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**Parallel panel meetings for in-depth review,
peer learning and dialogue on the sub-themes
of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable
Development: Strengthening the means of
implementation and the partnership for
sustainable development**

Background paper on strengthening the means of implementation and the partnership for sustainable development

I. Executive summary

1. Sustainable Development Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development) lies at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a cross-cutting Goal that spans the other 16 Goals. Innovative and universal partnerships are crucial to the achievement of Goal 17, and those partnerships should be complemented by Governments, the private sector and civil society in order to share and mobilize expertise, financial resources, knowledge and technology in support of the achievement of the Goals in every country.

2. In terms of resource mobilization for the Sustainable Development Goals, Africa requires between \$500 billion and \$1 trillion. While annual infrastructure spending amounts to about \$72 billion, there are annual gaps of between \$50 billion and \$93 billion. Achieving the goal of universal energy access by 2025 requires annual investments in the range of \$30 billion to \$55 billion. The current ratio of tax to gross domestic product (GDP) in Africa is low, providing scope for additional domestic revenue mobilization. In addition, measures to increase foreign direct investment (FDI), encourage remittances and strengthen capital markets in Africa have the potential to yield increased resources for sustainable development.

3. Furthermore, compared with other regions, Africa has the lowest ratio of government revenue to GDP. That ratio averaged 24.7 in Africa in the period 2000-2017. The tax-to-GDP ratio increased from about 12 per cent in 2000 to an average of 16 per cent in 2014, slightly above the global average of about 14 per cent in 2015. However, tax-to-GDP ratios in Africa remain low compared with much of Europe and Central Asia – estimated at about 20 per cent – which provides scope for domestic revenue growth by plugging loopholes in tax administration and tax avoidance. Official development assistance (ODA) remains an important source of international financing for development in Africa, especially the least developed countries. In the three decades to 2017, Africa was the largest recipient of ODA,

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accounting for 43 per cent of the total. In 2017, aid to Africa was estimated at about \$29 billion. However, many countries in the West do not fulfill their aid commitments owing to political reasons, changing domestic priorities, and austerity measures brought on by global economic and financial crises. To achieve these ambitions, it is necessary to strengthen governance, improve the environment for investment and increase private sector engagement in sustainable development.

4. With regard to science, technology and innovation, Africa has registered significant progress in technology development and transfer as assessed in terms of information and communication technologies and the import of capital goods. However, the pace has declined over the last two years as economic growth and fiscal space contracted owing to rising debt burden and growing fiscal deficits. Countries in Africa have entered into or agreed a significant number of partnerships for technology development and transfer with developing and developed countries, philanthropic organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to improving technology development and transfer in Africa. However, the number of science, technology and innovation cooperation agreements remains low.

II. Achievements

5. A brief overview of the current status, existing and emerging challenges and the actions being undertaken and/or the possible way to address the needs is provided. Highlights of progress and achievement to date are structured into the following five major themes: finance; technology; capacity-building; trade; and systemic issues.

A. Finance

6. The financing requirements for sustainable development in Africa are large, running from anywhere between \$500 billion and \$1 trillion. Annual investment requirements to realize the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa are estimated at \$600 billion to \$638 billion. Annual infrastructure spending in Africa – including transport infrastructure, energy, oil and gas, telecommunications, social infrastructure, water, mining and real estate – amounts to about \$72 billion, the sources of which are as follows: Governments in Africa, 65 per cent; the private sector, 25 per cent; countries that are not member States of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 6 per cent; and ODA, 4 per cent. However, the annual financing gaps for infrastructure are estimated at between \$50 billion and \$93 billion in the period 2010-2020. Achieving the goal of universal energy access by 2025 requires annual investments in the range of \$30 billion to \$55 billion.

7. In order to provide adequate and quality basic social services to a growing population and the infrastructure to meet its growth and investment needs, countries in Africa need to raise their tax revenue share of GDP to a minimum of 15 per cent. However, domestic resource mobilization capacity remains low and efforts scarce; more needs to be done to raise tax and non-tax revenues to levels that will promote economic growth of 7 per cent and above. Faster economic growth rates and more inclusive participation in the economic sectors will help raise domestic revenue.

