2014), which articulated six pillars drawn from the aspirations, goals, and priorities of Agenda 2063 :

- Structural economic transformation and inclusive growth.
- Science, technology, and innovation.
- People-centered development.
- Environmental sustainability.
- Natural resources and disaster management.
- Peace and security.
- Finance and partnerships.

In his inaugural speech on September 1, 2015, the President of the African Development Bank Group, Akinwumi Adesina, laid out the five priority areas (the “high fives”)

that the bank will focus on over the next 10 years to advance Africa's transformative agenda:

- Light up and power Africa.
- Feed Africa.
- Integrate Africa.
- Industrialize Africa.
- Improve the quality of life for the people of Africa.

These high fives are a blueprint for African countries that seek to embark on a course of sustainable transformation.

The SDGs and Agenda 2063 share a similar vision. The SDGs call on governments to ensure that “no one is left behind”; Agenda 2063 aims “to optimize the use of Africa's resources for the benefit of all Africans.” Both the SDGs and Agenda 2063 seek inclusive development. AU member states are expected to anchor their implementation of these frameworks in nationally tailored policies and programs in order to strengthen mechanisms and other capacities for sustaining achievements. Integrating them in national priorities and plans also fosters stronger ownership, builds effective alliances and partnerships, and promotes rational use of resources.

In 2015, the ACBF conducted a study to identify and analyze the capacity dimensions and imperatives for achieving the Agenda 2063 vision.<sup>1</sup> It concluded that capacity remains the critical missing link in the implementation of programs and projects in Africa and a fundamental prerequisite for achieving desired results.

### Objectives and Scope of the Report

This report examines how African countries can increase their capacities to implement the SDGs within the framework of Agenda 2063. It argues that capacity development must go beyond the classical approach, that African countries need to develop multilevel plans that develop the capacities of multiple stakeholders.

<sup>1</sup>The study produced three reports (ACBF 2016b, 2016c, 2016d).



One of the advantages of a decentralized, disaggregated, multilevel, and multistakeholder approach is its potential for widening the source of funding for capacity development. The approach gives responsibility to various levels of stakeholders to commit themselves to continuous identification of sources of funding for capacity development.

The report also stresses the importance of change readiness, soft skills (such as leadership and strategic planning), and especially

mindset transformation, a change in the attitudes, societal value system, and philosophy of doing business for the benefit of the populace. Innovative thinking and approaches to capacity development are critical because of the dynamic nature of the challenges facing Africa. The report draws on an examination of existing capacities and capacity shortfalls in Africa for implementing the SDGs in the framework of Agenda 2063 (see box 1.1 for the study methodology.)

### Box 1.1 Study methodology

This study is based on an extensive desktop review of country progress reports on implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), analysis of policy documents on country initiatives related to the SDGs and the African Union's Agenda 2063, and interviews with stakeholders in 11 African countries (Algeria, Cameroon, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, and Zambia), a diverse group that includes francophone, anglophone, lusophone, and Arabic-speaking countries; island, landlocked, and coastal countries; and post-conflict and more stable economies.

The study identifies the capacities that African countries need to develop to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the SDGs to build economies that can achieve and sustain their development aspirations. It identifies areas for strengthening capacity and capacity-enabling approaches for a range of stakeholders, including international partners.

While the findings and recommendations of this study can inform the measures that African countries take to implement the SDGs within the context of Agenda 2063, some caution is required in generalizing the findings for the sample of 11 countries surveyed to all African countries. That caveat notwithstanding, the key findings and recommendations are useful and valid in supporting African countries in successfully delivering on the SDGs because they draw on the experiences of countries from all regions and income groups and with considerable linguistic diversity.

In certain instances, limited country-level data constrained the depth of evaluations and assessments of the initiatives undertaken on SDGs at country level. This was expected, given that the SDGs have been launched only recently. However, some of these data gaps were bridged through the interviews with key informants.

The next chapter sets out the conceptual framework of the study. Chapter 3 describes the lessons learned from implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Chapter 4 examines the challenges faced, the institutions created, and the lessons learned from integrating the SDGs and Agenda 2063 into national development plans. Chapter 5

presents the results of interviews with stakeholders in 11 African countries. Chapter 6 discusses the key capacities needed to implement the SDGs within the framework of Agenda 2063. Chapter 7 summarizes the key messages and provides recommendations on what African governments and other stakeholders can do to achieve the SDGs.



## Chapter 2

# A Conceptual Framework for Capacity Development

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This chapter defines the concept of capacity, which is at the core of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, and provides general guidance on how to promote capacity development to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### Recognizing the Dimensions of Capacity

The African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) defines capacity as “the individual, organizational, and societal ability to set goals for development and achieve them; to budget resources and use them for agreed-on purposes; and to manage the complex processes and interactions in the politico-economy nexus to achieve sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction” (ACBF 2011, 30). National capacity encompasses the state's ability to deliver to its people products, goods, and services efficiently and effectively, in all sectors, at all levels of decisionmaking, and at the least possible cost. The ACBF definition of capacity includes the societal ability to “manage the complex processes and interactions in the politico-economy nexus” (ACBF 2011).

A more operational definition characterizes capacity as “the ability of people, communities, organizations, and societies to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve targets within an institutional setting or enabling environment” (ACBF

2016d, 5). This definition underscores the focus and essence of several critical management actions that an entity should be able to perform:

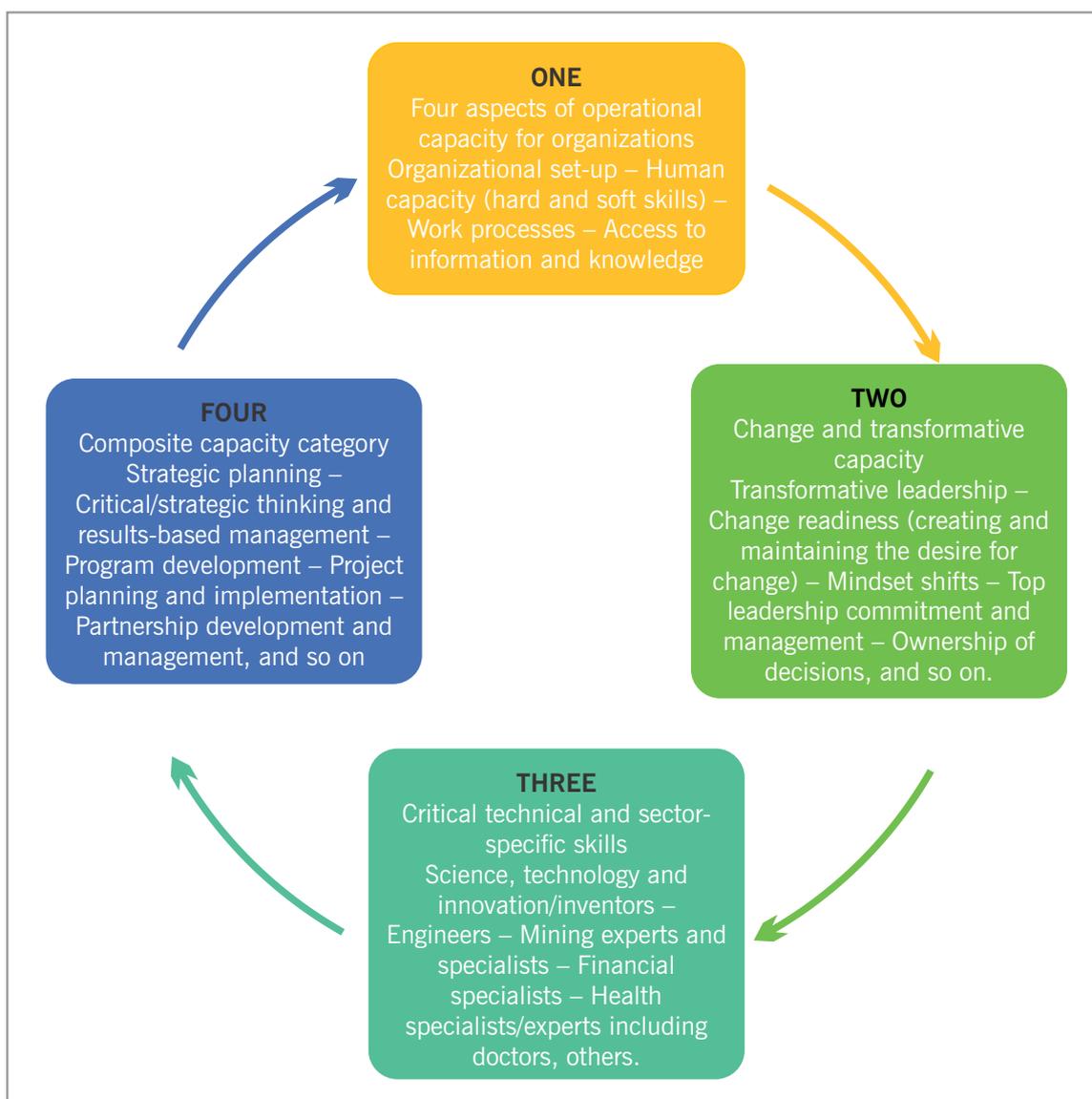
- Scan and analyze its environment.
- Identify complex problems, issues, needs, and opportunities.
- Formulate strategic and operational plans to deal with these problems, issues, and needs and to seize opportunities.
- Design programs and plans of action.
- Develop effective communication and information sharing in society.
- Assemble and effectively and sustainably use resources to implement, monitor, and evaluate plans.
- Use feedback to learn lessons.

Capacity development is a process of enhancing institutional, human, and organizational abilities to perform core functions, solve problems and seize opportunities, organize communication and information sharing, and define and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner (ACBF 2011). New approaches are needed to unlock the transformative potential of ordinary people and society, organized as government, civil society, entrepreneurs, industry, academia, and other players.

A four-dimensional capacity-set conceptual framework can serve as a basis for understanding and addressing Africa's capacity needs (figure 2.1).



**Figure 2.1 Conceptual framing of capacity sets for sustainable development in Africa**



Source: ACBF 2016b.

### Linking the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development and Capacity Development

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda is the outcome document adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in July 2015 on how to mobilize financial and technical resources for development.<sup>2</sup> The main idea is to have a large number of actors to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda and, in the same vein, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recognize capacity development as an integral part of a global partnership for sustainable development. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda calls for enhanced international support and the establishment of multistakeholder partnerships for implementing effective and targeted capacity building programs in developing countries. Such support and capacity development initiatives would reinforce national plans to achieve the SDGs and include mechanisms for North–South, South–South, and triangu-

<sup>2</sup> The Third International Conference on Financing for Development was held in Addis Ababa July 13–16, 2015. The UN General Assembly endorsed the agenda in Resolution 69/313, passed on July 27, 2015.

lar cooperation. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda dedicates special attention to capacity building, including a commitment to the principle that capacity development must be country-driven, address country-specific needs and conditions, and reflect national sustainable development strategies and priorities.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda defines seven action areas for which capacity development remains crucial:

- Domestic public resources.
- Domestic and international private business and finance.
- International development cooperation.
- International trade as an engine for development.
- Debt and debt sustainability.
- Systemic issues, including cooperation, coordination and policy coherence, global governance, global market stability, financial market regulation, migration, and crime.

- Science, technology, innovation, and capacity-building.

The critical role of capacity development in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda can be illustrated by examining the close links between these action areas and capacity issues (table 2.1). Each action area must be properly underpinned and addressed by turning them into operational commitments—hence the importance of capacity building. The concrete actions will generate the desired change only if they are backed by strengthened national capacities: responsibility and ownership to build the necessary institutions, develop relevant processes, and strengthen financial management. For instance, increasing domestic public resource mobilization requires establishing conducive laws and institutions (including tax administration), building well-functioning individual capacities, and efficiently applying technology (ACBF 2015).

**Table 2.1 Addis Ababa Action Agenda action areas and capacity development**

Action area	Examples of potential role/importance of capacity development
<b>Domestic public resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparency, inclusive participation, and gender budgeting</li> <li>• Reduction of illicit financial flows, including combatting tax evasion</li> <li>• Payment of taxes (where economic activities are taking place) by multinational firms</li> <li>• Mobilization of resources from the informal sector</li> <li>• Financial inclusion and deepening of the financial sector</li> <li>• Win-win international cooperation, including trade</li> <li>• Promotion of social inclusion in domestic policies, including law enforcement</li> </ul>
<b>Domestic and international private business and finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulatory framework for aligning private sector incentives with public goals</li> <li>• Sustainable corporate practices (including environmental, social, and governance-related issues in business reporting)</li> <li>• Enabling domestic and international environment for private sector investments</li> <li>• Development and stability of financial market</li> <li>• Access to formal financial services for all</li> <li>• Attention to the financing gaps of countries with structural needs (landlocked countries and countries in conflict and post-conflict situations)</li> <li>• Investments in strategic issues (energy infrastructure, clean energy technologies, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>International development cooperation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South-south and triangular cooperation</li> <li>• Promotion of country ownership, results orientation, and strong country systems</li> <li>• Production and dissemination of regular and timely information on development cooperation and support provided by development partners</li> <li>• Fulfillment of the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the development assistance target of 0.7 percent of gross national income</li> <li>• Resources of long-term investors directed to sustainable development, including through long-term infrastructure projects and green bonds</li> <li>• Access to funds</li> </ul>

Action area	Examples of potential role/importance of capacity development
<b>International trade as an engine for development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development banks to provide and increase market-oriented trade finance</li> <li>• Mechanisms to address market failures associated with trade finance</li> <li>• Gaps in trade, transport, and transit-related regional infrastructure addressed</li> <li>• Promotion of intra-African trade and fair trade</li> <li>• Diversification of African products and focus on value addition</li> </ul>
<b>Debt and debt sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief, debt restructuring, and sound debt management</li> <li>• Promotion of debt renegotiations within well-defined forums</li> <li>• Integration of debt management within the broad framework of countries' macroeconomic and sectoral policies</li> </ul>
<b>Systemic issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National institution strengthening to combat money-laundering, corruption, and financing of terrorism</li> <li>• Regional, national, and subnational institution strengthening to prevent all forms of violence, combat terrorism and crime, and end human trafficking</li> <li>• International coordination and policy coherence to tackle climate change, migration, trafficking, and related issues</li> </ul>
<b>Science, technology, innovation and capacity-building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International support and establishment of multistakeholder partnerships for implementing science, innovation, and technology-driven policies</li> <li>• Design and implementation of policies that incentivize the creation of new technologies, research, and innovation</li> <li>• Promotion of international cooperation and collaboration in science, research, technology, and innovation, including through public-private and multistakeholder partnerships</li> <li>• Transformative leadership for science, technology, and innovation</li> </ul>

Source: Based on UN 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, and 2015d.

## Drawing on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda

The declarations and commitments made by governments in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda provide guidance on areas of emphasis. An extract of some of these are highlighted in box 2.1 for ease of reference and completeness.

### Box 2.1 Highlights of government declarations and commitments extracted from the Addis Ababa Action Agenda

**Para. 5: Solution areas.** The challenges faced by many countries, particularly developing countries, were recognized. However, government leaders made a very bold declaration that “solutions can be found” to these challenges. This declaration is an affirmation of “strong political commitment [needed] to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development.” Also, this affirmation is very encouraging from a capacity perspective because a can-do attitude and a “mentality to develop” are prerequisites for transformation. The Action Agenda identifies the following as key contributors to the solutions:

- Strengthening public policies, regulatory frameworks, and finance at all levels.
  - Unlocking the transformative potential of people and the private sector.
  - Incentivizing changes in financing as well as consumption and production patterns to support sustainable development.
- **Para. 6: Gender equality and mainstreaming.** The Action Agenda clearly recognizes that gender equality, empowering all women and girls, and the full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive, and equitable economic growth and sustainable development.
  - **Para. 7: Investing in children and youth.** The Action Agenda also acknowledges that investing in children and youth is critical to achieving inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development for present and future generations.
  - **Para. 9: National ownership.** “Cohesive nationally owned sustainable development strategies, supported by integrated national financing frameworks, will be at the heart of ... efforts....

Processes to develop and facilitate the availability of appropriate knowledge and technologies globally, as well as capacity-building, are also critical. We commit to pursuing policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors, and to reinvigorating the global partnership for sustainable development.”

- **Para. 10: Stakeholder participation.** “Multi-stakeholder partnerships and the resources, knowledge and ingenuity of the private sector, civil society, the scientific community, academia, philanthropy and foundations, parliaments, local authorities, volunteers and other stakeholders will be important to mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources [to] complement the efforts of Governments....”
- **Para. 11: Transformative approach.** The SDGs are ambitious, and achieving them “will require an equally ambitious, comprehensive, holistic and transformative approach with respect to the means of implementation, combining different means of implementation and integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. This should be underpinned by effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, sound policies and good governance at all levels....”
- **Para. 12: Delivering social protection and essential public services for all.** “[Countries should] consider setting nationally appropriate spending targets for quality investments in essential public services for all....”
- **Para. 13: Scaling up efforts to end hunger and malnutrition.** “... revitalize the agricultural sector, promote rural development, and ensure food security ... in a sustainable manner... [We] encourage increased public and private investments.”
- **Para. 14: Establishing a new forum to bridge the infrastructure gap.** “Investing in sustainable and resilient infrastructure ... is a prerequisite for achieving many of [the] goals.”
- **Para. 15: Promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization.** “... invest in promoting inclusive and sustainable industrial development to effectively address major challenges such as growth and jobs, resources and energy efficiency, pollution and climate change, knowledge-sharing, innovation and social inclusion.”
- **Para. 16: Skills for full and productive employment and decent work for all.** Noting that micro, small, and medium-size enterprises, which create the vast majority of jobs in many countries, often lack access to finance, the Leaders committed “to promoting appropriate, affordable and stable access to credit to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as adequate skills development training for all, particularly for youth and entrepreneurs [working with private actors and development banks].”
- **Para. 17: Behavioral change toward ecosystems.** “Governments, businesses, and households will all need to change behaviors, with a view to ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns.... Public and private investments in innovations and clean technologies will be needed, while keeping in mind that new technologies will not substitute for efforts to reduce waste or efficiently use natural resources.”
- **Para. 18: Enablers for peaceful and inclusive societies for achieving sustainable development.** “Good governance, rule of law, human rights, fundamental freedoms, equal access to fair justice systems, and measures to combat corruption and curb illicit financial flows will be integral to ... efforts [to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for achieving sustainable development, and to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.]”

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda also suggests:

- Maintaining sovereignty over national wealth, natural resources, and economic activity.
- Mobilizing domestic resources, including through enhanced revenue administration and integration of the informal sector into the formal economy.
- Using domestic resources effectively and leveraging national wealth and natural resources.
- Investing in value addition and the processing of natural resources and productive diversification.
- Building democratic, transparent, and responsive institutions.
- Ensuring the full and equal participation of women in the economy and their equal access to decisionmaking processes and leadership.
- Involving well-functioning national and regional development banks in credit markets.
- Building technical and technological capacity, financing, and support in municipalities and other local authorities to manage expenditures and investments in sustainable development.

- Building the capacity for risk management of external shocks through prevention, adaptation, and mitigation measures.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda highlights the critical role of the private sector and private sector financing in a “call on all businesses to apply their creativity and innovation to solving sustainable development challenges.” It invites businesses “to engage as partners in the development process, to invest in areas critical to sustainable development, and to shift to more sustainable consumption and production patterns.”

### **Increasing Coherence and Mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals**

The SDGs and Agenda 2063 frameworks need to be integrated into nationally tailored policies and programs. Doing so should improve coherence and strengthen synergies and complementarities in approaches to development.

Greater coherence among national, regional, and global frameworks would enhance development effectiveness and ensure that actions at all levels prioritize ending poverty, inequality, and exclusion. Mainstreaming the SDGs by anchoring their implementation in national development plans also helps build effective national, regional, and international alliances and partnerships and strengthens capacities and systems that help implement and sustain achievements.

### **Adopting a Holistic, Comprehensive, Coordinated, Multistakeholder Approach**

The formulators and proponents of the SDGs never intended governments to implement them on their own. Implementation requires a multistakeholder approach that involves private sector actors (including entrepreneurs, innovators, inventors, investors, banks, and other players). Addressing capacity imperatives is not business-as-usual capacity building. It involves bolstering the collective capacity of a variety of stakeholders to implement different programs and activities. It requires a more holistic, comprehensive, and coordinated approach.

