Preparatory and Capacity-Development Workshop for Major Groups and Other Stakeholders in the Africa Region

Organised by

Technology, Climate Change and Natural Resource Management Division

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

16 April 2019, Marrakech, Morocco

Report of the Meeting

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List of Acronyms

ARFSD	Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FEMNET	African Women's Development and Communications Network
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
IDEP	African Institute for Economic Development and Planning
MGoS	Major Groups and Other Stakeholders
NSO	National Statistical Office
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
VNR	Voluntary National Review

Acknowledgements

I.   Introduction

1. Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS)[1] play a crucial role in promoting sustainable development. Their involvement is vital to enhancing inclusion by representing voiceless, marginalised and vulnerable populations; engaging in capacity-building activities; and strengthening the participation in and ownership of development processes by diverse communities, in particular at the national, subnational and local levels. They bring to bear key aspects essential to enhancing the reach, effectiveness and durability of development initiatives and outcomes in the continent, and more specifically to the implementation and progress of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063.

2. In its resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", the General Assembly recognized the need for major groups and other relevant stakeholders to be involved in the implementation of the Agenda, including the follow-up and review processes. In that regard, Governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations (UN) system and other actors were called upon in the context of an enhanced Global Partnership to deliver on the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals and targets, which are at the core of the Agenda. Moreover, in the Agenda, a high-level political forum (HLPF), under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), was stipulated to carry out regular reviews in line with General Assembly resolution 67/290 of 9 July 2012, and that the reviews should provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders. In addition, major groups and other relevant stakeholders were called upon to report on their contribution to the implementation of the Agenda. Also of note, citizens of African countries, civil society organizations and all other identifiable groups are being engaged with respect to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation under Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, which is being implemented coherently with the 2030 Agenda.

3. Accordingly, the effective implementation of the two agendas requires various actors to work together and strengthen their collaborative and integrated approaches with major groups and other stakeholders. For the contributions of major groups and stakeholders to be full and effective towards the successful implementation of the agendas, capacity development is required to enhance their knowledge on the processes and procedures for engagement. These groups need access to information to better understand their roles and platforms to engage more effectively with each other, Governments and other development actors. In that regard, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in collaboration with the United Nations Department of

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[1] Groups/associations working on and representing interests of, but not limited to, Women; Children and Youth; Indigenous Peoples and Communities; Non-governmental Organisations; Workers and Trade Unions; The Scientific and Technological Community; Business and Industry; Farmers; Local Authorities; and the Elderly and Disabled/Handicapped (https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/aboutmajorgroups.html).

Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), has been organizing workshops since 2015 to strengthen the capacity of these groups to participate and articulate inputs to the follow up and review of progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals at regional and global levels.

4. Through the capacity development workshops, African major groups and other stakeholder have been actively engaged in the work of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, which is one of the mechanisms providing inputs to the follow-up and review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

5. In a consolidated statement presented at the fourth Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, which was held in Dakar from 2 to 4 May 2018, African major groups and other stakeholders highlighted their important roles in ensuring effective, inclusive and integrated implementation of and follow-up to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

6. Against this backdrop, ECA, in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, organised a preparatory and capacity development workshop for major groups and other stakeholders in Africa to help countries in Africa prepare for the high-level political forum on sustainable development, to be held in New York from 9 to 18 July 2019. The workshop is scheduled to take place during the fifth session of the Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, which was held in Marrakesh, Morocco, from 16 to 18 April 2019, on the theme "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality".

7. The workshop, which was held on 16 April 2019 on the eve of the main sessions of the Regional Forum, was intended to achieve the following objectives:

(a) Brief major groups and other stakeholders on the follow-up and review process related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in the light of the selected Sustainable Development Goals approach from 2017 to 2019;

(b) Promote mutual learning through exchange of experiences, lessons learned and promising approaches and practices in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and tracking of progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the aspirations of Agenda 2063, with a special emphasis on the selected Goals that are particularly relevant to the 2019 high-level political forum;

(c) Promote dialogue and consensus among the major groups and other stakeholders on their perspectives to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

II. Attendance

8. More than 125 representatives of the wide-ranging major groups and stakeholders from all over the continent attended the meeting. All nine categories of major groups and other stakeholders, had their representatives attending the workshop, including educational and academic entities; persons with disabilities; Elderly representatives, volunteer groups; and other stakeholders active in areas related to sustainable development. The detailed list of participants is available in Annex 3.