8. Despite improvements, compared with other regions, Africa has the lowest ratio of government revenue to GDP, averaging 24.7 in the period 2000-2017. The tax-to-GDP ratio in Africa increased from about 12 per cent in 2000 to an average of 16 per cent in 2014, slightly above the global average of about 14 per cent in 2015. The trends show progress to higher tax bands, with 16 countries achieving tax-to-GDP ratios of more than 15 per cent in the period 2012-2015, compared with only 10 countries in the period 2000-2003. However, tax-to-GDP ratios in Africa remain low, compared with much of Europe and Central Asia, which are estimated at about 20 per cent. In addition, there are wide variations across the continent. During the period 2010-2015, at least seven countries had tax-to-GDP ratios of more than 20 per cent, but nine had tax-to-GDP ratios of under 10 per cent. Average tax-to-GDP ratios in Africa declined to 11 per cent on account of declining commodity prices. In addition,

fluctuations in commodity prices have adverse impacts on tax revenue in Africa, underscoring the need for diversification of the economies.

9. Mobilizing sufficient resources to meet the investment requirements of countries in Africa may entail improving tax and non-tax revenue management and stopping illicit financial flows in order to sustain economic growth and reduce poverty. Countries in Africa should focus on strengthening measures to increase domestic resource mobilization as the most assured source for funding national development. Prior to the establishment of the Sustainable Development Goals, the International Monetary Fund underscored the need to strengthen measures to mobilize domestic revenue for the purposes of investing in the basic social sectors and infrastructure necessary for the elimination of poverty in least developed countries.

10. Furthermore, ODA offers an essential channel for countries in Africa to mobilize financing for critical investments and to promote stability and inclusive growth. In the three decades to 2017, Africa has remained the largest recipient of ODA, accounting for 43 per cent of the total. In 2017, aid to Africa was estimated at about \$29 billion. However, its role in promoting inclusive and sustainable development as well as promoting good governance has been widely questioned. A long-standing United Nations target is that developed countries should devote 0.7 per cent of their gross national income to ODA. However, many countries in the West have not fulfilled their aid commitments owing to political reasons, changing domestic priorities, and austerity measures brought on by global economic and financial crises and thus, large reductions in aid budgets of the donor countries.

11. Adopted in July 2015, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development contains seven strategic actions to improve resource mobilization to meet the enormous financing needs for sustainable development. Those actions include measures to do the following:

- (a) Expand and improving domestic resource mobilization;
- (b) Promote domestic and international private business and financing;
- (c) Strengthen international cooperation;
- (d) Foster international trade as the engine for sustainable development;
- (e) Promote science, technology and innovation and capacity-building;
- (f) Address systemic issues such as good governance and prudent macroeconomic policies.

These measures are key to promoting economic growth and global stability, equitable and sustainable growth.

12. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, in line with the New Partnership for Africa's Development, highlights the need for a revitalized and enhanced global, multi-stakeholder partnership for sustainable development. Leveraging and pooling financial (and non-financial) resources from a diverse array of development partners play an important role in advancing sustainable development and meeting the targets of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Partnership is also vital for the implementation of regional and sectoral agendas, including the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (2016-2025), proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/293, and the Action Plan for Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa. For that purpose, an innovative multi-stakeholder partnership model to promote inclusive and sustainable industrial development – the Programme for Country Partnership – is being piloted by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. The Programme is aimed at accelerating inclusive and sustainable industrial development, in particular through the mobilization of financial resources for developing countries; the enhancement of North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation; and access to science, technology and innovation; and the promotion of the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries.

13. International remittances from the diaspora are another major source of foreign exchange earnings. In 2017, total remittances to Africa reached about \$77 billion, representing about 4.3 per cent of GDP. In West Africa, remittances have been increasing since, representing up to 6.4 per cent of GDP. In Southern Africa, however, remittances have been declining from a high of 6.7 per cent of GDP in 2000 to only 3 per cent in 2017. It is therefore imperative for countries in that region to establish measures to scale up the development impact of the inflows, including reducing transaction costs and strategically orienting the funds towards the productive sector and prioritized industries.