Building such broad-based partnerships requires strengthening and sustaining capacities across stakeholder groups. It also requires structures at the national and local levels to enhance opportunities for investments in development.

By adopting a multisectoral and multistakeholder platform, African countries can create the kind of social contract and momentum they need to transform their societies, achieve the SDGs, and fulfill the aspirations of Agenda 2063. The contributions of governments, the private sector, development partners and their finance institutions, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, youth, women, and the media will be vital.

### **Investing in Opportunity**

The SDGs present a grand opportunity for change. Their 169 targets can create new momentum for finding fresh approaches to addressing development in an inclusive manner.

The SDGs can be a vehicle for job creation, skills development, innovation, and business opportunities. They can motivate firms to look for or develop new markets for products and services, explore new business approaches, and develop and expand value chains in a more inclusive manner. The SDGs challenge governments and society to find innovative ways to redirect investments into development in ways that leave no one behind. Capacities need to be built that allow stakeholders to seize the opportunities that the SDGs present to build economies that can attain and sustain the development aspirations of African countries.

This study uses the conceptual framework of capacity sets for sustainable development in Africa shown in figure 2.1 to explore capacity imperatives for the SDGs from two perspectives:

- Scoping indicative capacities and generically mapping the convergence of capacity imperatives for the SDGs and Agenda 2063.
- Identifying areas for strengthening capacity and capacity-enabling approaches for stakeholders, including international partners.

Traditional functional and technical capacities are important for development. So are intangible factors (soft skills or composite capacities for planning, facilitation, knowledge and risk management, and program financing, management, and development), some of which determine the extent to which stakeholders and beneficiaries embrace and own development goals and the efficiency and effectiveness with which resources are used to achieve goals (ACBF 2016b; Otoo, Agapitova, and Behrens 2009).

There is also a need for social, economic, and political rejuvenation to reenergize Africans with the spirit of working together toward collective prosperity, a common destiny under a united and strong Africa. This aspect of development requires a radical shift from business-as-usual and traditional capacity-building approaches. Realizing it requires a set of transformative capacities that reinforce a new sense of identity and create a new culture of self-determination and results orientation. Africa needs a fundamental shift in collective consciousness about the lack of progress on the continent and an internal search for an alternative logic, narrative, and motivation. This kind of transformation requires radical shifts in mindset and an openness to change, achieved through a coalition of “drivers of transformation” that stimulate and promote a sense of urgency and address foundational elements of transformative capacities. The imperatives to be addressed include the following:

- Visioning and transformative leadership.
- Shifts in mindset and change readiness on the part of all stakeholders.
- Ownership, stakeholder engagement, and participation in the SDGs.
- National capacities for executing projects.
- Capacity enablers.
- Financing capacity (including private sector mechanisms).
- Accountability for results, including monitoring, evaluation, and reporting arrangements.

Success in implementing the SDGs requires the ability to implement and sustain efforts at both the central government and the local level. Strengthening implementation processes requires the following:

- Identifying critical skill sets and promoting innovation among stakeholders.

- Revitalizing key institutions and revamping working systems and infrastructure to make them fit-for-purpose and positioning them for new and emerging opportunities.
- Strengthening the ability of stakeholders to mobilize resources and use them to execute, monitor, and evaluate programs and projects.
- Promoting a culture and practices that sustain development results, including through monitoring and evaluation, leadership, and devolution of authority to various levels of action.

Private sector participation is critical. African governments must stop paying lip-service to the private sector and instead fully embrace it as a partner in development and find more effective ways to engage it. Business-friendly incentives and regulatory frameworks will help align business interests with national development goals and foster long-term investment.

Private sector financing is another area that requires capacity development. The capacity to finance projects is woefully lacking in most African countries.

## Key Messages and Recommendations

The following are needed for transformative development and effective implementation of the SDGs that integrates their economic, social, and environmental dimensions:

- Strong political commitment to meet the financing challenge for implementing the SDGs and to create an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels.
- A can-do attitude.
- Appropriate incentives; stronger national and international policy environments and regulatory frameworks (and more coherence between the two); better harnessing of the potential of science, technology, and innovation and the closing of technology gaps; and the scaling up of capacity building at all levels.
- The full and equal participation of women in the economy and in decisionmaking processes and leadership, the full realization of the human rights of women and girls, and greater investment in youth and children.



- An ambitious, comprehensive, holistic, and transformative approach to SDGs implementation.
- Good governance, the rule of law, human rights, fundamental freedoms, equal access to fair justice systems, and measures to combat corruption and curb illicit financial flows.
- Effective domestic resource mobilization, including enhanced revenue administration and integration of the informal sector into the formal economy; sovereignty over national wealth, natural resources, and economic activity; investment in value addition in the processing of natural resources; and product diversification.
- Broad-based, multistakeholder partnerships, in which stakeholders work together to tap their collective potential to find solutions.
- New approaches to unlock the transformative potential of ordinary people and society, organized collectively as government, civil society, entrepreneurs, industry, academia, and other actors.
- Social, economic, and political rejuvenation to rekindle Africans' spirit of working together toward collective prosperity and a common destiny under a united and strong Africa.
- A fundamental shift in the African consciousness about the lack of progress on the continent, and a search for an alternative logic, narrative, and motivation.
- A coalition of “drivers of transformation” to stimulate and promote a sense of urgency and address foundational elements of transformative capacities (visioning and transformative leadership, mindset and change readiness on the part of all stakeholders, ownership, stakeholder engagement and participation in the SDGs, financing capacity, and accountability for results, including monitoring, evaluation, and reporting arrangements).
- Revitalization of key institutions, working systems, and infrastructure to make them fit-for-purpose and to position them for new and emerging opportunities.
- Engagement of the private sector in development.

## Chapter 3

# Applying Lessons from Efforts to Meet the Millennium Development Goals

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This chapter reviews the performance of Africa on achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through 2015 and identifies the capacity lessons. It then examines the key capacity imperatives for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### Africa's Performance on the Millennium Development Goals

The eight MDGs—which range from halving extreme poverty rates to providing universal primary education and halting the spread of HIV/AIDS, by the target date of 2015—galvanized unprecedented efforts in all countries to promote a more people-centered development that would meet the needs of the world's poorest people. Globally, the MDGs helped to lift more than one billion people out of extreme poverty, to fight hunger, to enable more girls to attend school, and to protect the planet. Similar levels of progress have been noted in Africa. According to *MDG Report 2015: Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals* (ECA et al. 2015), Africa has been particularly successful in improving access to primary school (MDG 2); reducing maternal, infant, and HIV-related deaths (MDG 4, MDG 5, and MDG 6); and enhancing women's representation in national parliaments (MDG 3). This section highlights some of the progress and challenges discussed in that report.

Over the 15-year implementation period of the MDGs (2000–2015), Africa made remarkable progress toward universal primary education, relative to the baseline of 1990. For example, Algeria, Benin, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Mauritius, Morocco, Rwanda, South Africa, Tunisia, and Zambia recorded a net enrollment rate of over 90 per cent in 2012. This boosted youth literacy rates in many

countries, but challenges in improving primary education completion rates undermined the enrollment progress. African countries have also made large strides in gender equality. Girls' primary school enrollment rates have increased in many countries, thanks to gender-responsive interventions. Similarly, affirmative action programs and other initiatives have made Africa the leading developing region in women's representation in national parliaments. In 2014, 20 percent of members of parliaments were women, an increase of 15 percent from 2000, which is the highest progress recorded under this target.

Progress has also been impressive in health, if somewhat mixed. For example, over 1990–2015, the under-five mortality rate dropped 55.5 percent—the target was to reduce it by two-thirds. However, neonatal mortality rates, particularly in rural areas, remained stubbornly high, with slow progress, if at all. The maternal mortality ratio declined 49 percent; the target of 75 percent was met by only four countries: Equatorial Guinea (81.9 percent), Eritrea (77.6 percent), Rwanda (77.1 percent), and Cabo Verde (77 percent). By 2015, Africa had the highest maternal mortality ratio globally. On HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, Africa achieved impressive results. Use of condoms and antiretroviral therapy to prevent and control HIV/AIDS, use of insecticide-treated bednets against malaria infection, and implementation of new treatment protocols for tuberculosis were instrumental in reversing the spread of these diseases.

On the environmental targets (MDG 7), progress in Africa was mixed. While the continent still has the lowest carbon dioxide emissions, 38 African countries increased



their emissions over the period. Furthermore, only 16 per cent of the population had access to piped drinking water by 2015, which was the lowest in the world.

Among the major challenges to progress on the MDGs in Africa were the limited access to and quality of service delivery, lack of

communication and follow-up, weak institutional framework for implementation, threat of conflict, and adverse effects of shocks such as the Ebola outbreak. On top of these challenges, lack of capacity, in various forms, also explains the limited performance of African countries in attaining most of the MDGs (box 3.1).

### Box 3.1 Examples of capacity gaps during implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, 2000–2015

**Weak primary education completion.** Despite steady progress on improving access to primary school, there were challenges in primary completion rates: one-third of students who started grade 1 did not reach the final grade of the primary level. Between 2000 and 2012, countries like Ghana, Morocco, Rwanda, and Tanzania made remarkable progress, while others stagnated or slid backwards. In addition to conflict and political unrest, obstacles to greater progress included limited capacity to improve the quality of education, not only at the policymaking level but also among the actors directly involved in primary education, such as teachers.

**Lack of skilled health personnel.** Despite Africa's progress on several health-related MDGs, inadequate access to skilled health personnel, especially in rural areas, constrained efforts to reduce child and maternal deaths. Africa has one of the lowest proportions of births attended by skilled health personnel (68 percent at the end of the MDG period).

**Inadequate debt management capacity.** From 2010 to 2014, total foreign debt was higher than 30 per cent of GDP in Africa. Structural problems in some countries and lack of capacity in debt management among policymakers and finance officers were serious constraints in achieving a sustainable level of debt.

**Limited productive capacity.** Africa's share in global merchandise trade declined from 3.5 percent in 2012 to 3.3 percent in 2013. Moreover, at 16.3 percent in 2013, intraregional trade was lower than in any other region. Increased and sustained participation in global trade was a target of the MDGs because of its positive effect on export earnings, industrialization, and job creation. However, limited productive capacity led to a deteriorating national trade balance in many African countries and prevented them from attaining the many benefits associated with increased participation in global trade.

**Poor implementation capacity.** Experience with the MDGs highlights the critical role of implementation capacity. Implementation of the MDGs was focused on financial resource mobilization, with little attention to institutional factors and capacity building. Many evaluation reports found that the lack of a robust institutional framework and the proper implementation capacities hindered achievement of the MDGs.

Source: Adapted from ECA et al. 2015.

## Lessons Learned in Implementing the Millennium Development Goals

Valuable lessons emerged from the MDG experience that can inform policymaking on implementation of the SDGs. Table 3.1 identifies some of the most salient lessons associated with each SDG. General lessons include the following:

- Effective communication and follow-up are critical for the success of global agendas. Some of the success in achiev-

ing the MDGs was attributable to the effective communication and continual follow-up processes at the national, regional, and global levels, which helped maintain pressure on governments to fulfill their social compacts.

- Policymakers must be mindful of the utility and sustainability of their investments. Brick and mortar investments, such as schools and hospitals, can be sustainable and useful only when accom-



panied by complementary financing of recurrent expenditures (teaching materials, equipment, skilled health professionals).

- Sustainability requires addressing the root causes rather than the symptoms of slow development. Donor support is more likely to result in sustainable development if it focuses on extending a helping hand rather than a handout. Focusing on outcomes such as poverty reduction without paying attention to the pathway or enablers required to achieve them leads to unsustainable solutions.
- Global development agendas are likely to succeed if they are underpinned by a

credible and committed means of implementation that takes into account both financial and nonfinancial resources. Lack of such means left implementation of the MDGs vulnerable to resource shortfalls.

- The interrelatedness of the goals means that focusing on development interventions that have the greatest knock-on effects heightens impact.
- Low-cost interventions can drive progress if they focus on populations that are vulnerable or at greatest risk (women and girls, the extremely poor, and rural dwellers, among others).

**Table 3.1 Salient elements of the Millennium Development Goal experience that can inform implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals**

Millennium Development Goal	Priorities	Measures	Examples of capacity imperatives
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spur people-centered development and respect human rights while reflecting Africa's priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize value addition and commodity-based manufacturing to create jobs and reduce dependence on a narrow range of primary commodities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the private sector and strengthen the productive capacity of the informal sector to ensure a larger contribution to industrialization and value addition.</li> <li>• Build capacity for sustainable agricultural production and food security by modernizing and diversifying agricultural sectors.</li> </ul>
2. Achieve universal primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen access to quality education by investing in early childhood education, teacher training, and learning materials, particularly textbooks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) at an early age to nurture technological innovation and competitiveness.</li> <li>• Promote engineering and technical education, especially for girls.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support policymakers in planning, executing, and monitoring focused STEM policies that are aligned with national development priorities</li> </ul>
3. Promote gender equality and empower women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address gender disparities at the secondary and tertiary school levels through targeted free or discounted education for girls.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate discriminatory laws and practices that undermine women's access to education and employment.</li> <li>• Enact affirmative action laws to promote gender parity at all levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop gender-sensitive tools and guides for policymakers, practitioners, and other development stakeholders.</li> </ul>

4. Reduce child mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revitalize comprehensive and integrated efforts against the main diseases that kill children within the framework of strengthening health systems and ensuring a continuum of quality care.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in preventive health interventions, including immunization and malaria prevention.</li> <li>Enhance access to treatment for acute respiratory infections and diarrhea.</li> <li>Adopt cost-effective measures to strengthen health systems, including deployment of community health workers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address the bottlenecks and capacity gaps within African health systems to make them more effective in both prevention and the handling of outbreaks.</li> </ul>
5. Improve maternal health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>End preventable maternal mortality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access to emergency obstetric care and skilled healthcare providers during childbirth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the number of skilled healthcare providers to ensure high-quality antenatal, delivery, emergency, obstetric, and postnatal services.</li> </ul>
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other major diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access to antiretroviral therapy and TB detection and cure, including through subsidies and strengthened social protection systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch awareness campaigns aimed at minimizing risky behavior and encouraging condom use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop skills to prevent mother-to-child transmission.</li> <li>Implement Stop TB strategies and monitor their effectiveness.</li> </ul>
7. Ensure environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invest in water and sanitation infrastructure, including the recycling of waste products.</li> <li>Adopt cleaner technologies for industrial production, to minimize pollution.</li> <li>Respond to climate change, including through disaster and risk management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address the root causes of conflict, to help prevent armed conflicts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen human and institutional capacities on climate change and related issues.</li> </ul>
8. Develop global partnerships for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work closely with the international community to improve the productive capacities and international competitiveness of African countries, and facilitate the adoption of cleaner technologies, which are vital for ensuring that Africa's industrial development is environmentally sustainable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with the international community to curb illicit financial outflows, strengthen the capacity for domestic resource mobilization, and identify alternative sources of financing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen public financial management and fiscal systems to leverage domestic resource mobilization and ensure that revenues are used effectively for economic transformation.</li> </ul>

Source: ECA et al. 2014.

Other lessons from MDG implementation related to capacity constraints can also help countries in Africa implement the SDGs and Agenda 2063 (table 3.2).

**Table 3.2 Capacity lessons from implementing the Millennium Development Goals**

Capacity lesson	Relevance for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union Agenda 2063
Invest in multistakeholder partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multistakeholder partnerships will be critical to mobilize internal and external resources, strengthen capacities, and facilitate technology development and transfer.</li> </ul>
Map priorities and integrate them in national planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awareness-raising initiatives are needed, including on the relationship between the global and African agendas.</li> <li>The planning cycles of the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union Agenda 2063 need to be aligned. Integration toolkits are needed to strengthen national capacities to integrate both agendas in planning frameworks by mapping the relationship between the two agendas.</li> </ul>
Create integrated and coordinated institutional arrangements for implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated and coordinated institutional arrangements and integrated and inclusive follow-up and review mechanisms are needed.</li> <li>Capacities for data collection and analysis need strengthening. Data deficits can undermine country capacities to establish baselines, track performance indicators, and reinforce evidence-based policymaking.</li> </ul>
Promote intersectoral coordination, multidisciplinary synergies, and policy coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The interrelatedness of goals, targets, and indicators and their cross-sectoral attributes call for an institutional architecture that promotes intersectoral coordination, leverages multidisciplinary synergies, and enhances policy coherence.</li> </ul>
Strengthen service sector development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links between service and real sectors need to be strengthened by increasing support to the agricultural and industrial sectors, improving coverage of broadband Internet services, and making telecommunications the backbone of the service sector.</li> <li>Home-grown innovations in service delivery need to be encouraged, including by improving the quality and efficiency of public services, modern logistics, high-tech services, culture, e-commerce, tourism, and health-related services and by accelerating international development exchanges and cooperation in the service sector.</li> </ul>
Accelerate infrastructure development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerating infrastructure development is pivotal to connect people, countries, and economies and to undergird social, cultural, and economic development.</li> <li>Countries need to develop and maintain reliable, sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable infrastructure in both rural and urban areas, with a focus on land, water, air transport, energy, storage facilities, clean water and sanitation, waste management, and information and communication technologies.</li> </ul>
Foster connectivity and Africa-wide integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With the assistance of the international community, countries need to implement infrastructure projects that facilitate intra-African trade and regional and continental integration. Infrastructure programs can create jobs, strengthen domestic skills and enterprise development, and enhance technological capability.</li> </ul>
Enhance technological capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technological capacities for Africa's transformative agenda can be enhanced by transferring and diffusing technology and innovation in line with each country's development needs, improving access to funding for home-grown technological innovations and environmentally sound technologies, and strengthening the science and technology component of curricula. Enhancing the use of information and communication technologies in key social and economic sectors is also critical.</li> </ul>
Increase support for research and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academia, industry, government, and civil society organizations need to work closely together on research and development, which needs to be commercialized and marketed. Marketable research is needed at all levels of the education and training system.</li> <li>Investments in science and technology parks need to be scaled up.</li> </ul>
Harness Africa's youth population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that Africa's youth bulge yields a demographic dividend, countries need policies and strategies that strengthen young people's entrepreneurial skills and capacity, increase their access to financial services, promote decent jobs, increase access to business advisory services and credit facilities, promote participation in decision-making processes, and support the African Union's initiative to create a continental framework on demographic dividends.</li> </ul>

Source: Authors' analyses based on various documents such as Agenda 2063, Agenda 2063 First Ten Year Implementation Plan, ACBF Studies on Agenda 2063, and Reports on "Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals."



## Ways to Improve Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063

African countries can take a variety of steps to improve implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 based on lesson from implementation of the MDGs.

## Strengthening education to develop critical technical skills

Africa lags far behind other regions in the number of people with critical technical skills, and the gap is projected to increase by 2030 (table 3.3). Achieving the SDGs will require

**Table 3.3 Current and projected gaps in critical technical skills in Africa**

Critical technical skill	Current ratio in Africa and international norm	Current number in Africa	Number in Africa if it met international norms	Current gap between Africa and international norms	Projected gap in 2030
Physicians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Africa: 0.3 per 1,000 people</li> <li>International norm: 2.5 per 1,000 people</li> </ul>	358,035	2,915,598	2,557,563	4,200,000
Other medical specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Africa: 0.3 per 1,000 people</li> <li>Canada, United Kingdom, and United States: 7.3 per 1,000 people</li> </ul>	358,035	8,525,207	8,167,172	12,280,800
Researchers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)-related areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Africa: 79 per million people</li> <li>International norm: 1,081 per million people</li> </ul>	92,133	1,260,704	1,168,571	1,816,080
Veterinarians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Africa: 2.3 per million people</li> <li>International norm: 300 per million people</li> </ul>	2,700	349,872	347,172	504,000
Engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Africa: Average 1,029 engineers<sup>a</sup></li> <li>Brazil: 3.8 per 1,000 people</li> </ul>	55,601	4,364,667	4,309,065	6,287,426
Quantity surveyors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Africa: 508</li> <li>Hong Kong: 2,551</li> </ul>	27,432	409,559	382,127	589,982
Agricultural scientists and researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Africa: 70 per million people</li> <li>India: 130 per million people</li> </ul>	81,637	151,611	69,974	218,400
Urban and regional planners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Africa: 2.0 per 100,000 people</li> <li>United Kingdom: 37.6 per 100,000 people</li> </ul>	22,761	438,856	416,095	632,184
Mining specialists/engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Africa: 12.9 per million people</li> <li>United States: 20.7 per million people</li> </ul>	15,066	24,156	9,090	34,798
Geologists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Africa: 17.8 per million people</li> <li>Canada: 148.9 per million people</li> </ul>	20,736	173,665	152,929	250,169

a. Average for Malawi, Rwanda, and Tanzania.