III. Opening and introductory session

9. The capacity-building workshop for major groups and other stakeholders (MGoS) kicked off with an opening and introductory sessions facilitated by **Mr**. **Edo Mahendra**, (Associate Economic Affairs Officer, Technology, Climate Change and Natural Resource Management Division, Economic Commission for Africa/ECA).

10. **Mr. Edo Mahendra** started the opening session by introducing the panelists:
    - **Hon. Jacqueline Amongin** (Member of Parliament, Pan-African Parliament),
    - **Ms. Lilia Hachem Naas** (North Africa Director, UN Economic Commission for Africa/ECA),
    - **Ms. Emily Hosek** (Associate Sustainable Development Officer, Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/DESA)
    - **Mr. Stephen Chacha** (Chair, Interim Committee for MGoS Regional Engagement Mechanism, MGoS Representative).

11. **Ms. Emily Hosek** stated that DESA supports the VNRs and stakeholders engagement at the global level to ensure that all voices are heard at the global level.

12. **Mr. Stephen Chacha** mentioned that this workshop is important for MGoS to better coordinate and share experiences, including to establish the regional civil society engagement. The ARFSD should serve as the medium to facilitate the sharing of lessons, and best practices to enhance capacities for implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

13. **Ms. Jacqueline Amongin** called for the strengthening of the multi-stakeholders partnerships with the parliaments to enable governments in the continent to ensure alignment between national plans, agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063, and also the strengthening of VNRs. Through the Alliance on Pan-African Parliaments on SDGs, a Continental SDG Forum is to be held by Parliaments in Africa to ensure alignment of the Agendas.

14. **Ms. Lilia Hachem Naas** officially opened the workshop on behalf of Ms. Vera Songwe, the Executive Secretary of ECA. She appreciated the collaboration between ECA and DESA, and thanked the Kingdom of Morocco for the hospitality, having accepted this forum and also saying that this workshop should serve as a sub-regional coordination mechanism. And everyone should use this opportunity to bond and move forward together to make the workshop happened, the fifth ARFSD was the space to discuss, review the progress and challenges facing African countries in the implementation of six SDGs:

- Goal 4 - Quality education,
- Goal 8 - Decent work and inclusive economic growth,
- Goal 10 - Reduced inequalities,
- Goal 13 - Climate action,
- Goal 16 - Peace, justice and Strong institutions and,
- Goal 17 - Partnership for the goals.

And they agreed collectively on the key messages to be taken to the High-Level Political Forum in New York, 9 - 18 July 2019. She concluded that collaboration and networking is therefore crucial amongst major groups, in partnership with governments, as well as in the VNRs. Regional coordination is important for major groups to enhance the implementation and follow-up of Agenda 2030 to achieve the holistic and integrated Agendas 2030 and 2063.

IV. Session 1: Presentation and discussion on the regional report on progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and Agenda 2063.

Summary of the Presentation

15. **Ms. Emily Hosek**, chair of the session, stated that the session's objective is to brief and discuss on the regional report progress of SDGs.

Presenter:

16. **Mr. Paul Mpuga** (Economic Affairs Officer, Macroeconomic and Governance Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa/ECA) presented the report. Some key findings for each Goal discussed this year are the following:

a) **Goal 4**: School enrollment has been improving but completion rates remained low, and still disability needs to be more covered.
b) **Goal 8**: Africa had sustained growth since 2000 and there are positive medium-term prospects. There is potential of Africa's young populations as labor force will be 1.1 billion by 2030.
c) **Goal 10**: Africa is one of the most unequal regions globally. Seven of the top ten of the world's unequal countries are in Africa. Incomes of bottom 40%

between 2012 and 2016 grew by >5% in only two countries. Social Protection's scope remains very limited.

d) **Goal 13**: There are evidence of increasing investments and progress in implementing disaster risk reduction actions with stronger coordination and partnerships. All countries signed the Paris Agreement, and over 70% ratified. The knowledge about climate change is improving, but not enough. To address the issues of Climate Change we need to improve the use of the technology.

e) **Goal 16**: Slow progress in reducing violence and related death rates and challenges in serious data gaps. Only nine countries reported victims of trafficking by age and sex between 2012 and 2016 (data gaps are still a main challenge in areas facing conflicts).

f) **Goal 17**: Large financing needs remain present. Furthermore, government revenues-to-GDP are still low amidst limited improvements. There is huge inequality in the financing due to poverty. This is demonstrated with statistics indicating that more than 7 of 10 countries with the most unequal economy are found in Africa.