14. Opening up African economies to increased FDI is an important avenue for financing the continent's growth and development. However, for that to happen, countries in Africa need to improve their investment climate, including through better infrastructure, access to electricity and policies that make doing business easier. This requires securing adequate financing for public investments in energy and transport infrastructure to ease the costs of doing business and to spread the investments across geographical locations. In addition, commensurate investment policies and regulations are required to ensure that investments, products and services meet national and international standards, especially regarding health. Based on recent data, there has been a marked decline in FDI to Africa as a whole, from close to \$57 billion in 2015 to under \$42 billion in 2017. That represents a decline of 26 per cent, of which 22 per cent was in the period 2016-2017. That decline was in part precipitated by the subdued global commodity prices and muted growth rates on the continent. On a positive note, FDI inflows into Africa were projected to improve by 20 per cent in 2018 to \$50 billion, mostly as a result of accelerating regional integration efforts, expected recovery in commodity prices and investments in infrastructure projects.

15. Capital markets provide an important platform for mobilizing long-term capital through both debt capital markets and equity capital markets from domestic and external sources. Active capital markets are an important signal of economic and political stability and investment potential. Such markets can rally investors, including nationals living in the diaspora, to inject money into a country. Expansion of equity capital markets is a good indicator of recovering markets and confidence in the economy.

16. However, capital markets in Africa are still developing, exist in just a few countries and are not well connected with capital markets in the rest of the world. Africa accounts for under 1 per cent of the world's stock market capitalization. As of December 2018, only 29 countries had functional stock exchanges. Total market capitalization was about \$732 billion in 2014. In addition to their small size and limited liquidity, capital market activities are dominated by a few stock exchanges, especially those in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa.

17. Despite the low baselines, Africa is experiencing considerable growth of both volume and value of stock exchange transactions, the potential is large. Eurobond activity by corporates, sovereigns and supra-nationals in Africa has gained currency in the recent past and continues on the rise. In the period 2012-2017, there were 387 non-local currency debt transactions by African issuers on international markets, raising almost \$130 billion, of which 85 per cent was in United States dollars. Non-local currency, corporate-issued debt totaled \$7.5 billion, an increase of 68 per cent in terms of value. As of 2016, at least 45 countries had issued bonds and treasury bills amounting to a combined total of about \$216 billion. Private equity deals in Africa remain low, totaling only about \$4 billion in 2013. Growing trends in the bond markets will provide an important alternative for low-cost long-term capital and serve as a mechanism to transform savings into financing for the real sector.

18. Pension funds are becoming an important component of the financial sector as African economies expand and mature. This is an important opportunity for countries in Africa to tap into providing low-cost, long-term development financing.

B. Technology

19. Science, technology and innovation is an important issue that can provide countries with new opportunities to enhance economic, social and environmental development. In order to benefit from science, technology and innovation, it is necessary to optimize capacities and initiatives in that regard across national and thematic development platforms.

20. Increasingly, technology is playing a critical role in the economic and social development of Africa and helping to position the continent as a potential pole for global growth. For example, mobile technology alone is estimated to have connected 444 million inhabitants – either as unique subscribers or users of 744 million SIM cards, employed 3 million individuals, generated \$110 billion and contributed \$14 billion to public funding in sub-Saharan Africa in 2017. As a result, Internet penetration reached about 35 per cent as of December 2017, which in turn supports 135 unique mobile banking services in 39 countries, helping to connect the unbanked to financial services. Similarly, bioscience technological innovations have helped Africa to quickly and accurately diagnose and treat diseases such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, driving life expectancy in Africa to 61 for males and 64 for females in 2018.

21. The modernization and growth of African cities, diversification of exports and improvements in infrastructure and governance arrangements have been driven in part by technology development and transfer. For instance, when Africa was growing very fast, the import of capital goods (knowledge and machines) grew from about \$54 billion in 2005 to \$124 billion in 2014. Similar trends are observed in technology transfer indicators associated with trade and FDI, such as royalty payments and licensing fees; import of professional, technical and business services; and use of standards. Technology development and transfer is needed to build and enhance the performance of services for infrastructure, including information and communications technology, transport, energy and water; agriculture, including smart agriculture and hydroponics; health, including medical devices; and education, including laboratories and ultramodern libraries. Technology development and transfer also is required to address the challenges posed by climate change and unemployment, among others.

22. Partnerships are perhaps even more important now, in order to ensure that the gains recorded in the last few decades are not undone and that the gap in knowledge is not narrowed. Such technology partnerships could help Africa to invest in development and acquisition of new and emerging technologies to meet its international obligations, including in relation to the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, and its development aspirations, as reflected in Agenda 2063.