Source: Adapted from ACBF 2016b.

Most African countries have underdeveloped science, technology, and innovation institutions and fail to generate and deploy knowledge and technological innovations for socioeconomic growth (ACBF 2017). Institutions lack financial resources, infrastructure, equipment, and enough people with the requisite skills and expertise.

Skills development, the bedrock of capacity development, includes the following activities and priorities:

- Training people and developing their skills and abilities.
- Improving capacity enhancers, enablers, and optimizers.
- Putting in place enabling processes, institutional structures, and managerial systems, including decentralization, and sharing responsibilities.
- Mobilizing and building commitment at all levels to deliver on a strategic and visionary agenda.
- Identifying and promoting soft skills (such as leadership and strategic planning), including attitudinal skills.

### ***Building institutional architecture, increasing knowledge, and sharing information***

Interinstitutional coordination is weak in Africa. Staff tend to work in silos, seldom sharing information internally or externally. Few systems are in place for national, regional, or continental organizations to be “learning bodies” (ACBF 2016b). There is a need to harmonize the institutional architecture, particularly at the national level, in order to realize the SDGs. Leadership is also critical, including on issues of regional integration.

Capacity development also means providing institutions and organizations with mandates to lead SDG processes. Investments and activities under implementation as part of Agenda 2063 aim to develop critical foundational capacities.

Delivering on the SDGs requires fit-for-purpose institutions, at both continental and national levels, with a coherent set of policies, structures, and organizations; appropriate physical infrastructure and systems; and work processes and procedures that will attract and retain high-performers. Effective institutions create opportunities and build the potential of individuals to expand their

capability. Well-developed institutions—supported by skilled individuals, structures, and systems for applying knowledge, as well as by clear accountability mechanisms—enhance performance. They make implementation more efficient, adaptable, and resilient.

Another important part of the institutional architecture for SDGs is the role of national statistical offices in integrating the SDGs and Agenda 2063 in national development plans. To generate the data required to inform the monitoring and evaluation frameworks linked to the SDGs, these offices need some flexibility for reporting purposes. They need to develop a baseline on the SDGs and national indicators to track and measure progress on implementation. Statistical offices should also map national indicators, integrate the monitoring framework, identify expected challenges for data collection, and explore ways of overcoming these challenges.

### ***Developing infrastructure***

Improving Africa's infrastructure is pivotal to connecting people, countries, and economies and driving social, cultural, and economic development. Infrastructure programs also create local jobs, strengthen domestic skills and enterprise development, and enhance technological capability. Two main sets of actions are recommended:

- Develop and maintain reliable, sustainable, environmentally friendly, and affordable infrastructure in both rural and urban areas, with a focus on land, water, air transport, storage facilities, clean water and sanitation, energy, waste management, and information and communication technologies.
- Implement infrastructure projects that facilitate intra-African trade and regional and continental integration, including by enhancing research and technology.

A lack of bankable projects is a critical constraint to infrastructure development in Africa. Africa accounts for only about 3 percent of global investment: between 2003 and 2013, Sub-Saharan Africa closed just 158 project finance deals, with debt totaling \$59 billion of a total global debt of \$2 trillion. Most African countries lack the capacity to develop bankable projects. Four countries (Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, and Angola)



accounted for 70 percent of the projects that closed between 2003 and 2013 (Dornel 2014).

Lack of technical capacity also hampers infrastructure development. Africa has too few engineers and planners to develop the infrastructure needed to realize the SDGs and Agenda 2063 (see table 3.3).

### ***Strengthening health systems***

Africa's healthcare systems are weak, especially in rural areas. By one estimate, Africa would need an additional 1.8 million doctors to reach the average ratio of doctors per people in OECD countries (ACBF 2016b).

### ***Transferring technology***

Countries should prioritize the transfer and diffusion of technology and innovation in line with their development needs, improve access to funding for home-grown technological innovations and environmentally sound technologies, and strengthen the science and technology component of their curricula. The use of information and communication technology should be expanded in key social and economic sectors.

### ***Preparing for climate change***

Most of the 11 countries examined for this study lack the capacity to prepare for or manage climate change. Few have developed policies and strategies for national early warning systems.

### ***Raising awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals***

A prerequisite for implementing the SDGs is building in-depth awareness in all sectors. Within the first few years of SDG implementation, countries need to adopt and adapt the SDG agenda to national contexts and ensure collective commitment. Countries need to communicate information about the need for Africa's transformation to all stakeholders and create awareness of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. That includes routine reporting on outcomes and processes, so that stakeholders have the information needed to review their roles and contributions.

Promoting multistakeholder partnerships helps mobilize internal and external resources, strengthen capacities, and

facilitate the transfer of technology. Involvement will enable stakeholders to identify their needs and mobilize and commit resources to address them within a common framework and guiding principles. Stakeholders will take responsibility for developing capacity related to their areas of operations, contributing to system-level capacity improvements, increasing stability, and building resilience through investments for innovation and continuous improvement.

### ***Mobilizing financial resources***

Africa should not expect donors to fund the SDGs. External funding always comes with conditions, which can be intrusive and disruptive. And it has created a dependency syndrome.

Reliance on external financing is partly responsible for the failure by most African countries to attain the MDGs. Continued reliance on external funding will undermine ownership and lead to a loss of control of Agenda 2030. It is therefore imperative that member states find innovative ways of financing capacity building internally, with external resources playing only a supplemental role.

### ***Making the most of the youth bulge***

Africa has a young population. To ensure that this youth bulge yields a demographic dividend, countries need policies and strategies that strengthen entrepreneurial skills and capacity, increase young people's access to financial services, promote decent jobs, increase access to business advisory services and credit facilities, promote participation in decisionmaking processes, and support the African Union's initiative to create a continental framework for maximizing demographic dividends. Engaging young people is important because they are the ones who will ensure continued commitment to the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

### ***Improving monitoring, evaluation, and reporting***

Policymakers in Africa often agree on development objectives but then fail to act on them. Building monitoring, evaluation, and regular assessment and feedback into implementation arrangements can help to spur action. Policymakers need to promote an evaluation culture that goes beyond

compliance with processes and funding requirements by establishing concrete implementation procedures and monitoring and evaluation requirements in all project interventions. An evaluation culture uses monitoring and evaluation as a basis for improving performance; it links monitoring and evaluation with knowledge management to improve operational programming and program implementation. Thus, countries need to augment and upgrade skills and competencies to strengthen the collection of socioeconomic data, manage information, and establish systems for reporting results. And they need to create mechanisms to facilitate the use of information for decisions and accountability.

### Key Messages and Recommendations

The following are some key messages and recommendations for improving implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063, based on experience with the MDGs:

- Lack of capacity made it difficult for many African countries to achieve the MDGs. The same constraint is likely to affect their ability to achieve the SDGs.
- Lack of good data undermines countries' capacity to establish baselines, track performance indicators, and reinforce evidence-based policy-making.
- Africa has too few doctors, especially in rural areas.
- Africa lags other regions in the number of people with critical technical skills. Developing such skills is critical to achieving the SDGs.
- Africa has few bankable infrastructure projects. As a result, it accounts for just 3 percent of global finance on infrastructure.
- Africa lacks early warning systems for disasters.
- Most African countries have underdeveloped science, technology, and innovation institutions. They fail to produce and deploy knowledge and technological innovations for socioeconomic growth.
- Countries should partner with the international community to curb illicit financial outflows, strengthen the capacity for domestic resource mobilization, and identify alternative sources of financing.
- Africa's youth bulge can yield a demographic dividend if countries put in place policies and strategies that strengthen young people's entrepreneurial skills and capacity, increase their access to financial services, promote their participation in decisionmaking, create decent jobs, increase their access to business advisory services and credit facilities, and support the initiative to create a continental framework on demographic dividends.
- Delivering on the SDGs requires fit-for-purpose institutions, at both the continental and national levels.
- Implementing the SDGs requires building awareness across sectors and ensuring understanding of their essence at various levels.
- Critical areas of priority include supporting Africa's agenda for structural transformation; strengthening capacities in development planning, domestic resource mobilization, and public expenditure management; strengthening cooperation in stemming illicit financial outflows and returning stolen assets; supporting technology, innovation, and science; promoting industrialization, especially natural resource-based industrialization; promoting fair trade and strengthening trade facilitation; and facilitating good governance.
- Countries need to adopt and adapt the SDG agenda to their national contexts and ensure collective commitment.
- Africa should not expect donors to fund the SDGs. Continued reliance on external financing, which was partly responsible for most African countries' failure to achieve the MDGs, will undermine ownership and lead to a loss of control of SDG implementation. Countries must find innovative ways to finance the SDGs from their own resources.





## Chapter 4

# Aligning the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 with National Development Plans

Implementing the Sustainable Development goals (SDGs) and the African Union's Agenda 2063 presents challenges and opportunities. The challenges lie in devising a coherent framework that integrates both agendas in a balanced way. The opportunities encompass the way that integrated implementation promotes policy coherence, reduces duplication and the reporting burden, and orients development partners toward one cohesive set of development priorities.

Embedding these new agendas in long-term national visions and plans is vital to ensure that their aspirations remain an enduring feature of the development landscape in Africa.

### Mapping the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063

The SDGs and Agenda 2063 share many of the same goals (table 4.1).

**Table 4.1 Comparison of the Sustainable Development Goals and the goals and priorities of the African Union's Agenda 2063**

Sustainable Development Goals	Goals and priority areas of Agenda 2063
Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere in the world Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable	Goal 1: High standards of living, quality of life, and well-being for all citizens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incomes, jobs, and decent work</li> <li>Poverty, inequality, and hunger</li> <li>Social security and protection, including for people with disabilities</li> <li>Modern, affordable, and livable habitats and good-quality basic services</li> </ul>
Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Goal 2: Well-educated citizens and a skills revolution, underpinned by science, technology, and innovation
Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Goal 3: Healthy and well-nourished citizens
Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth; full and productive employment; and decent work for all Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation	Goal 4: Transformed economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable and inclusive economic growth</li> <li>Science, technology, and innovation-driven manufacturing, industrialization, and value addition</li> <li>Economic diversification and resilience</li> </ul>
Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture Goal 12: Ensure responsible consumption and production patterns	Goal 5: Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production
Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development	6: Blue (ocean) economy for accelerated economic growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marine resources and energy</li> <li>Port operations and marine transport</li> </ul>
Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Goal 7: Environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities



<p>Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all</p> <p>Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</p> <p>Goal 15: Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems and forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity, conservation, and sustainable natural resource management</li> <li>• Water security</li> <li>• Climate resilience and preparedness for natural disasters</li> </ul>
	Goal 8: A united Africa (federal or confederate)
	Goal 9: Continental financial and monetary institutions established and functional
Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation	<p>Goal 10: World-class infrastructure that crisscrosses Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications and infrastructure connectivity</li> </ul>
Goal 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	Goal 11: Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice, and the rule of law entrenched
Goal 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	<p>Goal 12: Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutions and leadership</li> <li>• Participatory development and local governance</li> </ul>
Goal 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	Goal 13: Peace, security, and stability preserved
	<p>Goal 14: A stable and peaceful Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional structure for African Union instruments on peace and security</li> <li>• Defense, security, and peace</li> </ul> <p>Goal 15: A fully functional and operational African Peace and Security Architecture</p> <p>Goal 16: Preeminent African cultural renaissance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values and ideals of Pan-Africanism</li> <li>• Cultural values and African Renaissance</li> <li>• Cultural heritage, creative arts, and businesses</li> </ul>
Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	<p>Goal 17: Full gender equality in all spheres of life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women and girls' empowerment</li> <li>• Elimination of violence and discrimination against women and girls</li> </ul>
<p>Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</p> <p>Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p>	Goal 18: Engaged and empowered youth and children
Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	Goal 19: Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful coexistence
<p>Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries</p> <p>Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development</p>	<p>Goal 20: Africa takes full responsibility for financing its development goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African capital markets</li> <li>• Fiscal systems and public sector revenue</li> <li>• Development assistance</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from AUC 2015.

## Progress in Integrating the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 into National Development Plans

Countries are at different stages of integrating the SDGs and Agenda 2063 into their national development planning frameworks. In Egypt and Uganda, the planning cycle coincided with the commencement of the SDGs and Agenda 2063, and the integration process is more advanced than in some other countries. For example, in March 2015 Egypt developed its Strategy for Sustainable Development “Egypt’s Vision 2030.” The strategy mainstreams all three dimensions of sustainable development—economic, social, and environmental. At the operational level, programs, projects, and initiatives were launched with the aim of achieving SDGs and simultaneously implementing the National Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Most of the other nine countries are still implementing national development plans that were established before the SDGs and Agenda 2063 were introduced. Countries should review their policy frameworks, strategies, and plans to identify how to merge multiple strategies and goals into more integrated plans. This exercise may identify and eliminate implementation bottlenecks

and illuminate synergies between national and subnational goals (UNDG 2015). A few countries have commissioned initial assessments to determine how the SDGs fit in with their national development plans. These studies have focused on comparing national development plan indicators with those of the SDGs. Egypt, Rwanda, and Uganda found that their national development plans already included many SDG indicators. All countries should carry out such an analysis so that they can integrate the 169 SDG targets into national indicators and link them to national priorities.

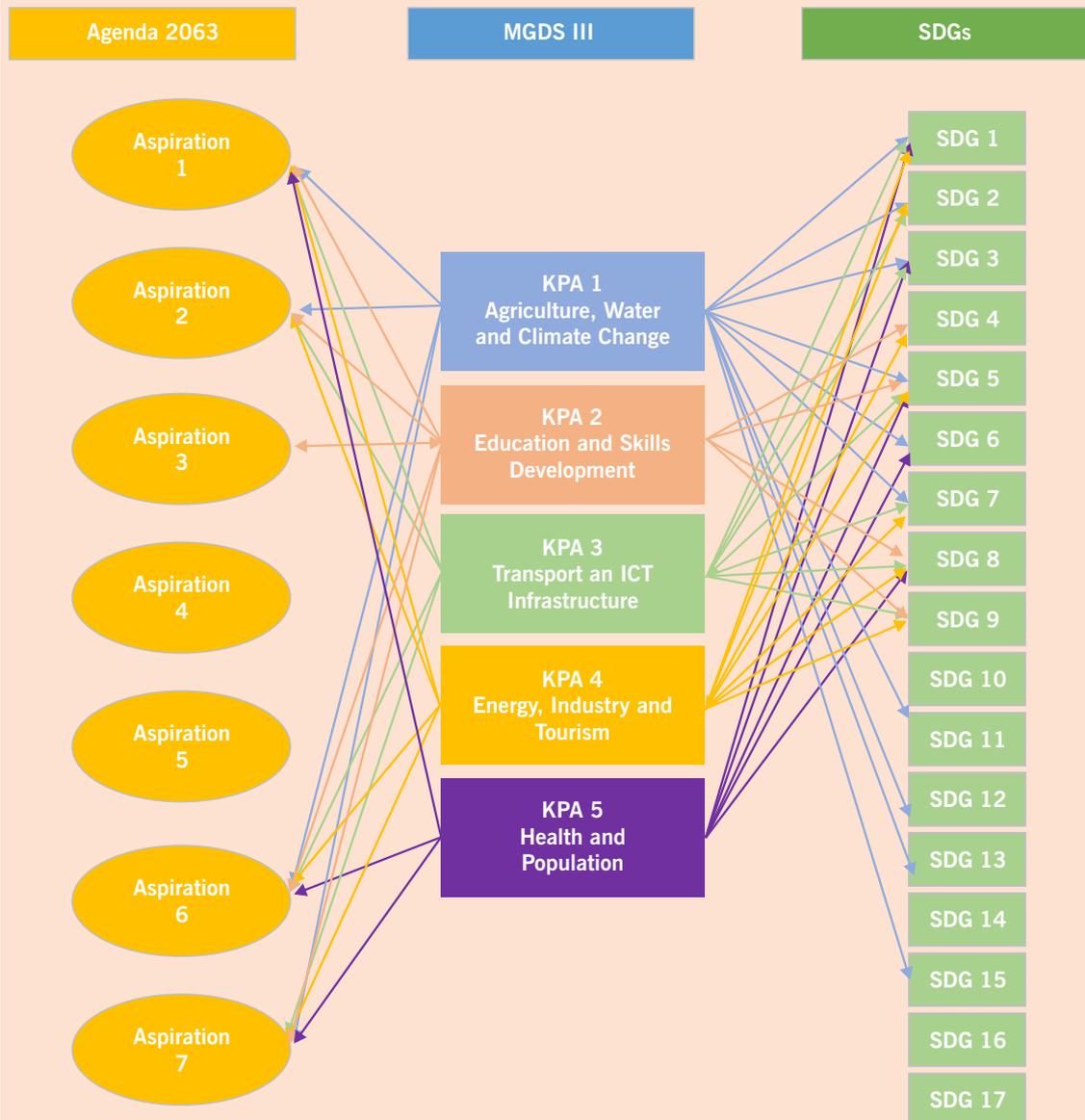
In preparing their national development plans, countries need to:

- Determine how the SDGs and Agenda 2063 should be incorporated into short-, medium-, and long-term national planning processes, policies, and strategies (see box 5.1 for an example for Malawi).
- Set national targets, taking into account national circumstances.
- Develop tools to translate the international framework into practical instruments to support operations, including at the local level (UNDG 2015).
- Designate a ministry (or a bureau in the office of the president) to oversee and coordinate the process.

### Box 5.1 Identifying key priority areas for the Third Malawi Growth and Development Strategy in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063

Malawi recently launched the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) III, to be implemented over 2017–2022. MGDS III will contribute to the attainment of the country’s long-term development aspirations as enshrined in its Vision 2020 document. The country leverages the fact that the strategy is developed in a context where the continental Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are already in place. Therefore, it identified and anchored the Key Priority Areas (KPAs) of MGDS III into the goals of those two broader agendas to ensure policy alignment and effective domestication.

## Mapping Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Third Malawi Growth and Development Strategy



As shown above, not all SDGs goals and Agenda 2063 aspirations were addressed in Malawi's MGDS III, which is an illustration of the national prioritization of goals. Also, out of the 241 indicators for the 161 SDGs targets and the indicators for Agenda 2063, a selected number have been chosen and will be reported on based on national key priority areas.

Source: Government of Malawi (2017).

Implementation of strategic national development plans and initiatives has been anemic in the 11 case study countries. Challenges included the following:

- *Weak institutions.* Lack of sound institutions and competent personnel has led to poor management of public resources and made it difficult to achieve strategic goals.
- *Low levels of human development.* Most national development plans highlight the shortage of professionals in key areas as an obstacle to development.
- *Lack of political will.* Political will has been lacking to see national development strategies through to the end. National development plans suffer from policy reversals and lack of follow-through by implementing agencies and ministerial committees.
- *Overreliance on foreign technical assistance.* Foreign technical assistance has been costly and indifferent to countries' long-term needs. Although foreign technical assistance has improved in

recent years, it still interferes with effective governance.

- *Overreliance on foreign financing.* Overreliance on foreign financing was among the main reasons most African countries failed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Domestic resources need to be mobilized.
- *Lack of financial resources.* Projects and activities in national development plans are not properly financed. Public resource allocation is not coherent.

Some countries also experienced other challenges, including the following:

- Inadequate alignment of planning and budgeting instruments with national development plan priorities.
- Lack of mainstreaming of the SDGs in the budget.
- Weak results frameworks.
- Limited involvement of nonstate actors, especially in implementing national development plans.
- Limited stakeholder participation in planning and decisionmaking.
- Slow implementation of core projects because of weak technical capacity.