23. A number of national, corporate and philanthropic organizations have programmes that are designed to encourage technology development and transfer in Africa. However, the most cited funders of research and development in the area of technology include the United States Agency for International Development, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the World Health Organization, the European Commission, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the Danish International Development Agency, *Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), the Department for International Development, the International Development Research Centre and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. It appears that a number of emerging economies such as Brazil, China, India and the Russian Federation are not yet key partners in development and transfer of technology in Africa.

24. Another way of tracking partnership for technology transfer and development is through national reports of developed countries to the World Trade Organization to meet obligations on article 66.2 of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. That article calls on developed countries to provide incentives to their firms to facilitate technology transfer to least developed countries in order to enable them to build a sound and viable technological base. A total of 33 countries in Africa (out of 54) are classified as least developed countries. As a result, the reports of efforts by developed countries to meet their obligations under article

66.2 provides a good indicator for global partnerships for technology development and transfer to Africa.

25. In the 2030 Agenda, countries are called upon to pursue science and/or technology cooperation agreements. Given that national and regional agreements may be indefinite, take long to negotiate and are based on mutual interests in an identifiable field of technologies, the number of agreements may not change regularly. In fact, the number of international bilateral science and technology agreements between countries in Africa and the countries that are the main exporters of technology have not changed. For instance, the United States has over 50 such umbrella agreements, of which 6 are with countries in Africa – Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, South Africa and Tunisia. The European Union has 20 such agreements, including with the same countries in Africa as the United States, with the exception of Libya.

26. Many of the agreements establishing regional economic communities in Africa contain aspects of partnerships for technology development and transfer among their member States. Some communities have recently established independent agencies to promote technology development and transfer, including the East African Science and Technology Commission for the East African Community; others have developed policies on science, technology and innovation (e.g. the Economic Community of West African States). Similarly, the Southern African Development Community and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa have developed their own strategies for science, technology and innovation as part of their industrialization strategies.

27. At the continental level, the African Union has developed the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 to guide the continental initiatives for technology development and transfer. In November 2018, the African Scientific Research and Innovation Council was launched by the African Union Commission and its partners in Abuja. The Council is expected to serve as a continental platform for mobilizing research and innovation excellence, providing a sustainable space for promoting dialogue as well as enabling all key stakeholders to participate in science, technology and innovation activities.

28. As a member of the Inter-Agency Task Team on the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, ECA is promoting South-South cooperation and encouraging the participation of Africa in the science, technology and innovation forum of the Economic and Social Council. ECA will be organizing a regional forum on the same topic in April 2019 to further promote cooperation among member States on the subject. Furthermore, ECA organizes an annual review and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, which serves as an arena for promoting cooperation. The new ECA initiative on digital identification, economy and trade is being supported by the Indian Software Product Industry Round Table, founded on South-South cooperation.

29. The operationalization of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries has been undertaken. The General Assembly officially established the Bank in 2016, The host agreement with Turkey was signed in 2017, with Turkey committing to contributing \$2 million annually for the first five years. In addition, Norway contributed a little more than \$1 million towards its establishment in 2018, the same year that the first Managing Director, Joshua Phoho Setipa of Lesotho, joined the Bank.

C. Capacity-building and systemic issues

30. Effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals requires capacity to deliver at all levels. There are several capacity challenges associated with the mainstreaming and implementation of the Goals ranging from poor institutional and organizational capacities, to limited human resources, and weak analytical and technical capacities. In that regard, most countries in Africa have developed comprehensive financing and capacity development strategies as part of their national

development plans and process to ensure coherent and effective financial resource mobilization and capacity development support.

31. In order to support policymakers in Africa, ECA has been organizing capacity-building programmes in collaboration with various stakeholders and the African Union Commission, with a focus on economic policy management and development planning in line with both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

32. Many South-South capacity-building initiatives were implemented in 2018. Partners included institutions of the United Nations system, including ECA (Community-Led Total Sanitation, African Centre for Statistics, African Trade Policy Centre and the ECA Subregional Office for West Africa); the United Nations Development Programme; the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations; the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa; the World Bank; the International Organization for Migration; the United Nations Institute for Training and Research; the Office of the Prime Minister of Senegal; the Ministry of Trade, Informal Sector, Consumption, Promotion of Domestic Goods and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises of Senegal; the United Nations Foundation; the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning of Rwanda; the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA); the Open Society Initiative for West Africa; Africa Futures Institute; the Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute of Eastern and Southern Africa; the African Capacity-Building Foundation; the African Development Bank; the African Inclusive Markets Centre of Excellence; and the African Union Commission. Partners also included international development partners, such as the GIZ, the Department for International Development, and national partners, including ministries and government agencies for Benin, the Gambia and Mozambique.