Most funded projects were delayed because of a failure to fulfill initial project assessment requirements. The main reasons for the failure were a lack of the required technical capacity and underdevelopment of a culture of evaluation, accountability, and evidence-based management in most countries.

Added to these common challenges are shortcomings in many public sector administrations, including the apathy of state employees, corruption, mismatches between skills and roles, cumbersome work pro-

cesses, lack of clarity of stakeholder rights and responsibilities, and lack of up-to-date data. To address these issues, countries need to create an enabling environment by promoting a culture of knowledge-driven policy implementation and accountability.

The ambitious and comprehensive nature of the SDGs requires enhancing national capacity on how best to steer inclusive development over time, sectors, and regions of the country. Key areas that need attention include strengthening institutions; improving financing mechanisms; rallying the private sector, civil society, citizens, and other partners toward implementation; and forging public–private partnerships.

### Setting up Institutional Mechanisms to Coordinate Implementation

Most of the case study countries are setting up institutional mechanisms for implementing the SDGs, an important indicator of countries' readiness for change. Some countries have identified a ministry, agency, or office to oversee the process (table 4.2). Most of these entities have clearly defined responsibilities. Such coordinating institutions connect and break down silos across departments. They create horizontal policy coherence, improve integration, and encourage partnerships.

Some agencies and departments still face problems, including overlapping responsibilities (because of territorialism and silo management), low implementation capacity, development partners' bureaucracies, and overly optimistic projections. These problems have led to low development budget execution.

**Table 4.2 Ministries, agencies, and offices responsible for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in selected African countries**

Country	Ministry or agency
Egypt	A national committee to coordinate efforts toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to which the Ministry of International Cooperation is the rapporteur, was established by prime ministerial decree. The Ministry of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform oversees the process. Also, within the National Statistical Agency, a Sustainable Development Unit, established in April 2016, is to lead monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the SDGs and Egypt Vision 2030.
Kenya	The National Vision Steering Committee, a semi-autonomous government agency, oversees implementation of all Vision 2030 projects. It works closely with government ministries, county governments, and departments, as well as with the private sector, civil sector, and other stakeholders.
Liberia	Ministry of Finance.
Malawi	A National Planning Commission is responsible for ensuring that sectoral policies are aligned with the national and international agendas. In addition, the commission is responsible for reporting development progress at all levels.
Mauritius	Committee on SDG Statistical Indicators.
Nigeria	Office of the Special Adviser on Sustainable Development Goals, in the Office of the President. The office works with the Ministry of Planning and Budget and local authorities.
Rwanda	Ministry of Planning. Rwanda will host the Africa Sustainable Development Goals Center, which will drive innovation and research toward achievement of the SDGs in Africa.
Uganda	Prime Minister's Delivery Unit.

These coordinating entities need to:

- Identify key areas for priority attention, and develop a work plan for incorporating the SDGs and Agenda 2063 in national development plans.
- Develop a coordination framework and continue to strengthen it.
- Review and, as necessary, revise existing plans.
- Develop detailed frameworks that sectors and local governments can use to integrate the SDGs.
- Build stronger national ownership by sensitizing all participants to the national relevance of the SDGs.
- Motivate nonstate actors, particularly the private sector and civil society, to integrate the SDGs into their investments, programs, and plans.
- Hire well-trained planners, implementers, and civil servants in relevant sectors.

### Key Messages and Recommendations

The following are some key messages and recommendations for aligning the SDGs and Agenda 2063 with national development plans:

- Mapping the relationship between national development plans and the SDGs and Agenda 2063 is invaluable. In line with national vision documents, countries should select and prioritize key areas of emphasis for their development processes.
- Capacity-related challenges to implementing national development plans include weak institutions, low levels of human capital, lack of political will, overreliance on foreign technical assistance and financing, and limited domestic financial resources.

- National goals should focus on fundamentals and opportunities that increase competitiveness and opportunities.
- National goals should be realistic, based on the capacity of institutions.
- All government departments engaged in implementation of the national development plan should coordinate their efforts and increase their institutional, human, and financial capacity.
- Coordination mechanisms need to be customized to local institutional arrangements.
- The feeling of national ownership of development goals should be heightened.
- Nonstate actors, particularly the private sector and civil society, should be motivated to integrate the SDGs into their investments, programs, and plans.
- National statistical offices should develop baselines on the SDGs and identify national indicators to track and measure progress, map national indicators against the SDGs, integrate the proposed monitoring framework, identify challenges for data collection, and explore ways of overcoming these challenges.

More must be done to mobilize domestic resources, especially in light of dwindling official development assistance and the need to reduce reliance on external resources.



## Chapter 5

# How Stakeholders View the Sustainable Development Goals

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This chapter presents the results of consultations with stakeholders—including representatives of national governments, the private sector, development partners, civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, and youth and women's organizations—in 11 African countries. The consultations focused on the following issues:

- Visioning and the government's development policy framework, including the alignment of frameworks and goals.
  - Ownership, stakeholder engagement, and participation in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
  - The institutional architecture in place for implementing SDG-related programs.
  - Institutional (operational) capacities, including coordination, systems and work processes, and accountability for results.
  - Human capacities to deliver on the SDGs at lead ministries (staffing levels, adequacy of critical technical competencies and skills mix, and so forth).
  - Multidisciplinary capacities.
  - Capacities for change and transformation.
  - Soft skills (such as leadership and strategic planning) to enhance implementation of SDG programs.
  - Capacity-enabling or impeding arrangements for SDG programs.
  - Capacity to finance the SDGs (including support by development partners).
  - Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting arrangements on progress toward the SDGs.
  - Ideas for doing things differently (avoiding the mistakes made in trying to implement the Millennium Development Goals).
- (table 5.1). Interviews with officials in these ministries revealed these perspectives (figure 5.1):
- Medium-term sector strategies and expenditure frameworks are the major policy documents relevant for national development objectives. This implies the need not only to integrate development goals like those articulated by the SDGs and the African Union Agenda 2063 into the national development plans but also to earmark them in shorter term expenditure frameworks. Most countries have not yet integrated the SDGs into their national development plans.
  - The SDGs present medium to high opportunities to build momentum for development. All respondents perceived them as an opportunity for job creation, knowledge creation, and innovation. They also perceived them as a medium to high opportunity for developing infrastructure, agriculture, industry, value chains, markets, and small and medium-size enterprises. They perceived the SDGs as a medium opportunity for expanding intraregional trade, developing women entrepreneurs, and creating and strengthening the service sector. They also saw opportunities for public–private partnerships, institutional strengthening, social cohesion, and better data monitoring and accountability. Respondents did not perceive the SDGs as providing opportunities for developing new institutions.
  - Information sharing and coordination are the greatest challenges. Respondents identified incorporating the SDGs into the Agenda 2063 transformation vision as a moderate but manageable challenge. This finding resonates with the fact that the SDGs were informed by the Common African Position on the post-2015 agenda. Government officials did not view

### Perspectives of Government Ministries

Nine types of government ministries coordinate implementation of the SDGs



participation of the private sector in implementing the SDGs as a major challenge (private sector and other stakeholders held a different view about the extent of their involvement and the adequacy of government consultation).

- All of the coordinating government ministries agreed on the need to substantially increase the participation of academics, innovators, local communities, entrepreneurs, the business community, industrialists and manufacturers, small and medium-size enterprises, financiers and investors, service providers, youth and women's groups, grassroots groups, and rural communities. They acknowledged the importance of broad-based consultation and the need to increase stakeholder awareness, engagement, ownership, and participation.
- Several structures and mechanisms would be useful for coordinating implementation of the SDGs. Most of them have been planned but are not yet in place. Some respondents reported already having functioning interministerial committees, operational lead institutions, and interdepartmental working groups for specific SDGs. Among the mechanisms that some respondents reported as not being yet in place are high-level national SDG champions, interagency task forces, and mobilization of private sector, youth, women, and civil society working groups—are not yet in place. Some government departments reported having in place operational working groups for development partners, academics, and think tanks. That these groups are in place but others are not raises questions about ownership of the agenda and dissemination of the message. More needs to be done to increase awareness, ownership, and participation of all stakeholders, especially local actors.
- Institutional operational capacities are inadequate. All respondents indicated that their coordination capacities (including staffing and resources) were insufficient but that their ministries' skills and competency mix, the efficiency of current work processes, and accountability for results were adequate. Some felt that access to information; knowledge; and

monitoring, evaluation, and reporting processes were insufficient or just adequate.

- Staff need both basic and advanced training, including basic training in critical thinking, strategic planning, results-based management, resource mobilization, and coordination. Some respondents identified the need for advanced training in program development, implementation, and risk management and mitigation. All respondents identified the need for improvements in transformational leadership, change readiness, innovativeness, inventiveness, and comfort with information and communication technology.
- Perceptions of the availability of the attitudinal skills required to enhance implementation of the SDGs are mixed. Staff are sufficiently proactive and able to solve problems, but some respondents noted the need for improvement in negotiation, persuasion, and networking skills.
- Women and youth are only moderately involved in SDG mechanisms. This finding is unsatisfactory, because the full engagement of women and youth is key to achieving the SDGs.
- Domestic resources are a significant funding source for implementation. Some respondents reported that external funding has major potential, others believe it could play only a limited role. More African governments now believe that the SDG agenda will be better advanced with their own resources, supplemented to a limited extent from other sources, including remittances, foreign direct investment, and contributions from the domestic private sector.
- More effort needs to go into building the case for the SDGs as a business opportunity. The SDGs need to be seen, presented, and pursued as an opportunity for a multistakeholder, mutually beneficial partnership for development.
- Moderate capacity strengthening is needed to design an SDG monitoring, evaluation, and reporting system. Responses were mixed on the establishment of an SDG baseline, with some governments highlighting the need for considerable capacity strengthening and

others not seeing it as a major challenge. These differences reflect that some African governments are ahead of others in planning for SDG implementation. There was near unanimity about the need for moderate to substantial capacity strengthening in information technology and monitoring and evaluation.

- Respondents from sectoral departments (including the departments of agriculture, environment, water and sanitation, and sustainable cities) were asked about support within their sector for stakeholder engagement and participation in the SDGs. Responses indicate that greater stakeholder involvement is needed in the development of supporting infrastructure, technical assistance in implementation by nonstate stakeholders, provision of and access to finance, and access to training and skills development.
- Some skill shortages affect the achievement of the SDGs. Implementation of SDG 2 (zero hunger, food security) is hampered by insufficient critical technical skills and shortages of agricultural scientists and

engineers, agricultural planners and economists, agro-chemical specialists, seed breeders, and food security information system specialists. Implementation of SDG 6 (water and sanitation) is held back by shortages of hydrologists, waste management scientists, water infrastructure specialists, and aquatic scientists. Implementation of SDG 11 (development of sustainable cities) is hampered by shortages of surveyors; engineers (civil, mechanical, and electrical); and landscaping specialists. Lack of sufficient training and education facilities leads to overreliance and dependence on imported skills.

These responses from the coordinating government ministries and sector ministries support the view that there is inadequate capacity within government departments to implement the SDGs. Staff lack both soft skills and hard sector-specific skills. It is imperative to address these skills shortages and gaps to ensure that the SDGs can be implemented.

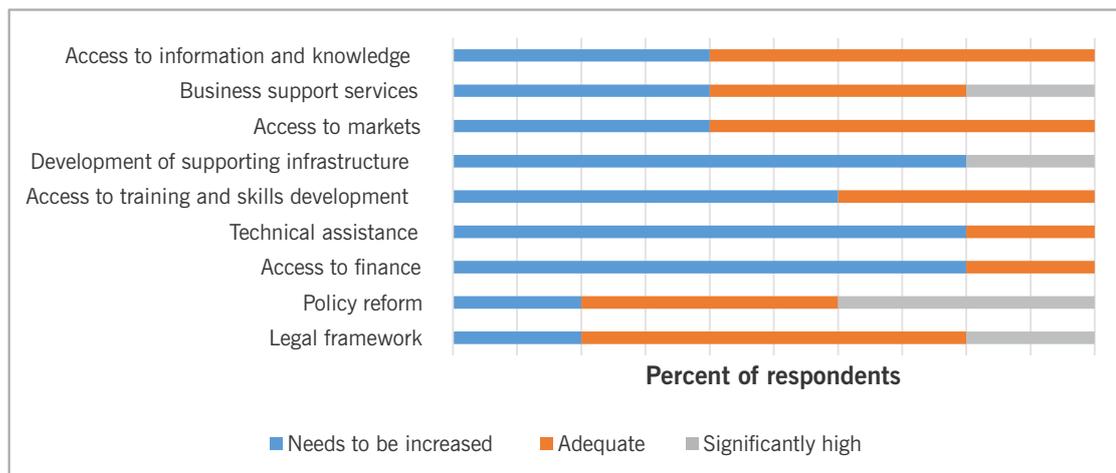
**Table 5.1 Types of government ministries involved in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in selected African countries**

Sustainable Development Goal	Goal, sector, or theme	Ministry, department, or agency
SDG programming, including SDG 1	Overall coordination	Ministry of Planning Ministry of Finance Planning Commission
SDG 2	Zero hunger	Agriculture and Food Security
SDG 3	Health and well-being	Health and Well-Being
SDG 4	Quality education	Education
SDG 5	Gender and empowerment of women and girls	Gender Affairs
SDG 6	Water and sanitation	Water and Sanitation
SDG 7	Clean and sustainable energy	Energy and Power
SDG 11	Sustainable cities	Urban Planning and Cities
SDG 12, 13, 14	Environmental issues	Environmental Affairs

Source: Authors, based on reviews of various country reports on the Implementation of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and discussions with some SDG national focal person.



**Figure 5.1 Government officials' perceptions of stakeholder engagement and participation in the Sustainable Development Goals**



Source: Interviews with government officials.

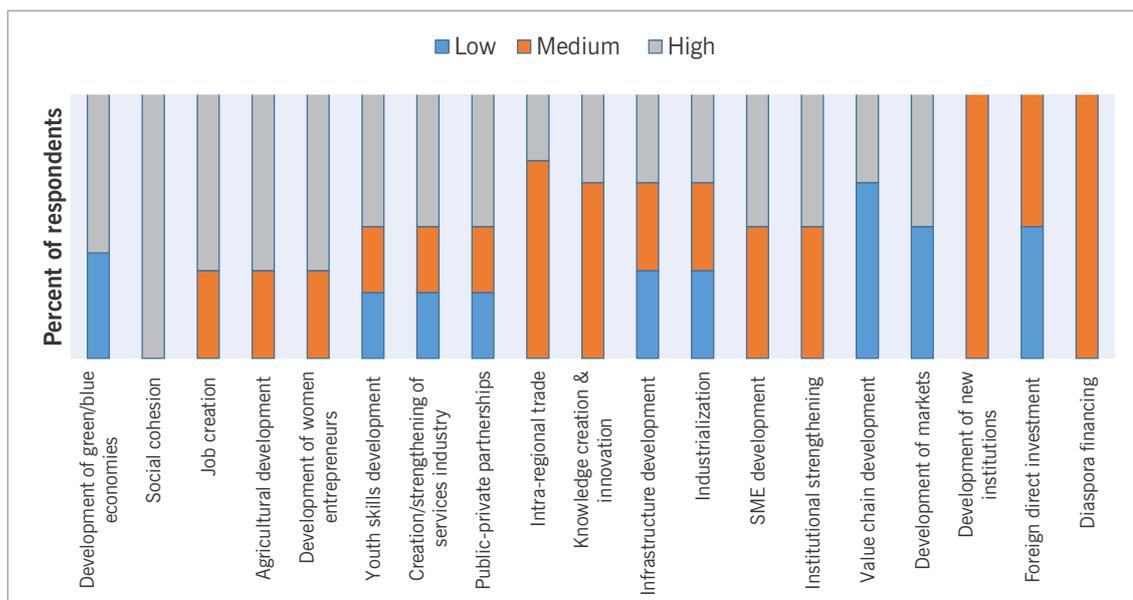
### Perspectives of the Private Sector

The private sector is critical to SDG implementation, both as a source of domestic resource mobilization and as a key participant in the development discourse.

Most private sector respondents consider the SDGs to be an opportunity for job creation, knowledge creation, and innovation (figure 5.2). They see the SDGs as an opportunity for

developing women entrepreneurs, increasing social cohesion, improving youth skills, and, to a limited extent, creating and strengthening service industries. They do not see the SDGs as an important opportunity for developing value chains, markets, or small and medium-size enterprises. These findings suggest that businesses see the SDGs as an opportunity for social sector-related actors rather than for themselves.

**Figure 5.2 Private sector perceptions of the Sustainable Development Goals as sources of opportunities**



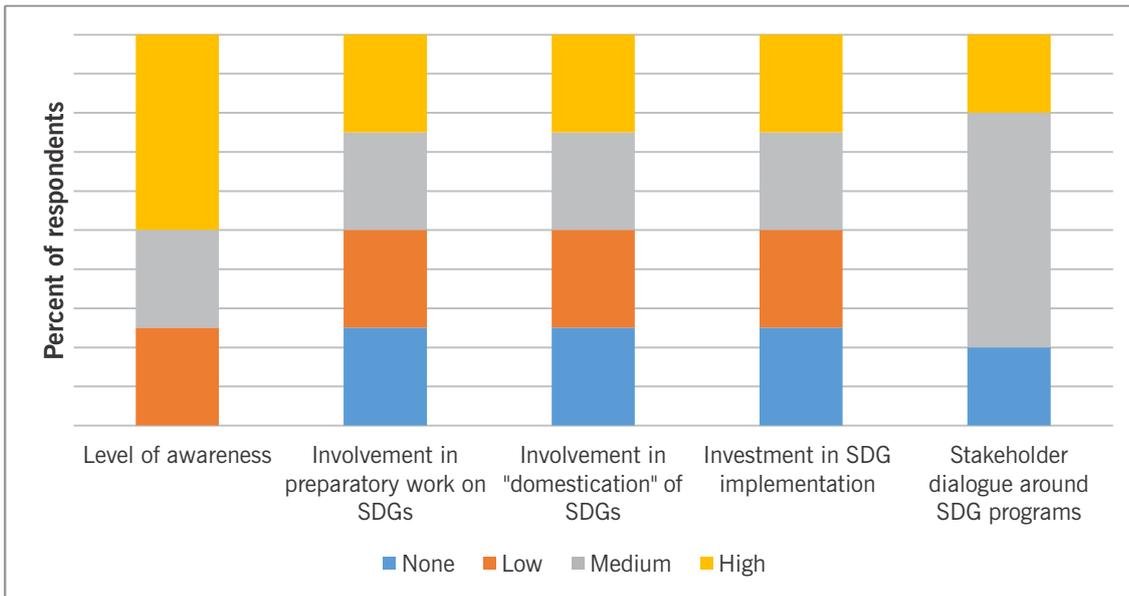
Source: Interviews with private sector representatives.

Viewing the SDGs as a source of business opportunities for the private sector will require a shift in mindset. Africa's development partners have already made this shift and, increasingly, see development cooperation as a business opportunity for companies in their own country. The private sector in Africa needs a new vision of its role. Aligning development objectives with opportunities for private investment would increase domestic resources to drive implementation of the SDGs and attract

knowledge, skills, and expertise. For this shift to occur, the private sector needs to increase its involvement and participation in the process.

Respondents were asked about their understanding of certain parts of the SDGs, including their level of awareness and involvement in SDG preparatory work, localization of the SDGs, investment in SDG implementation, and stakeholder dialogue on SDG programs (figure 5.3).