33. In terms of monitoring and benchmarking the Sustainable Development Goals, many countries in Africa lack the capacity to collect, manage and report on demographic, social, economic and environmental data. This is especially alarming in an increasingly digital, information- and knowledge-based world. Such data are important, as they help inform Governments in designing, implementing and monitoring better policies and interventions and responding more effectively to national development challenges. Additionally, Governments need data to document and report on progress made in their countries.

34. Adequate resourcing of national statistical systems is crucial. The need is clear and investments in national statistics systems and data production have increased. According to the *African Statistical Yearbook* of the African Development Bank, the total amount of all resources made available to strengthen statistical capacity increased by 388 per cent in the period 2006-2014. ODA that was focused on data and statistics formed part of these resources: ODA provided to help with statistics globally was 0.30 per cent in 2015, which is a slight improvement over the previous decade, when the average was 0.27 per cent. Of the total amount of statistical support provided, countries in Africa received an average of 56 per cent in the period 2013-2015.

D. Trade

35. International and intra-African trade constitutes an engine for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction, and is an important means for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Achieving the Goals could open up \$12 trillion of market opportunities in food and agriculture, cities, energy and materials, and health and well-being alone, and could also create 380 million new jobs worldwide by 2030. Regional integration has a prominent role to play in boosting intra-African trade so that member States can benefit from economies of scale and develop significant regional value chains.

36. Intra-African trade consists of more value-added products than are traded internationally. International trade is dominated by traditional commodities. It is in this context that the African Continental Free Trade Area could encourage stronger intra-African trade and create a larger market that is likely to drive FDI flows to

Africa even for national and regional infrastructure projects to improve competitiveness and production capacity, increase the creation of decent jobs, improve productivity, increase incomes and reduce economic vulnerability and risks.

37. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda acknowledges that international trade is a catalyst for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction. However, ongoing dynamics show that the international trade bodies and regimes, such as the World Trade Organization, or regional and bilateral trade agreements, do not often favour Africa. Nonetheless, international trade remains a potential source of considerable funding for the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa, in particular since new actors are consolidating their relevance in the international trade landscape and are representing potential diversification of trade flows. For example, emerging economies now constitute close to 6 per cent of global economic activity and growth. Within this context, the international community has committed to providing support to countries in Africa through the Aid for Trade initiative, which assists in trade facilitation and continued access to preferential markets for the export goods of the least developed countries.

III. Challenges

38. Illicit financial outflows hurt resource mobilization efforts. Africa loses large amounts of financial resources to illicit financial outflows, but possesses very low levels of innovative financing strategies. At the peak in 2014, illicit financial outflows from Africa were estimated at about 8 per cent of the GDP of the continent, with annual losses of more than \$50 billion, an amount equivalent to twice the ODA received, in 2016 prices. The sources of such illicit financial flows include improper invoicing and tax avoidance.

39. Rising debt stocks are a cause for concern. A major challenge to greater financing mobilization in Africa is the issue of rising debt stocks and associated debt servicing costs. In 2018, Africa witnessed an upsurge in both public and foreign debt levels, to about 50 and 27 per cent, respectively, compared with 48.4 and 26.5 per cent in 2017. The continent's total debt-to-GDP ratio rose from about 35.5 per cent in 2017 to 37.6 per cent in 2018. Foreign debt stocks are high, especially in oil-importing and mineral-rich countries, where they are estimated to be 45.4 and 62 per cent of GDP, respectively.

40. Capacity-building programmes indicate a monitoring challenge related to the unavailability of reliable data for effective monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of Agenda 2063. Moreover, there is also a challenge related to the harmonization of data produced by different sources at national and regional levels.

41. Monitoring progress on the 232 indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as on Agenda 2063, is a daunting task for member States. According to the data availability from the global Sustainable Development Goals database, nearly half of the indicators have little data from countries in Africa. These indicators, especially those in tier III, have neither a methodology nor a statistical production system in place to regularly produce data for measuring and monitoring their progresses.