**Figure 5.3 Private sector self-reported understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals**



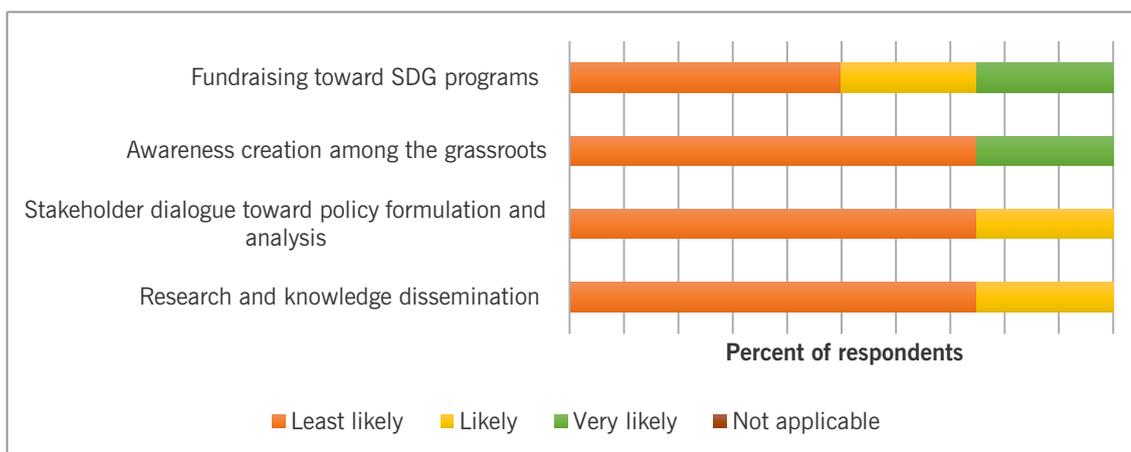
Source: Interviews with private sector representatives

About three-quarters of private sector respondents demonstrated a medium to high level of awareness of the SDGs and half of them indicated that they had been involved in preparatory work on the SDGs, localization of the SDGs, or investment in SDG implementation. About 80 percent of respondents had been involved in stakeholder dialogue on SDG programs. About 22 percent reported no involvement in SDGs.

The picture that these results paint is one of awareness without involvement. The private sector in Africa knows about the SDGs and has been invited to discussion forums, but it has not become an implementation partner or committed its own resources to achieving the SDGs.

Respondents were also asked to indicate what technical expertise the private sector is most likely to contribute toward implementation of the SDGs (figure 5.4).

**Figure 5.4 Private sector technical expertise likely to be harnessed in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals**



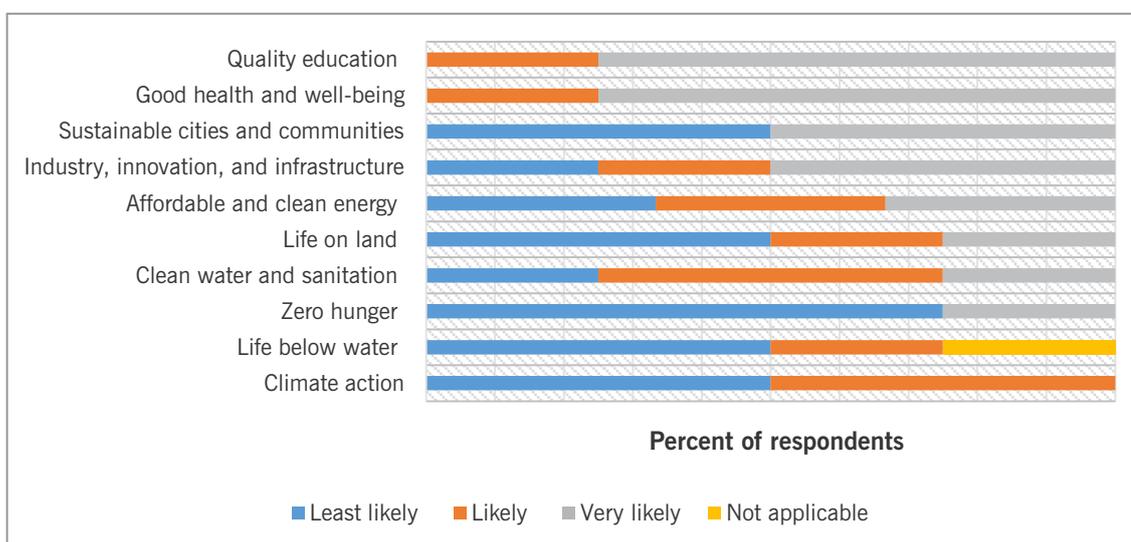
Source: Interviews with private sector representatives.

Private sector respondents demonstrated little enthusiasm for helping achieve the SDGs. Almost 70 percent thought it would be the least likely for them to contribute research and knowledge dissemination, awareness creation at the grassroots, or stakeholder dialogue toward policy formulation and analysis. If the private sector could be

convinced of the merits of participating, these contributions could fit well within their corporate social responsibility activities.

Respondents were also asked how likely they were to invest in specific SDG goals (figure 5.5).

**Figure 5.5 Likelihood of private sector investment in Sustainable Development Goal-related areas**



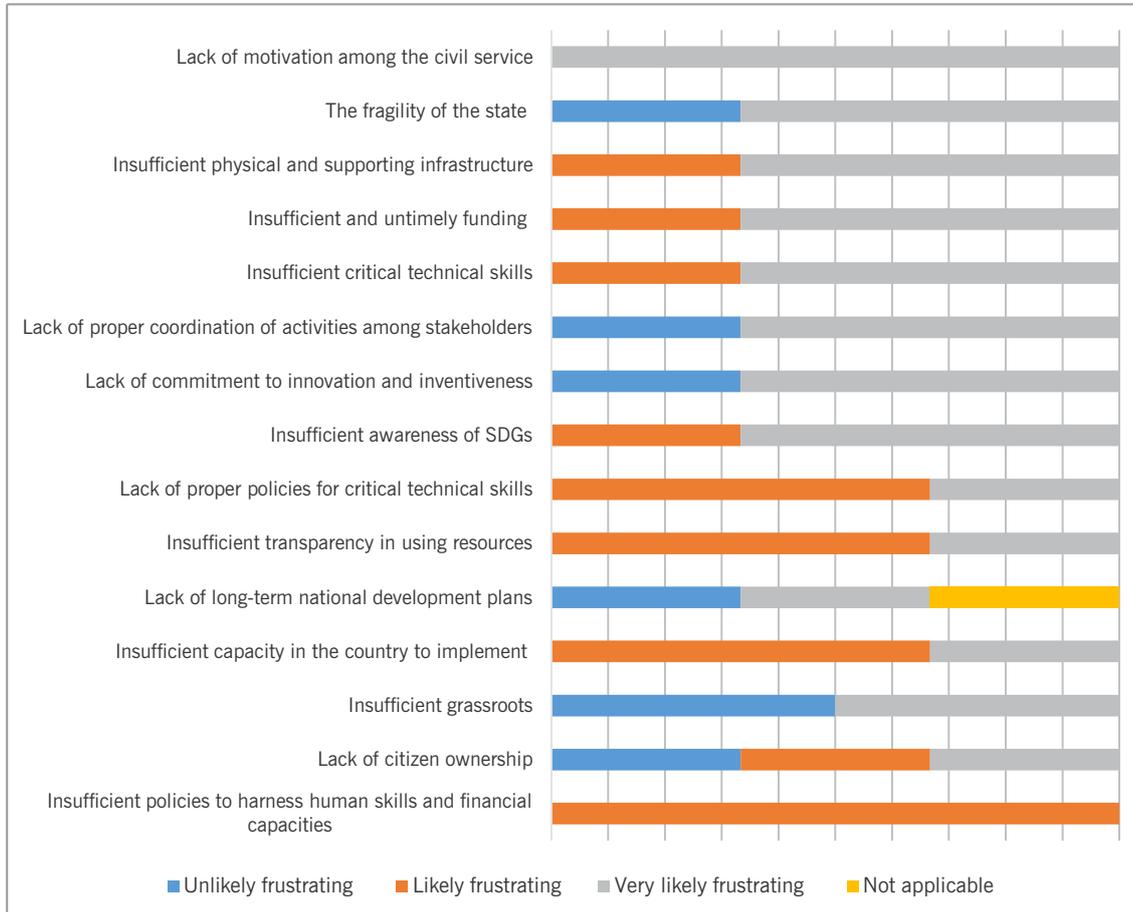
Source: Interviews with private sector representatives.

Three-quarters of private sector participants were interested in investing in efforts to improve health and well-being and education. That response may reflect the private sector's traditional involvement in providing healthcare and education facilities as part of their corporate social responsibility activities. About half of respondents indicated that they would invest in water and sanitation, and more than a third were interested in investing

in clean and affordable energy, areas that represent profit-making opportunities. The areas least likely to attract investments include life on land and life below water, climate action, and zero hunger. These responses suggest that more effort needs to go into developing the business case for investing in SDGs with high social impact but no obvious profit-earning opportunities, possibly through social entrepreneurship.

All private sector respondents identified a lack of motivation among civil servants as the factor most likely to frustrate accomplishing the SDGs (figure 5.6). Many also cited insufficient critical technical skills, including the lack of policies to enhance the retention and full utilization of available skills.

**Figure 5.6 Private sector perceptions of challenges likely to frustrate efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals**



Source: Interviews with private sector representatives.

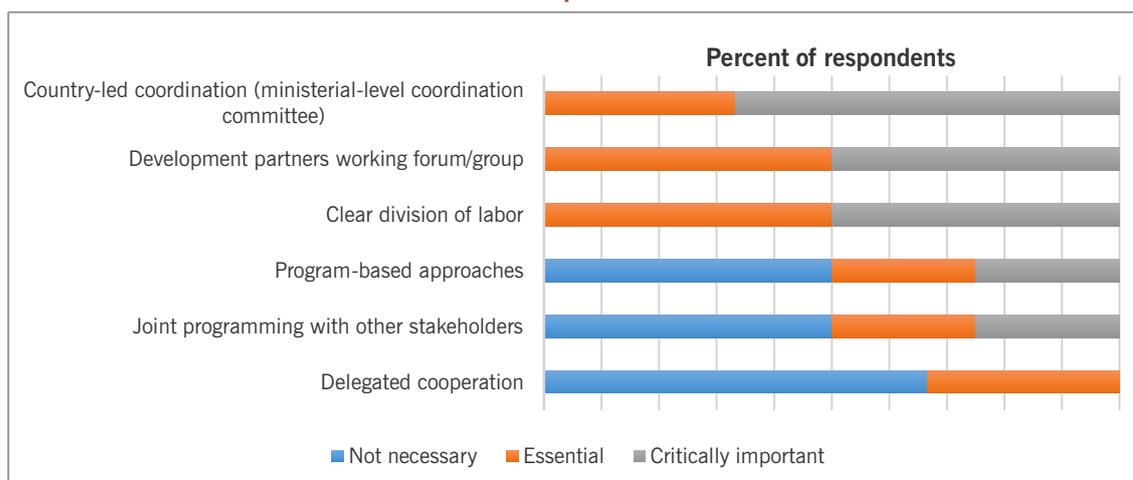
## Perspectives of Development Partners

Respondents among development partners were drawn from bilateral partners, donor organizations, and UN agencies. Respondents indicated that questions of ownership of the agenda and the definition of priorities need to be revisited through dialogue between African countries and development partners. African countries and their development partners (bilateral and multilateral) should have frank conversations about the need to do things differently, bearing in mind that development partners

may have different guidelines and political mandates from their government.

Half of the respondents reported that a country-led coordination group (such as a ministerial-level coordination committee) and a development partners working group, with a clear division of labor, would be the most effective way for a country to maximize the opportunities presented by the SDGs (figure 5.7). Respondents were cool to the idea of joint programming with other stakeholders or delegated cooperation. They were evenly split over adopting program-based approaches.

**Figure 5.7 Development partners' perceptions of how best to enhance coordination of efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals**



Source: Interviews with development partners.

Joint programming is intrinsically linked to regional integration in Africa. It is an important part of the Agenda 2063 goal of increasing intra-Africa trade, which the UN Regional economic commissions are promoting. These commissions need training in negotiation, project development, and monitoring and evaluation.

Development partners' responses mirror the challenges of the aid effectiveness agenda, as articulated by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for Action, and the Busan Partnership Agreement.<sup>3</sup> Coordination is unpopular among donors, who prefer adherence to their own guidelines and procedures and fear that coordinated action might reduce the visibility and political mileage they derive from their interventions.

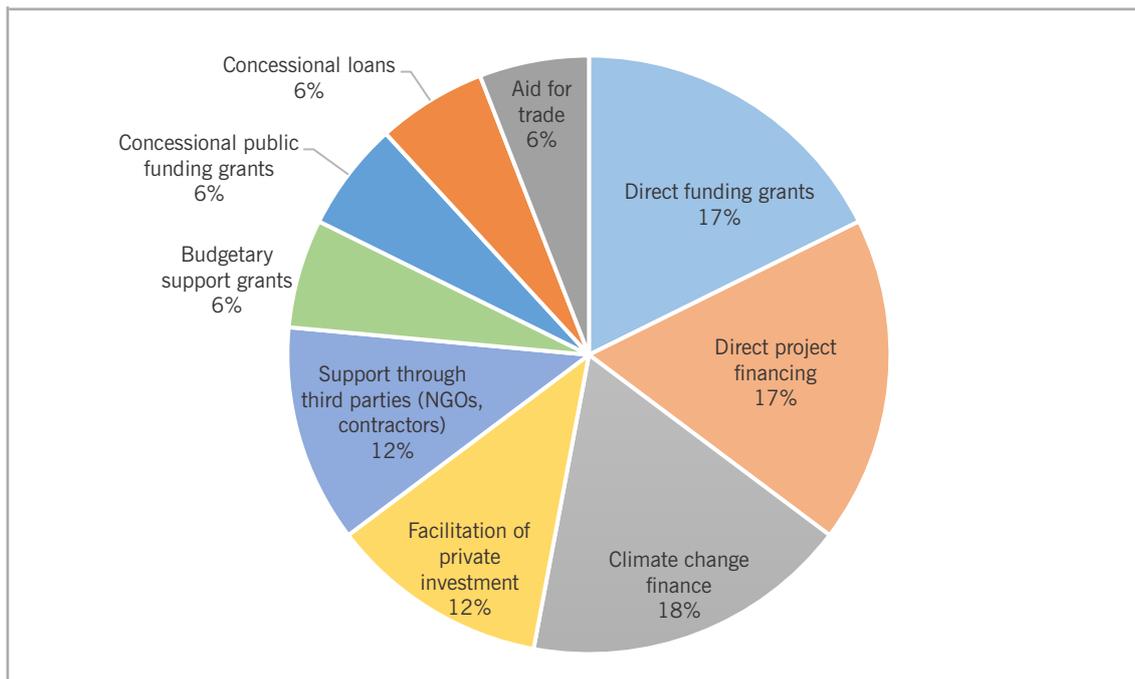
Bilateral partners were asked to identify the funding mechanisms that their organizations

might provide to support the SDGs. They displayed a preference for direct funding grants, direct project financing, and climate change financing (figure 5.8). These three options leave overall control to external partners and delineate preferred areas of engagement. The fourth and fifth preferences were facilitation of private investment and provision of support through third parties.

Facilitation of private investment reflects a mindset shift toward more business-oriented models for delivering development assistance. Bilateral partners are not enthusiastic about the modes of support that African stakeholders have often identified as desirable: budget support grants disbursed and managed within national systems, concessional public funding grants, concessional loans, and aid for trade.

<sup>3</sup>The Paris Declaration (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2008) define principles and establish commitments that have improved the quality of aid. Much remains to be done to put those principles into practice. The Busan Partnership Agreement (2012) highlights common principles for all development actors that are key to making development cooperation effective.

**Figure 5.8 Bilateral development partners' preferred funding mechanisms for supporting implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals**

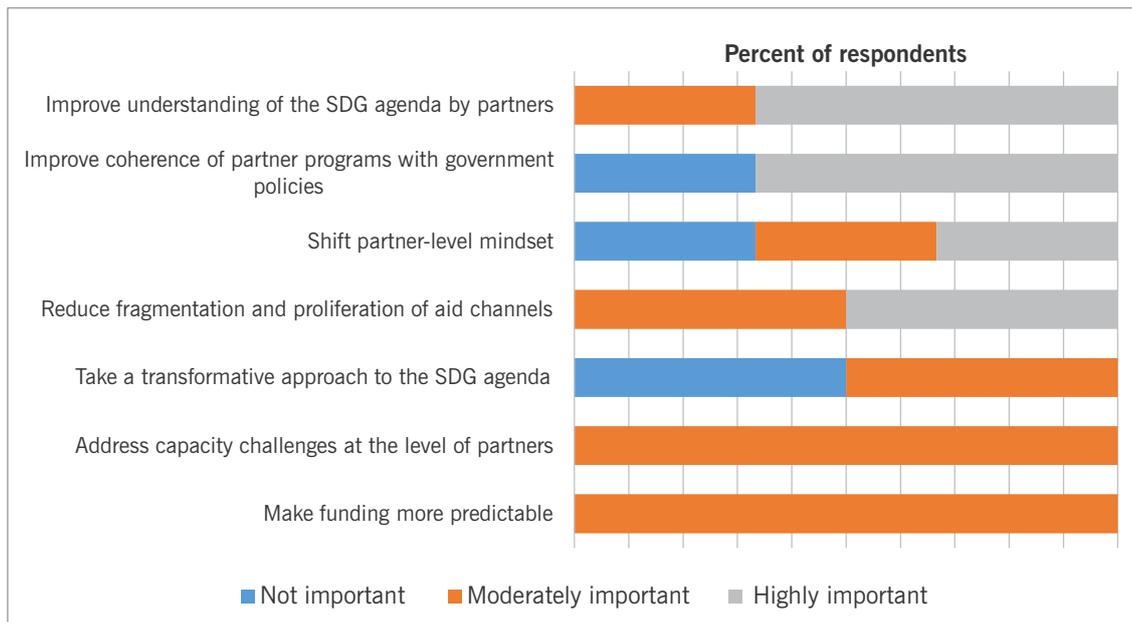


Source: Interviews with bilateral development partners.

Bilateral partners were also asked what they planned to do differently. They expressed interest in better understanding the SDGs and improving the coherence of partner programs and government policies (figure 5.9). Bilateral partners also highlighted reducing the fragmentation and proliferation of aid channels, addressing capacity challenges, and making funding more

predictable. These findings indicate that although external partners are not interested in joint programming, they agree with other parts of the aid-effectiveness agenda. Half of bilateral partners did not think it important to adopt a transformative approach to the SDGs agenda, and a third did not believe that a mindset shift by partners is important.

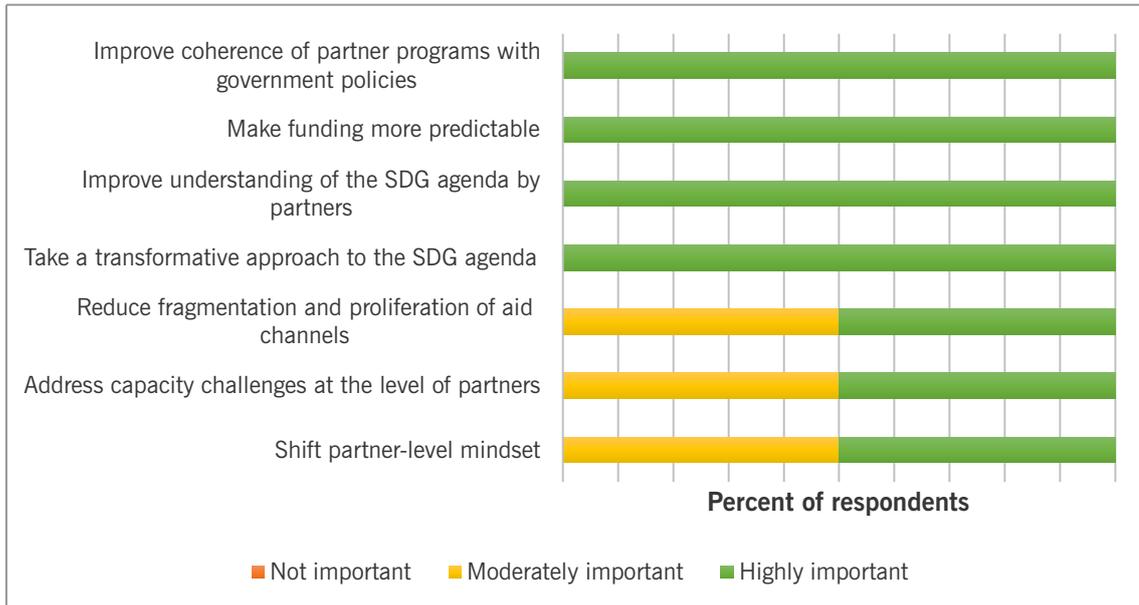
**Figure 5.9 Bilateral partners' perceptions of the importance of doing things differently**



Source: Interviews with bilateral development partners.

UN agencies held slightly different views. At least half of respondents indicated that doing things differently was highly important in all categories (figure 5.10).

**Figure 5.10 UN agencies' perceptions of the importance of doing things differently**



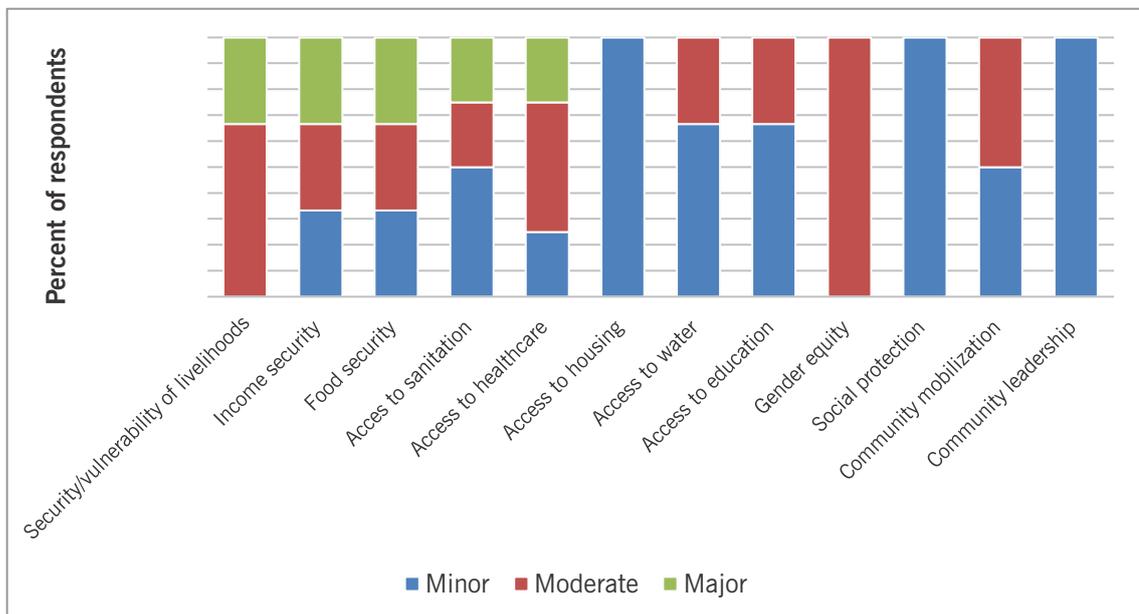
Source: Interviews with bilateral development partners.

The contrasting views of UN agencies and bilateral partners are worth exploring. These differences may reflect the closer working relationships between UN agencies and African governments and tighter links with local stakeholders.

### Perspectives of Nonofficial Stakeholders

Nonofficial stakeholders include civil society, faith-based, community-based, and grassroots organizations. They identified various challenges facing communities, including the security and vulnerability of livelihoods and lack of access to water, sanitation, and healthcare (figure 5.11).

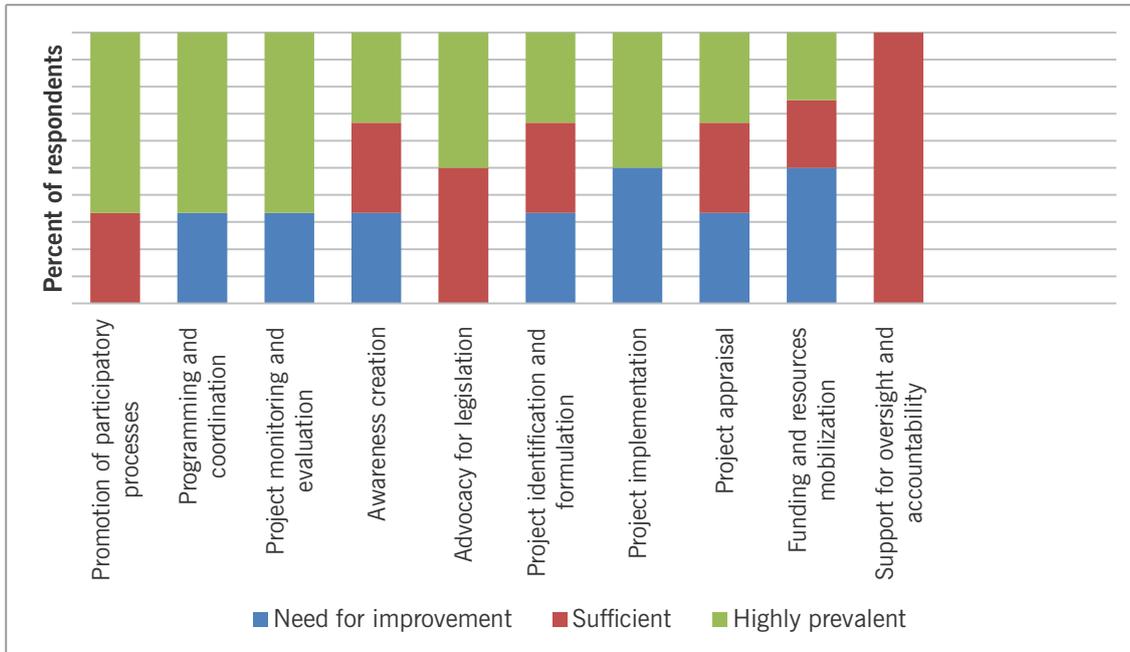
**Figure 5.11 Nonofficial stakeholders' perceptions of development challenges**



Source: Interviews with bilateral development partners.

Respondents also shared their perceptions about their organization's strengths in various capacity enablers (figure 5.12). Major challenges include project monitoring and evaluation, project implementation, programming, and coordination. Categories that generated a mixed response included awareness creation, project identification and formulation, and project appraisal.

**Figure 5.12 Nonofficial stakeholders' perceptions of the prevalence of factors that enable capacity development**



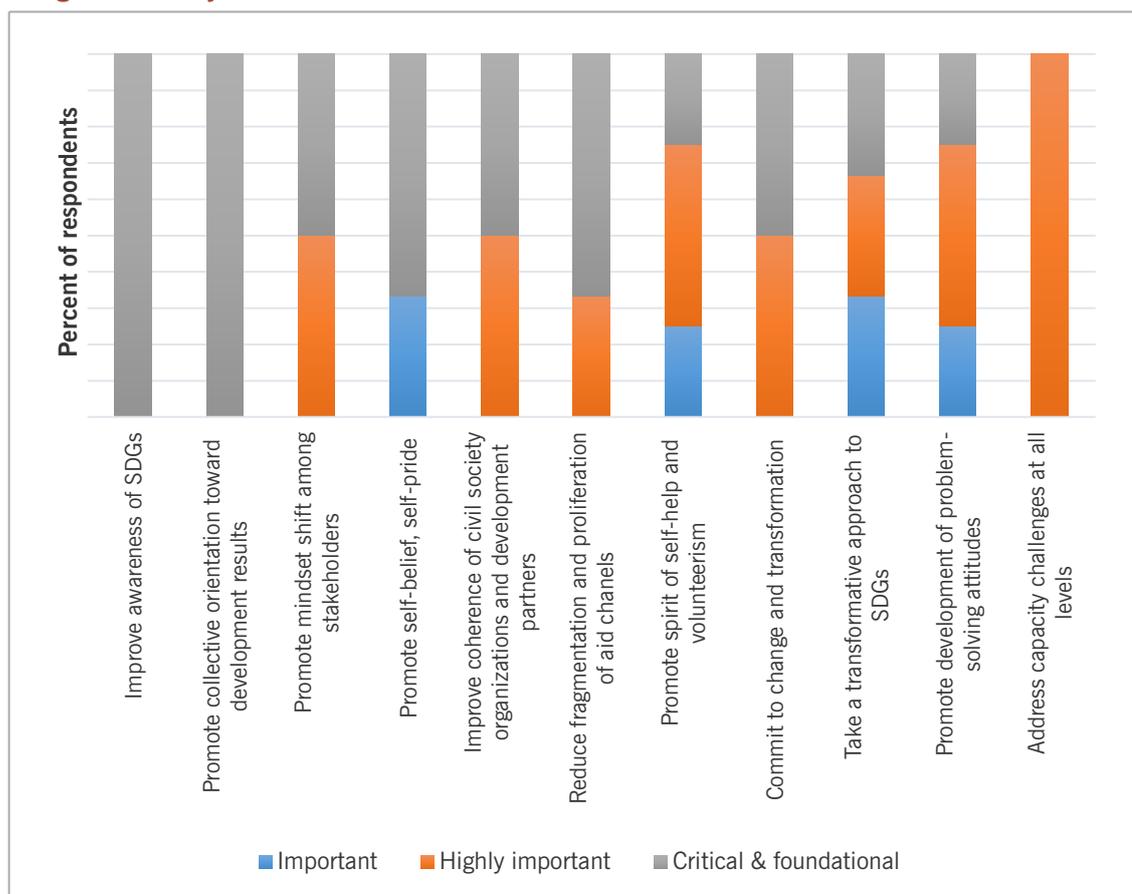
Source: Interviews with bilateral development partners.

The SDGs are an opportunity for nonofficial stakeholders to revisit their roles in development and to shift their perspective to viewing SDGs as a business opportunity. This may be challenging for them, as earning profits is not their primary objective. But they need to adapt to these changes if other stakeholders do so, because it may affect their relevance and value added. Such a mindset shift also has implications for the availability of funding from partners.

In response to questions about what nonofficial stakeholders plan to do differently, most

respondents reported that it is critical for them to create awareness and a better understanding of the SDGs agenda at all levels and to promote a collective orientation toward development results (figure 5.13). Most also indicated that it is highly important or critical and foundational to adopt a transformative approach to the SDGs agenda. There was also agreement on the need to address capacity challenges at all levels and to improve the cohesion of programs among civil society organizations, development partners, and governments.

**Figure 5.13 Nonofficial stakeholders' perceptions of the importance of doing things differently**



Source: Interviews with bilateral development partners.

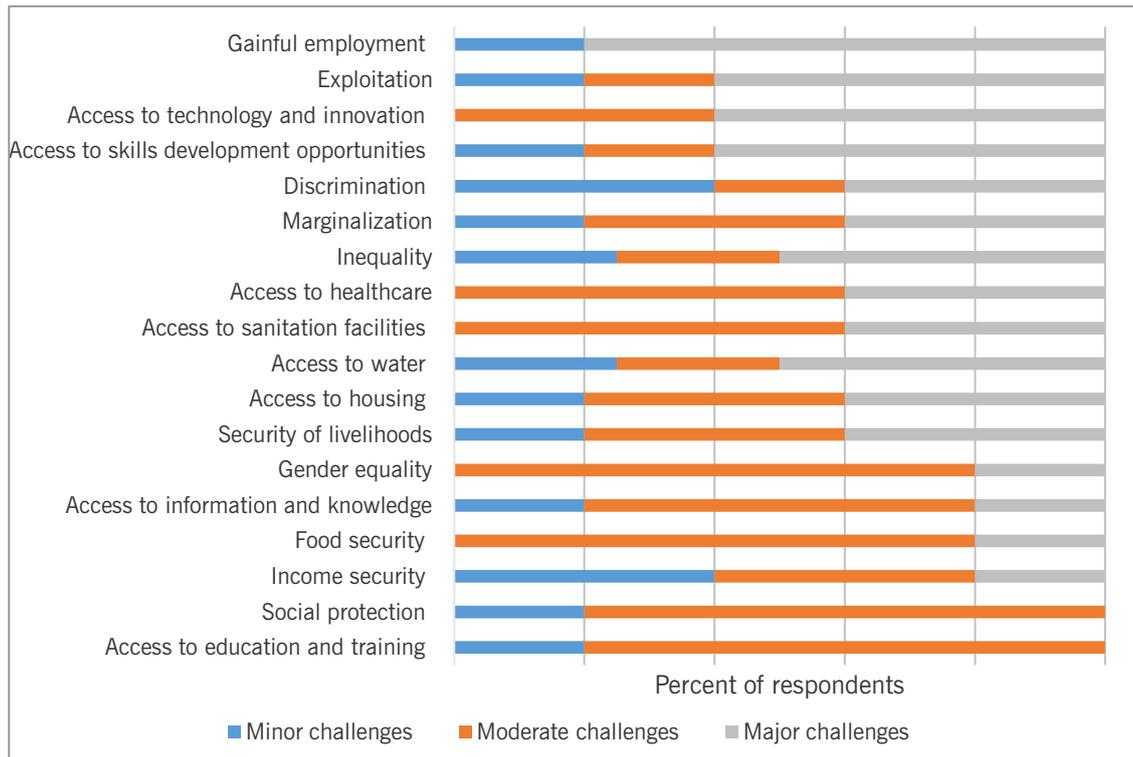
The position of nonofficial stakeholders on the transformation agenda is in sharp contrast to the views of bilateral partners, which tend to fund programs and projects that they consider as priorities. To the extent that the survival of nonofficial stakeholders depends heavily on donor funding, this difference may pose a serious challenge.

other actors, advocate for the components that they have identified as important, including the promotion of self-belief and self-pride among the citizenry, the promotion of a spirit of self-help and volunteerism, and the development of problem-solving attitudes to enhance a transformative approach to the SDGs agenda.

There is broad consensus across all stakeholders on a broad set of agenda items. But if the transformation agenda, which is often identified as an African priority, is going to be advanced, African governments must make it a priority to set aside funding for civil society organizations. The promotion of change and transformative capacities should be the mainstay of discussions with all partners. A “coalition of the willing” could be formed of representatives of government, UN agencies, nonofficial stakeholders, and other partners who believe in transformation. This will happen only if civil society organizations, like

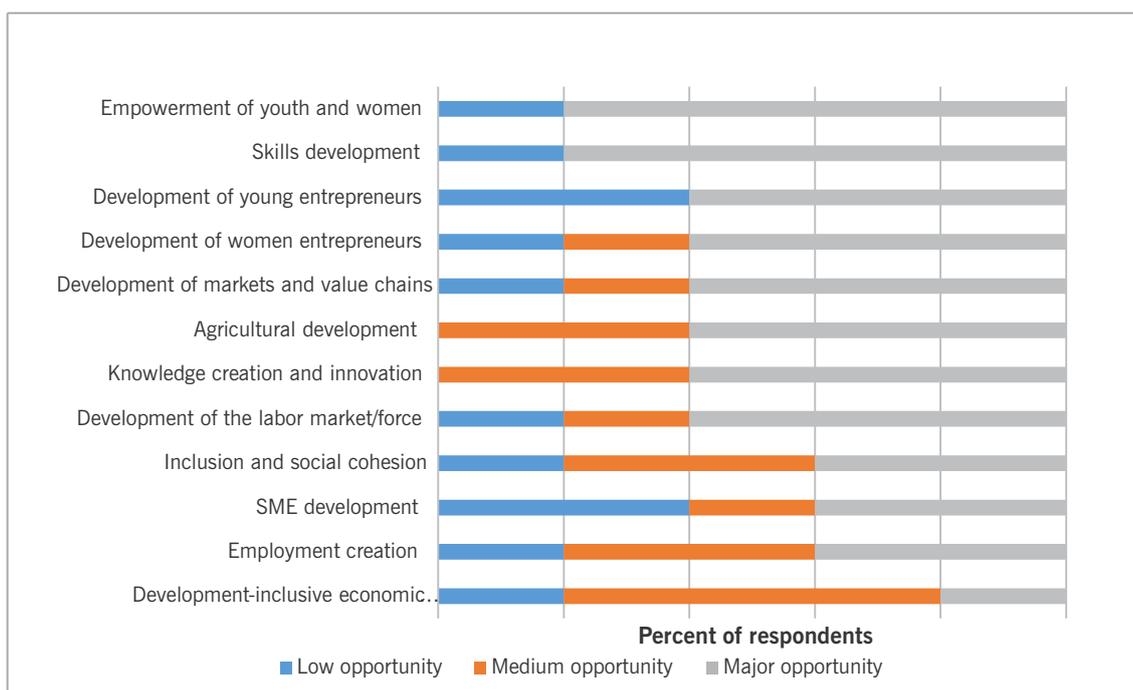
### Perceptions of Youth and Women's Groups

Youth and women's groups cite inadequate access to employment, technology and innovation, and skills development as the major challenges facing their constituencies (figure 5.14). Other challenges include exploitation, inequality, and inadequate access to water. Moderate challenges include inadequate access to education and training, healthcare, sanitation, and information and knowledge, as well as food security and gender equality issues.

**Figure 5.14 Youth and women's groups' perceptions of development challenges**

Source: Interviews with bilateral development partners.

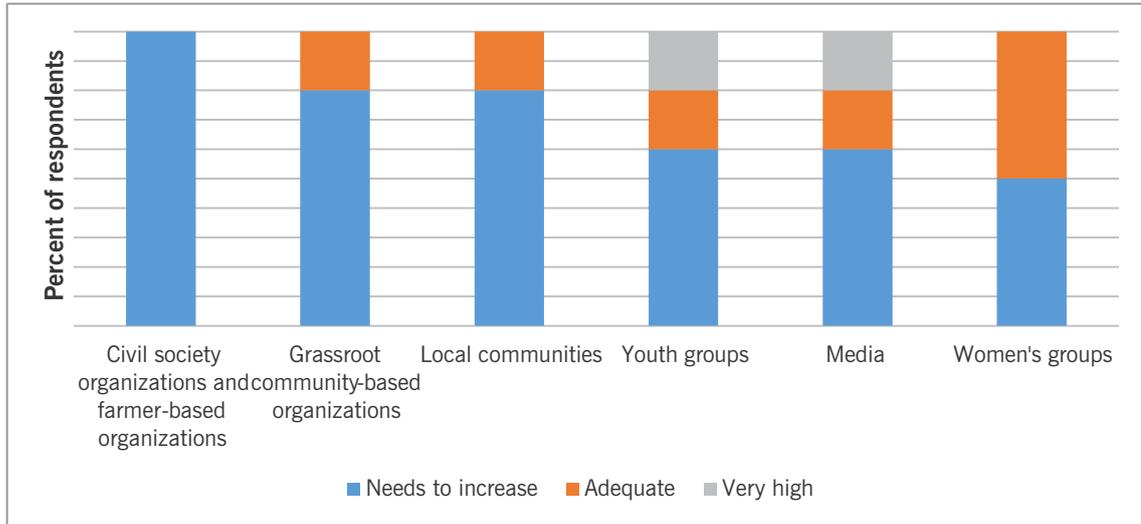
These two groups approach the SDGs with enormous optimism. Most respondents believe that the SDGs represent a major opportunity for the empowering youth and women and developing their skills (figure 5.15). A large percentage of respondents believe that the SDGs represent a major opportunity for the development of young entrepreneurs, including women; the development of markets, value chains, and agriculture; the creation of knowledge; and the development of the labor market and workforce.

**Figure 5.15 Youth and women's groups' perceptions of development opportunities created by the Sustainable Development Goals**

Source: Interviews with bilateral development partners.

Respondents also indicated that the level of ownership, engagement, and participation by key stakeholders needs to increase (figure 5.16).