IV. Recommendations

42. Given the fast rates of growth in Africa and the large untapped potential, measures to increase domestic revenue should pay off handsomely. Countries in Africa need to take a more strategic and holistic approach in mobilizing financing for development from the public sector, the private sector and development partners through harmonization of national policies and priorities with financing frameworks in line with global best practices and regional models to enhance national efforts.

43. On the one hand, Africa has low tax-to-GDP ratios, high economic growth rates and strong potential; on the other, illicit financial flows from Africa are at a high

level. This juxtaposition underscores the scope for additional domestic revenue mobilization. Measures are needed to improve tax administration and eliminate loopholes for tax avoidance.

44. In several markets, local structural reforms are needed to promote economic and financial development. Africa is seen as the last frontier for the capital markets; however, economic growth and the quality of institutions differ greatly, with varying levels of capital markets development.

45. Improved governance will help to encourage foreign direct investment and the development of capital markets. For many years, political turbulence and corruption precluded sustainable growth and acted as a barrier to foreign investment in many countries in Africa. Indeed, political dynamics and transitions to democracy are determining factors for investor decisions as well as economic and financial decisions pertaining to the continent.

46. Enhanced and revitalized partnerships for sustainable development, led by Governments, will be a vehicle for strengthening international cooperation for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, as well as other sectoral and regional initiatives. Multi-stakeholder partnerships formed by engaging with the private sector, civil society, academia, local authorities and other stakeholders will be important to mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, complement the efforts of Governments, and support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

47. Trade finance could be enhanced by promoting the standardization of trade finance instruments and the consistent implementation of measures to counter money laundering and the financing of terrorism, as well as the implementation of “know-your-client” regulations across jurisdictions.

48. Countries in Africa should take advantage of opportunities offered by the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and the Technology Bank for the least developed countries to harness science, technology and innovation, with a view to achieving their development objectives.

49. Local governments should have sound understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals and align their development efforts with the national sustainable development priorities.

V. Key messages

50. Strengthening capital markets provides an important avenue to mobilizing revenue from the private sector in Africa and beyond. In order to avoid the threat of marginalization, in the case of investors choosing the more developed markets over Africa, efforts to integrate regional capital markets and cross-listing are critical. The leadership of the Regional Securities Exchange (BRVM) in West Africa is a good example of capital market integration at regional level. Within the East African Community (EAC), cross-listing, especially by firms from Kenya on other EAC stock exchanges is another example of financial integration. Similarly, firms from South Africa are cross-listing on the stock exchanges in countries within the region.

51. Common challenges with regard to harnessing science, technology and innovation for sustainable development include the lack of capacity to implement related policies; political leadership; balanced engagement and participation to ensure that resources are in line with aspirations, and address fragmentation. In addition, there can be issues with the evidence base for measuring and monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of science, technology and innovation programmes, including on social and environmental issues beyond economic outcomes. Gender disparity in the field of science, technology and innovation is also a challenge in most countries in Africa.

52. In order to measure progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, all stakeholders – aside from national statistical

systems – need to fulfil their roles in the development process, including in implementation, monitoring and reporting on progress.

53. Data quality is another hurdle that should be addressed by national statistical systems in Africa. Only a handful of national statistics offices have data quality assurance frameworks to ascertain and measure the quality of the data produced. The key challenge in data quality is attributed to the differences in methodologies, concepts, definitions, standards used within national statistical systems and across member States, which make international harmonization difficult.

54. Additional investments strengthening capacities and systems for data gathering are needed to ensure accurate assessment of financing needs towards realizing the two agendas in Africa. Well-disaggregated and up-to-date data on population trends, the state of social services and infrastructure, and future demand and requirements are needed in order to make the right projections. Data systems need to be tailor-made and interlinked across the continent in order to meet the reporting requirements for the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063.

55. In order to unlock the potential of multi-stakeholder partnerships for enhancing the means of implementation, priority should be given to the following: a coherent financing and partnerships framework; an institutionalized dialogue and engagement mechanism; a robust review and accountability system; enhanced policy coherence for sustainable development; and optimal use of innovation as an incentivizing and scaling tool.

56. The horizontal nature of multi-stakeholder partnerships should not dilute the special lead and accountability role of the Government in promoting the strong political will and undertaking policy and institutional reforms in line with the 2030 Agenda; the better approach would focus on all of society instead of national concerns. Strong government institutions and processes inclusive of all vulnerable groups are essential for enhancing the quantity and quality of the means of implementation.