**Figure 5.16 Ownership, engagement, and participation in the Sustainable Development Goals by youth and women's groups**

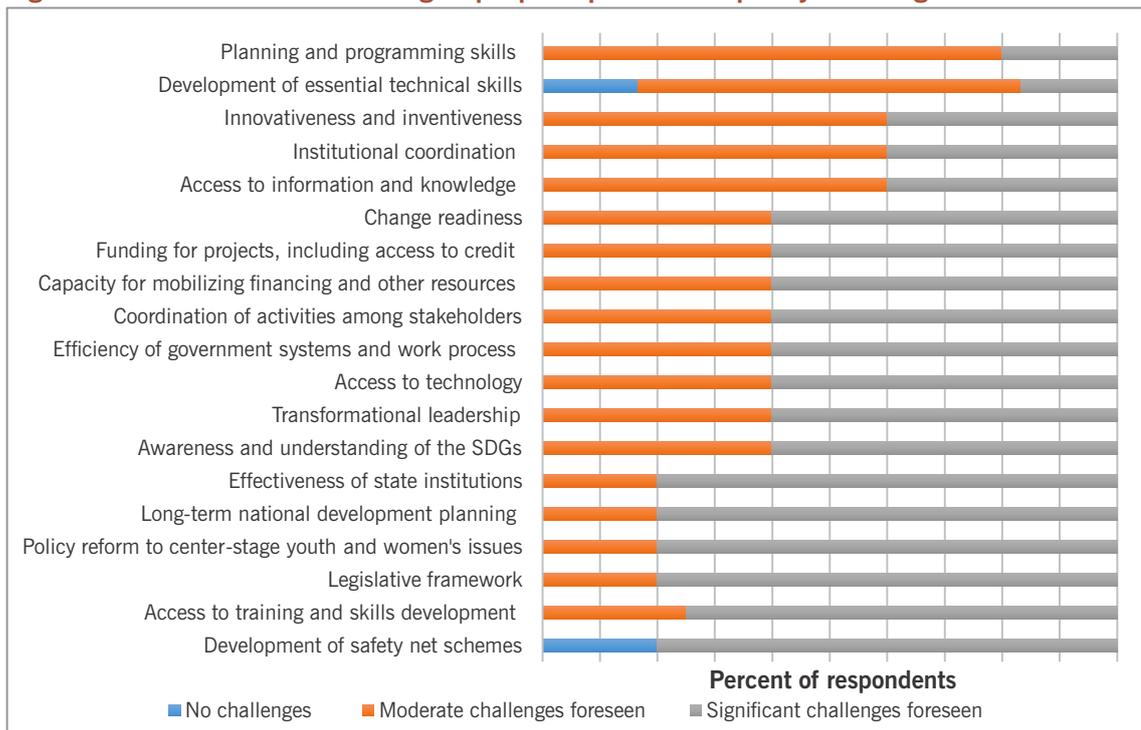


Source: Interviews with bilateral development partners.

Eighty percent of respondents cited the development of essential technical skills, including planning and programming skills, as the major capacity need (figure 5.17). Very significant challenges include the legislative framework and policy reforms that bring youth and women's issues center stage, as well as long-term development planning and the effectiveness of state institutions.

The next set of challenges, cited by about 60 percent of respondents, includes institutional coordination, coordination of activities among stakeholders, capacity for mobilizing financing and other resources, funding for projects, change readiness, and access to information and knowledge. Most of these challenges relate to the creation of an environment in which youth and women can thrive.

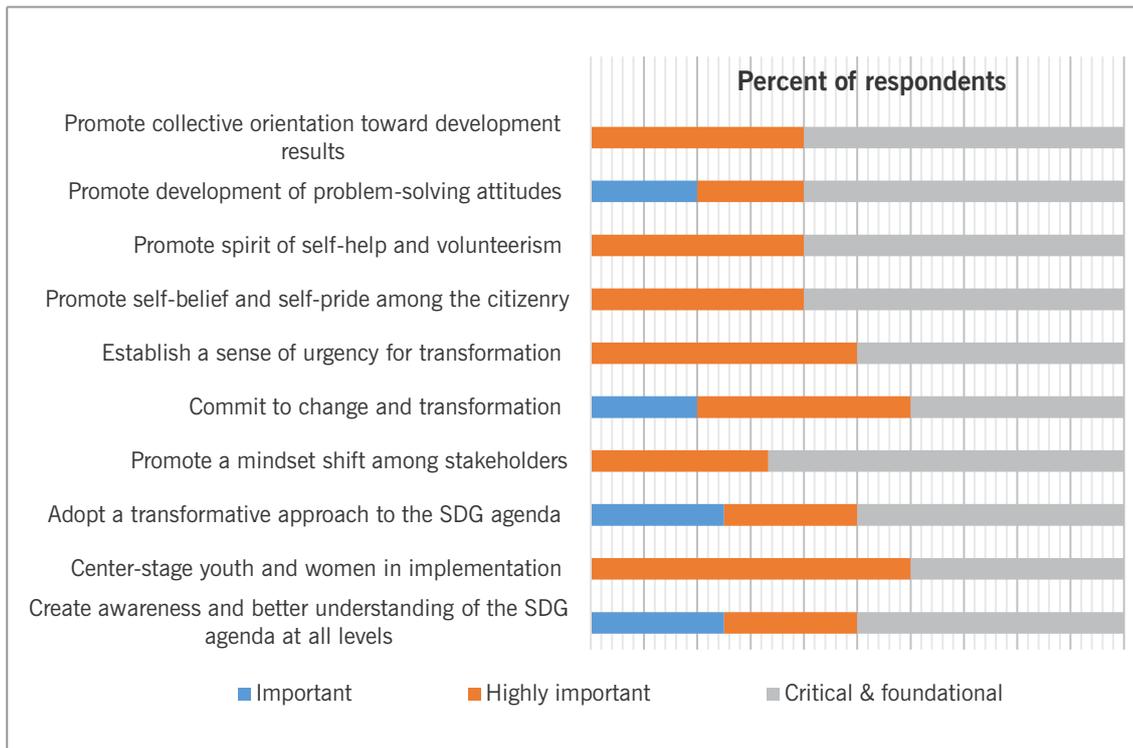
**Figure 5.17 Youth and women's groups' perceptions of capacity challenges**



Source: Interviews with bilateral development partners.

Most youth and women respondents indicated that it is critical and foundational or highly important to promote a collective orientation toward development results and a spirit of self-help and volunteerism (figure 5.18). Most respondents also indicated that it is highly important to put the role of youth and women in implementation at center stage, to commit to change and transformation, and to promote the development of problem-solving attitudes. These responses indicate the importance of owning the development agenda and developing the capacity to deliver on its promises and take advantage of its opportunities.

**Figure 5.18 Youth and women's groups' perceptions of the importance of doing things differently**



Source: Interviews with bilateral development partners.

## Key Messages and Recommendations

The following are some key messages and recommendations for improving implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063, based on the perceptions of stakeholders:

- Most government institutions perceive the SDGs as a medium to high opportunity for infrastructure development, agricultural development, and industrialization as well as a medium to high opportunity for development of value chains, markets, and small and medium-size enterprises.
- Government institutions see a need for training in critical thinking, strategic planning, results-based management, resource mobilization, and coordinating capacities.
- Most countries lack the capacity to implement programs. The problem is exacerbated by the lack of coordination of activities by stakeholders and the lack of commitment to innovation. A mindset shift is needed to introduce a new approach to change readiness, reflected by a commitment to do things differently.
- African countries favor using budget support grants disbursed and managed within their own systems, an idea that bilateral partners have not warmed to.
- There is a dichotomy between what African development partners identify as priorities and what they are prepared to support. This exposes the challenge of ownership of the development agenda by African countries. African countries need to find ways to make their partners more responsive to their priorities and preferred approaches.

- The private sector sees the SDGs as an opportunity for social sector–related actors; it does not perceive the SDGs as offering business opportunities. A shift in mindset is needed to attract private sector participation.
- African governments must set aside funding for civil society organizations to help them embrace a new approach to development. Civil society organizations need to shed the animosity that has characterized their relationship and replace it with joint pursuit of an agenda on which they agree.
- The major development challenges faced by youth and women in Africa include lack of adequate access to employment, technology and innovation, and skills development opportunities. The SDGs represent a major opportunity to develop these groups' skills and empower them—by supporting them in becoming entrepreneurs, developing markets and value chains, creating knowledge, and developing the labor market and labor force.

## Chapter 6

# Key Capacities for Implementing the SDGs in the Framework of Agenda 2063: Evidence from Country Case Studies

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There is a growing awareness that capacity development is central to the efforts of African countries to successfully implement their development agendas, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs; ACBF 2016d). Successful implementation of the post-2015 development agenda will require more responsive institutions and greater capacities for state and nonstate actors (including civil society and private sector) to achieve the economic, environmental, and social dimensions of sustainable development that are highlighted in the SDGs.

Key responsibility for achievement of the SDGs within the context of Agenda 2063 lies with national governments, which are the focal point for SDG implementation. To realize the SDGs, the need is clear for well-functioning and well-managed institutions and adequate human capacities at the national level. This chapter highlights the key capacities that are needed, using the experience of the 11 country case studies that have informed this report: Algeria, Cameroon, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, and Zambia. These countries are drawn from the five regions of Africa and represent different size economies, languages, and access to the sea.

Key stakeholders engaged include the countries' coordinating ministries (such as ministries of planning and finance), sector or thematic ministries and departments in charge of SDGs, nonstate actors (such as civil society organizations, youth, women's group, and the private sector), development partners, and selected grassroots organizations.

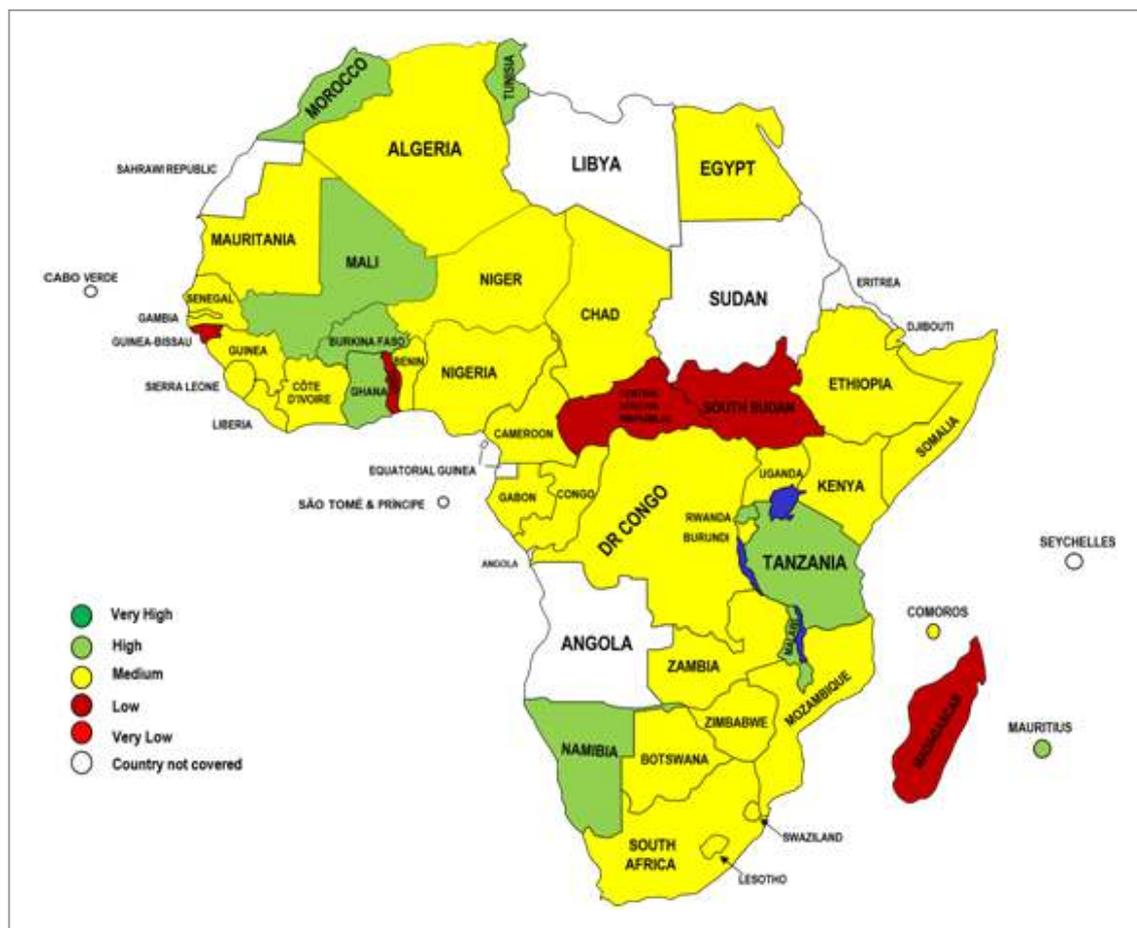
### Landscape of Capacity Development in Africa: *Africa Capacity Report 2019*

*Africa Capacity Report 2019* provides an overview of the state of capacity development in 46 African countries (ACBF 2019). It focuses on the key determinants and components of capacity for development while presenting lessons learned on capacity development. It maps Africa's capacity development landscape with the goal of sharpening the focus on capacity deficits as a major development policy issue. The report and its Africa Capacity Index (ACI) offer inputs for decisions on what to finance to develop capacity, on the regulatory and institutional reforms needed to better support public–private partnerships in capacity investment and building, and on investment to strengthen public administration. Together, the report and the ACI spotlight the importance of political will in enhancing social inclusion and development.

*Africa Capacity Report 2019* shows that countries are putting in place policies and strategies such as national development plans, strategies, and visions. Results have generally been satisfactory, driven largely by a strong policy environment for capacity building. The ACI ranges from 24.0 for Guinea-Bissau to 70.8 for Mauritius (map 6.1). There are no countries at the very low (0–<20) or very high (80–100) levels of capacity. Ten countries are in the high bracket and five are in the low bracket. Most countries (67.4 percent) surveyed have just medium capacity, 21.7 percent are in the high bracket, and 10.9 percent are in the low bracket (ACBF 2019).



Map 6.1 Country rating on the Africa Capacity Index 2019, by bracket



Note: Scores range from 0 to 100: 0–<20 very low, 20–<40 low, 40–<60 medium, 60–<80 high, and 80 and above very high.

Source: ACBF 2019.

A key recommendation of *Africa Capacity Report 2019* is that countries need to show more commitment and support for capacity development initiatives. Political leadership is important for arriving at a convergence of views on how to develop capacity in a country. Capacity development is key to the achievement of the SDGs and Agenda 2063, the pillars of Africa's effective transformation.

Capacity, more than financial resources, is the missing link to effective implementation of projects and programs spelled out in continental, regional, and country development strategies (ACBF 2016b, 2016c, 2016d). Promoting sustainable economic growth, fostering private sector development, and facilitating access to basic services all depend on adequate institutional and human capacity.

The capacity challenges facing the continent exist at three levels. At the continental level, the challenges include the inability of the African Union to effectively coordinate the

continental development agenda. At the regional level, the regional economic communities are not yet serving as the pillars of the continental development architecture. At the country level, the main challenges are insufficient operational capacity for managing development (inadequate institutional and human capacity, loose systems and work processes, and low access to information and knowledge); insufficient change and transformative capacities (transformative leadership, change readiness, positive mindset shifts, availability and openness to information and communication technology and technological change); insufficient composite capacity (for strategic planning, results-based management, process facilitation, driving change, organization and coordination); and the short supply of critical technical and sector-specific skills, especially for implementing the 10 flagship projects included in the First Ten Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 (ACBF 2016b, 2016c, 2016d).

## Critical Capacities Needed for Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals: Overview of Evidence from the 11 Countries

Countries were asked to highlight the key capacity challenges they face in implementing the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

Responses came mainly from experts and advisors of ministries of finance and planning. More specifically:

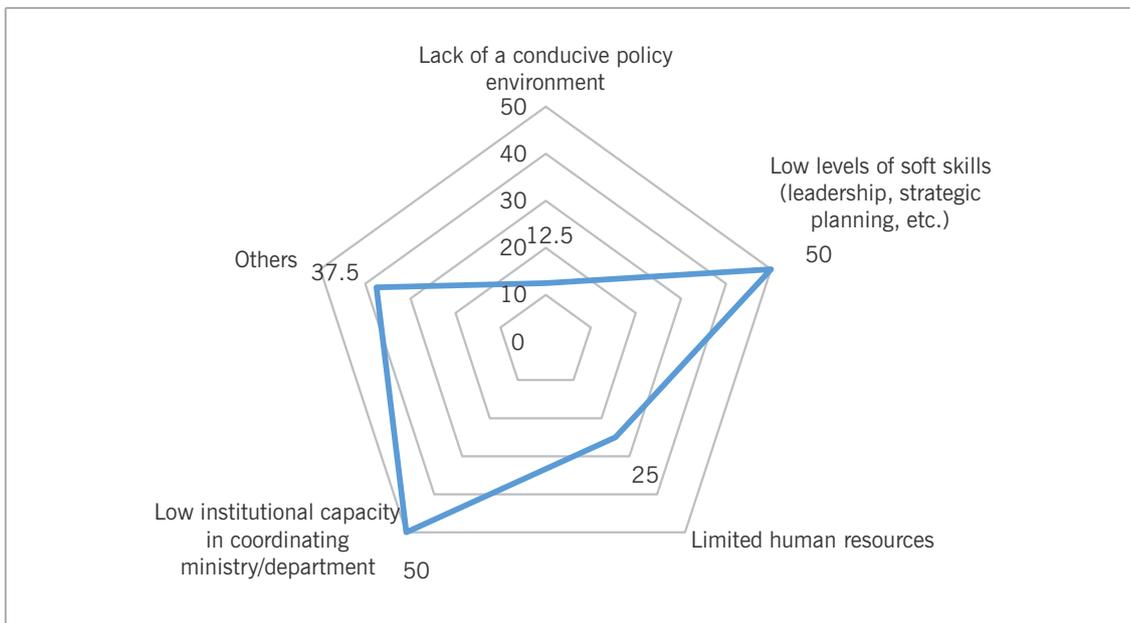
- Division of forecasting and policies.

- Division of planning.
- Division of economic development.
- Department of international cooperation.

### Main capacity challenges

The top challenges identified include lack of a conducive policy environment, low levels of soft skills (such as leadership and strategic planning), low institutional capacity in SDGs and Agenda 2063 coordinating ministries and departments, inadequate data, and limited human resources (figure 6.1).

**Figure 6.1 Main capacity challenges to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 in the 11 case study countries**



Source: Interviews with experts from ministries for finance, planning, and economic development

Of the 11 countries, four identified issues related to soft skills and to institutional capacity for coordination of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 as a key challenge to successful implementation (see figure 6.1). Soft skills are the ability to internalize values and principles, build and sustain relationships, and win commitment and loyalty. They include operational capacities (culture, values, leadership, implicit knowledge, and relational skills such as negotiation, teamwork, and facilitation) and adaptive capacities (problem-solving skills, confidence, empowerment, change management, adaptation, and self-reflection). Increasingly,

capacity in soft skills are recognized as being as important as capacity in hard skills in influencing change. And soft skills may be more enduring, living on in an organization's sense of identity, while hard skills depend on the current staffing of an organization. Coordination is vital to successful implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 as it ensures that each ministry, department, and agency delivers on its mandate, avoiding duplication of effort and waste of resources.

Box 6.1 describes how Nigeria is mainstreaming the SDGs into national policies and plans.



### Box 6.1 Mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals in national policies and plans in Nigeria

The Government of Nigeria has taken several initiatives to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in national policy, planning, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation frameworks. These include development of the SDGs Transitioning Strategy and Action Plan, preparation of a Millennium Development Goals endpoint report in 2015, and development of national SDG baseline indicators. Strategies have also been prepared for addressing data challenges by conducting an SDGs data mapping and developing a data supply framework and a data bond to be signed by all ministries, departments, and agencies. The SDGs have been integrated into federal and state level development plans. In addition, Nigeria is rolling out a national advocacy program, scaling up implementation of SDGs best practices (programmatic interventions) such as the Conditional Grant Scheme, revitalizing and strengthening institutional capacities for SDG implementation, enhancing domestic resource mobilization, conducting an SDGs needs assessment and policy analysis, and establishing or strengthening smart partnerships with the private sector, civil society organizations, and development partners for SDG implementation.

The president has appointed a senior special assistant to the president on SDGs who is responsible for ensuring coherence among development policies, plans, and strategies horizontally and vertically. Similarly, an Inter-Ministerial Committee on the SDGs has been established, along with operational guidelines for coordinated engagement with ministries, departments, and agencies. Similar structures have been established at subnational levels. To fully harness available resources and effectively engage other stakeholders, a Private Sector Advisory Group and a Donors' Forum on the SDGs have been launched. The Civil Society Organizations Advisory Group on SDGs is already working to achieve some SDGs targets and has made particularly large strides on inclusive education.

*Source: Federal Republic of Nigeria 2017.*

Nearly a quarter of the countries (two) see inadequate human resources as a key challenge to achievement of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. The shortage is also recognized as a major constraint to Africa's progress in science, technology, and innovation. Of the surveyed countries, three view as major challenges the lack of complete agreement on some of the goals such as gender equality, the lack of financial resources, and the complexity of the indicators.

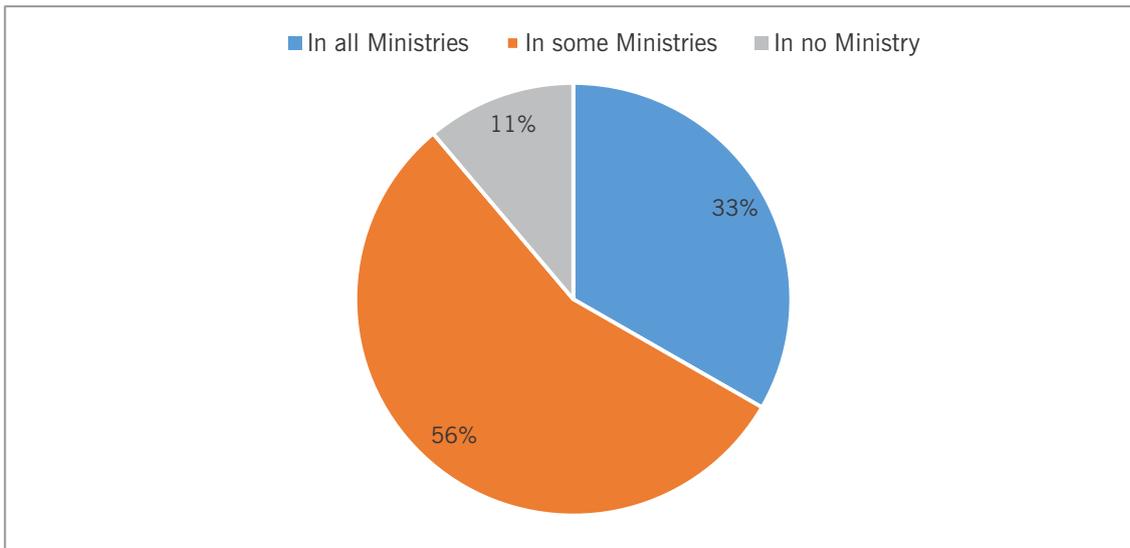
#### **Challenges of adequate staffing and tools**

The socioeconomic transformation expected through implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 will be possible only if African countries have adequate human resources. That requires enhancing skills for implement-

ing, monitoring, and evaluating progress toward the SDGs and Agenda 2063; boosting productivity and competitiveness; exploiting technological innovations; and creating jobs. Also important are enhancing citizens' voice to bring about improvements in the quality of public services and the efficiency of public spending and providing safety nets to protect the poorest against economic and social shocks.

A large majority of the countries (eight of the 11) are working to ensure adequate staff in each government ministry responsible for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. Some 33 percent of the countries have such staff in all focal ministries, and 56 percent have dedicated staff in some focal ministries

**Figure 6.2 Sample countries with adequate staff responsible for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation systems for the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063**



Source: Interviews with experts from ministries for finance, planning, and economic development.

While the SDGs and Agendas 2063 have well-defined indicators and targets, national guides are needed to help countries monitor and evaluate implementation. More than half the countries surveyed have developed such a guide that defines indicators and sets the method and frequency of data collection (figure 6.3). However, a large number of countries still lack appropriate guides.

## Individual Country Capacity Challenges

### **Algeria: Lack of a conducive policy environment**

The main challenge faced by Algeria in implementing the SDGs and Agenda 2063 is the lack of a conducive policy environment. Security issues and economic mismanagement (box 6.2) are at least partly to blame. Creating a conducive policy environment to reduce poverty would include developing a more diverse economy, moving toward an industry- and service-based economy, and installing transformative leadership to improve the quality of education and strengthen skills for jobs, enhance health infrastructure and access, and improve governance.

### **Box 6.2 Government management of the economy: Evidence from Afrobarometer**

Algerians' assessments of the government's overall management of the economy, according to Afrobarometer, grew more negative between 2013 and 2015, as the proportion of citizens who described it as fairly bad or very bad rose from 38 percent to 63 percent. On a range of other economic issues, Algerians' assessments of the government's performance improved somewhat, but ratings were still strongly negative. About two-thirds of Algerians said that the government was performing fairly or very badly on improving the living standards of the poor (63 percent, down from 77 percent in 2013), creating jobs (63 percent, down from 70 percent), keeping prices low (70 percent, down from 74 percent), and narrowing income gaps (63 percent, down from 76 percent).

Source: Isbell 2017.

### **Cameroon: Institutional capacity challenges**

The main challenges likely to impede successful implementation of the SDGs in Cameroon are weak institutional capacities and a shrinking government sector. Many state-sponsored institutions are ineffective, and public services such as healthcare and education are now administered in part by development agencies and nongovernmental organizations. Increasing privatization of services such as electricity has further reduced the role of government. Civil society organizations and business groups that can advocate for better government institutions exist, but they are weak (box 6.3).

#### **Box 6.3 Timidity of interest groups and institutions for service delivery in Cameroon**

Cameroon does not have many civil society organizations and business groups. It has only a few organizations committed to political transformation, most of them church-related and human rights organizations. The interests of the rural population and of women are underrepresented within these organizations as well as in government. The powerful business association, the Groupement Inter Patronal du Cameroun, continues to criticize government policies vocally. Also, consumer protection has become a critical issue for civil society organizations.

*Source: Bertelsmann Stiftung 2016.*

### **Egypt: Inefficient use of human and financial resources**

Over the past decade, Egypt has suffered from inefficient use of the human, financial, and organizational resources necessary for successful implementation of the SDGs. Misguided economic policies provided jobs within the public administration instead of the private sector, but without achieving any commensurate improvement in public services. This has resulted in a substantial proportion of young people who are deeply socially committed but discouraged and frustrated. While institutional arrangements to monitor government expenditures have improved in recent years, more efforts are needed to efficiently use human, financial, and organizational resources to deliver on the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

### **Equatorial Guinea: Weak governance of natural resources**

Equatorial Guinea is facing a major challenge related to the use of its oil wealth to achieve sustainable and more inclusive growth. The public sector has been inefficient in both the

formulation and implementation of public policies for governance of natural resources and the accomplishment of its redistribution mission. Transparency in public resource management is limited by a lack of reliable and updated statistics. These shortcomings also hamper the monitoring of budget execution and the assessment of the effectiveness of public policies and their impact, notably on the poor.

### **Kenya: Inadequate disaggregated data**

A key challenge that could affect implementation of the SDGs in Kenya is related to inadequately disaggregated data. Monitoring progress in SDG implementation may be impeded by weak database management and the lack of data disaggregated by sex, age, social group, disability status, income, and geography and at the subnational level. While Kenya is working to improve the situation (see box 6.4), the lack of high-quality, timely, and reliable data on specific groups such as homeless, older persons, orphans and vulnerable children remains an impediment to adequate analysis of progress.

#### **Box 6.4 Kenya's national statistics system has limited statistical capacity**

The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics is responsible for supervising and coordinating the national statistics system, including data and statistics knowledge-sharing, technology, and partnerships. The National Bureau of Statistics is stymied in these efforts by limited statistical capacity, inadequate technology, and lack of innovation. To establish an effective framework for monitoring and evaluating progress toward achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, Kenya's national statistics system must be expanded to incorporate data on nonstate actors and must adopt new data collection tools and technologies. Consequently, it is crucial that the statistics bureau receive technical and financial support to effectively supervise and coordinate the national statistics system.

*Source: Kenya Ministry of Devolution and Planning 2017.*

***Liberia: Low levels of soft skills (leadership, strategic planning) and low institutional capacity***

Some of the key challenges Liberia faces in implementing the SDGs are inadequate soft skills and institutional capacities. Liberia's protracted civil war (1989–2003) not only damaged pre-war institutional and human capacities but also blocked development of the new capacities required to kick-start and sustain the country's development. Learning centers, such as universities, polytechnics, training colleges, and secondary and primary schools, which are vital to national capacity development, were also destroyed, suggesting the urgent need for effective leadership that can support restoration and sustainability.

***Mauritius: Capacity building and financial resources***

Key challenges affecting the implementation of the SDGs in Mauritius are limited financial resources and capacity building interventions. However, the government is working to re-position Mauritius as a gateway for investment between Asia and Africa, while diversifying its export markets. Those efforts, expected to boost the wider economy and the position of the country as a regional services hub for Africa, are aligned with the objectives in the SDGs and Agenda 2063. However, they need to be accompanied by well-targeted capacity development interventions and adequate financial resources.

***Nigeria: Capacity building on data and statistics***

A key area in which Nigeria needs support as it races to implement the SDGs is data. Capacity building in information and performance management is urgently needed to support both the SDGs implementation agenda and the attendant process of accountability and tracking of performance. Better data and data management would also improve efficiency in performance accountability and attainment of the nationally agreed SDGs targets for 2030.

***Rwanda: Securing domestic financing***

Securing financing is one of Rwanda's biggest challenges in ensuring successful implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. While the government uses most of the available

financial resources fairly efficiently, domestic financial resources are scarce. Domestic revenues barely suffice to cover the salaries of state employees, with all other budget lines, around half of the total, financed by foreign aid. Given Rwanda's lack of natural resources and landlocked position, the government is undertaking efforts to improve the conditions for the development of a diversified, market-based and competitive economy to help generate revenues.

***Zambia: Limited human resources and low institutional capacity***

Some of the major institutional challenges include weak and inadequate administrative rules, regulations, and standards. Zambia is also facing challenges associated with inadequate statistics and document archiving, which are linked to limited human resources. Such weak capacities reflect in part the poor quality of education and the low enrollment in secondary school and tertiary institutions.

## **Countries' Preparedness to Implement the Sustainable Development Goals**

The 11 countries were assessed on their preparedness for implementing the SDGs based on their progress on the following tools and initiatives: awareness-raising on the SDGs, tools to integrate the SDGs into national development plans, review mechanism for the SDGs, capacity development plan for effective implementation of the SDGs, participation of key stakeholders in implementation of the SDGs, and capacity strengthening of national statistical agencies on issues related to the SDGs and Agenda 2063 (table 6.1).

The assessment shows that Egypt, Kenya, Mauritius, and Zambia have largely put in place the tools and initiatives needed for successful implementation of the SDGs, while Algeria, Cameroon, Liberia, Nigeria, and Rwanda are not yet fully prepared.

The capacity strengthening of national statistical offices requires special attention to enhancing statistics development systems and data-gathering plans to meet the reporting requirements of the SDGs and Agenda



2063. With adequate data for only about 38 percent of the SDGs indicators (table 6.2), African countries still have a considerable distance to go to align national development plans with the SDGs and Agenda 2063. To ensure proper monitoring and evaluation as

well as effective implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063, countries need to generate, as soon as possible, census survey and administrative data, which are the main sources of data used to inform the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

**Table 6.1 Sustainable Development Goals implementation preparedness in 11 sample countries**

Country	Awareness raising initiatives on SDGs	Tools for integrating SDGs into national development plan	Integrated and inclusive follow-up and review mechanism for SDGs	Capacity development plan for effective implementation of SDGs	Initiative for multi-stakeholders' participation in implementation of SDGs	Initiative to increase the capacities of national statistical agencies regarding SDGs and Agenda 2063
Algeria	Preparation on-going	No	No	Preparation on-going	No	No
Cameroon	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Egypt	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Equatorial Guinea	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kenya	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Liberia	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Mauritius	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nigeria	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rwanda	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Senegal	—	—	—	—	—	—
Zambia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

— Indicates no responses.

Source: Authors, compiled from experts from ministries for finance, planning, and economic development and from Africa Capacity Report 2018.

**Table 6.2 Sustainable Development Goal data availability on African countries**

Sustainable Development Goal	Data availability by indicator type			Number of indicators <sup>a</sup>	Percentage of indicators with data
	Sustainable development	Additional	Total		
1	3	3	6	12	25.0
2	8	4	12	14	51.7
3	18	7	25	26	69.2
4	6	3	9	11	54.5
5	3	1	4	14	21.4
6	2	4	6	11	18.2
7	4	0	4	6	66.7
8	10	1	11	17	58.8
9	8	1	9	12	66.7
10	5	0	5	11	45.5
11	1	1	2	15	6.7
12	2	1	3	14	14.3
13	0	0	0	9	0.0
14	1	0	1	7	14.3
15	6	0	6	14	42.9
16	6	5	11	23	26.1
17	8	3	11	25	32.0
Total	91	33	124	241	37.8

a. Eleven indicators are repeated.

Source: AUC et al. (2017).

## Key Messages and Recommendations

The following are some messages and recommendation on key capacities for implementing the SDGs in the framework of Agenda 2063 in the 11 sample countries:

- African countries are still not yet ready to fully execute and deliver on the SDGs agreed in 2015, mainly because of human and institutional capacity challenges, as well as the lack of preparedness, particularly in collecting, analyzing, and storing data.
- The key capacity challenges for implementing the SDGs include the lack of a conducive policy environment, the low levels of soft skills (such as leadership and strategic planning), the low institutional capacity in SDGs and Agenda 2063 coordinating bodies, inadequate data availability, and limited human resources.
- Capacity challenges facing some countries include tools to integrate the SDGs into national development plans, participation of all key stakeholders in implementation of the SDGs, mobilization of adequate financial resources, and capacity strengthening of national statistical agencies on issues related to the SDGs and Agenda 2063.
- Countries need to quickly address the leadership and human capital challenges by mounting awareness raising campaigns, investing in training executives and leaders on issues related to the SDGs, and integrating SDG-related issues in education and training materials and curricula.
- Institutional capacities also need to be strengthened as soon as possible to ensure effective coordination and delivery on the SDGs. One step countries could take would be to offer peer-learning and study tours in countries such as Nigeria that have already mainstreamed the SDGs into national development planning, ensuring horizontal and vertical coherence of development policies, plans, and strategies at the national and subnational levels.
- Bolstering data and statistical capabilities remains an urgent issue. A framework is needed that can encourage synergies between data providers and data collaboratives. Also important is increasing the number of staff in the African Union Commission Statistics Division in charge of statistical coordination in Africa and establishing capacity building programs in all countries for generating the necessary data for tracking progress on the SDGs.



## Chapter 7

# Key Messages and Recommendations for Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063

There is growing awareness of the centrality of capacity building to the efforts of African countries to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This study has recommended multiple steps for African governments and their stakeholders to follow to achieve the SDGs within the framework of Agenda 2063.

### Key Messages

- This exercise to identify the capacity building needs of African countries in order to achieve transformative growth through the SDGs has highlighted the kinds of challenges most African countries still face.
- The key capacity challenges in implementing the SDGs include the lack of a conducive policy environment, the low levels of soft skills (such as leadership and strategic planning), the low institutional capacity in SDGs and Agenda 2063 coordinating bodies, inadequate data availability, and limited human resources. Developing and strengthening capacity remain priorities for all African countries.
- Vicious cycles of poverty, limited capacity, and bad governance have marginalized Africa and stymied development. Previous efforts to build capacity have not delivered the desired results.
- Africa's transformation agenda requires strong leadership and political vision; effective national, regional, and sub-regional institutions; competent staff; and inclusive multistakeholder collaboration. Strengthening is needed across four capacity sets: operational capacity for organizations; change and transformative capacities; composite capacity; and critical, technical, and sector-specific skills.
- Effectiveness requires visionary and transformative leadership (including the ability to influence, inspire, and motivate

others to achieve or exceed their goals); knowledge; and accountability.

- Ownership and participation of stakeholders, including intended beneficiaries, is critical. Participation needs to increase significantly among academics, innovators, local communities, entrepreneurs, the business community, industrialists and manufacturers, small business owners, financiers and investors, service providers, youth and women's groups, grassroots organizations, and rural communities.
- Coordination and information sharing are key challenges. Harmonizing efforts can reduce the risk of duplication.
- As a follow-up to the findings from this report, capacity development plans need to be developed that address the capacity needs identified as critical for successful implementation of the SDGs.

### Recommendations

#### *General recommendations*

- Move the change readiness and transformation discourse to the fore of policy debates.
- View, present, and pursue the SDGs as opportunities for mutually beneficial partnerships for development. The SDGs represent opportunities for all stakeholders, especially governments, the private sector, and academia, to develop Africans' skills and empower youth and women.
- Create a skill-based network to allow African professionals abroad to mentor, train, and add to the skills base on the continent.
- Commit to think and act differently about development issues. A different mindset that emphasizes transformative leadership, change readiness, and innovativeness is likely to improve both coordination and policies.



- Own the development agenda, develop the capacity to deliver on its promises, and take advantage of the opportunities it presents.
- Give youth and women roles in contributing to activities to achieve specific SDG targets.
- Document country case studies and best practices, and try to establish the causes of capacity challenges. Strengthen the capacity to implement the SDGs by focusing on soft attitudinal skills as well as hard sector-specific skills.

#### ***Recommendations for governments***

- Take responsibility for overall coordination and governance of SDGs and Agenda 2063 processes by crafting supportive policies, programs, and institutions, including interministerial committees and interdepartmental working groups.
- Create broad awareness, build commitment, and promote a shift in mindset at all levels focused on delivery of the SDGs and Agenda 2063.
- Mobilize domestic resources and curb illicit financial flows to increase Africa's ownership and use of domestic resources.
- Conduct a skills gap audit to determine capacity needs at various levels, and match them against designated interventions.
- Break down the SDGs targets and indicators into short- and medium-term implementation plans that correspond with national government budgetary implementation cycles, such as medium-term expenditure frameworks.
- Develop the business case for active private sector engagement in SDG initiatives such as health infrastructure and education.
- Promote a healthier partnership with civil society organizations, support their establishment and growth, and explore ways of developing and enhancing their negotiation skills.
- Create an enabling environment that allows the private sector, youth and women's groups, and other stakeholders to benefit from the opportunities presented by implementation of the SDGs.
- Strengthen monitoring, evaluation, and information technology systems.

- Establish a framework for coordinating nonstate actors, to enhance their participation in achieving the SDGs.

#### ***Recommendations for development partners***

- Recognize that African countries need to own their development programs and appreciate the importance of additional resources to complement domestic resources in implementing the SDGs.
- Promote joint programming with other stakeholders within the framework of regional integration.
- Develop a shared understanding of joint programming, which would improve coordination of interventions to achieve the SDGs.

#### ***Recommendations for the private sector***

- Promote resource mobilization from the business sector through taxes and corporate social responsibility.
- Invest in innovation and new products.
- Facilitate a mindset shift that sees the private sector as implementation stakeholders.

#### ***Recommendations for nonofficial stakeholders***

- Build stronger national ownership by sensitizing all participants to the national relevance of the SDGs.
- Advocate and lobby for a new mindset that views the SDGs as a business opportunity.
- Adopt a transformational approach to development.
- Partner with governments on issues of mutual benefit.
- Contribute to monitoring and reviewing SDG and Agenda 2063 programs.
- Advocate for the inclusion of youth and women and consultations among governments and other stakeholders in SDG implementation.

#### ***Recommendations for academia***

- Develop curricula that equip students with critical technical skills.
- Focus on training in critical thinking, strategic planning, results-based management, resource mobilization, coordinating capacities, program development and

implementation, and risk management and mitigation.

- Improve training in transformative leadership, change readiness, innovativeness, and inventiveness as well as in the use of information and communication technology.
- Generate the data required to inform the monitoring and evaluation frameworks linked to the SDGs.
- Support the development of national indicators to track and measure progress on SDGs implementation.

***Recommendations for the African Capacity Building Foundation***

- Extend support to all African countries in conducting an in-depth assessment of national capacity imperatives for implementing the SDGs.
- In the spirit of regional integration, have each regional block conduct a compre-

hensive skills audit to identify deficits in the number of professionals required to promote an effective change and transformation agenda.

- Mainstream the mindset shift as part of all capacity development programs at country, regional, and continental levels, including education programs.
- Move the discussion of readiness and transformation to the fore of policy debates.
- Map national indicators, and integrate the proposed monitoring framework for the SDGs and Agenda 2063 goals.
- Emphasize the need for a new tripartite discussion platform involving academia, the private sector, and government on education priorities and employment.
- Initiate and coordinate an SDG capacity-strengthening program at the regional economic community and country levels.



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