17. **Mr. Paul Mpuga concluded his presentation with the followings findings:**

Emerging issues, opportunities, challenges:

(a) Quality education and effective learning are critical to realizing sustainable development.

(b) Clarion call to address inequality for greater traction.

(c) Measures to combat climate change a priority and responsibility of all.

(d) Mobilize additional resources from multiple sources for sustainable development: scope for raising tax & non-tax revenues.

(e) Trade above aid: Africa's share of global merchandise exports is low, 2.4% in 2017.

Discussant:

18. **Ms. Salina Sanou** (Global Call to Action Against Poverty)**,** the discussant, noted that awareness raising is important so that communities are able to hold governments accountable for their commitments to SDGs. All citizens need to understand SDGs so that they know what they are talking about. A lot of work is happening on the continent with regard to awareness raising on the SDGs including support to countries that are reporting to VNRs. Lingering challenges are continuing silos, fragmented efforts, lack of resources and shrinking space for civil society (CSO) on sensitive issues such as corruption and governance need to be addressed, also engaging with CSO is key in ensuring that duplication is avoided and information sharing is shared across all sectors. Apart from women, there are other vulnerable groups that she has not been able to develop especially the situation of the elderly. The private sector has also been seen to encroach on CSO space vying for the same resources.

19. **Ms. Salina Sanou** concluded her presentation by putting forward several recommendations as following :

(a) It is clear that conflict affects issues of governance so this needs to be looked into.
(b) There is some progress from climate change- data collected but more needs to be done- it is not yet extensive enough.
(c) Remittances are seen to be mostly coming from diaspora to families back in Africa.
(d) The progress that has been documented is in terms of infrastructure. There needs to be documentation on the social aspect such as health services to provide clear indicators.
(e) The youth need to be able to engage in initiatives that will provide economic gains for them.
(f) There is need to align Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 with government policies.

Recommendations:

20. **The session recommended and concluded the following**:

(i)   MGoS to recognize and accommodate country specificities with regards lessons learned and best practices to ensure coherence and efficiency in the implementation of SDGs ;
(ii)   All stakeholders to push the efforts to disaggregate the data and statistics to ascertain divergence in the countries to gauge better understanding on the causes of failures whereby realities and contexts could be beyond the numbers and statistics.

21. **Comments from the Floor:**

(a) A Parliamentarian from Uganda stated that there needs more work to be done to bring women in the center. Women are socially and economically empowering and yet many women in Africa do not have access to factor productivity, especially the youth. Free money going to youth will not accelerate the growth.
(b) Participant representing the Women Parliament of Gambia stated that learning from Kenya's experience, we need to know and understand what are the tools used to accelerate the mechanism.
(c) ANCEFA Africa Network (Education for All) called for a Pan African Coalition to establish better coordination support to those working on education issues.
(d) A lot of valuable works have been done at the national, sub regional and regional but lack of coordination between the different levels and inefficient coordination with governments remain. VNR is a process, hence the report should not be done by the government alone, the space for all stakeholders including MGoS needs to be opened as wide as possible.
(e) Persons with disability are still not well represented or heard. They need to get more involved and engaged in the process of the implementation of the SDGs.

22. **Questions:**

    (a) In the ensuing questions and answers (Q&A), a question was directed to Mr. Paul Mpuga, regarding the challenge beyond the statistics, and how to invest in working model of decent work.

    (b) A question on the inequality related to unemployment, and to give some examples of the rate of the unemployment in different countries, also the impact of the poverty on the education of the needed children.

    Wrap up of the Session: Answers:

23. **Mr Paul Mpuga responded by saying that:**

    (a) The average will not cover everything, the investment and policies should be implemented on the ground and that education is a critical need to the youth to have necessary and relevant skills.

    (b) The CSOs in children and women need to be more engaged and powerful.

    (c) Some countries need to have health insurance services developed.

    (d) Budget capacity is widespread constraint.

    (e) Efforts need more alignment with the existing national policies.

    (f) The SDGs should be aligned with the government policies. The Agendas 2030 and 2063 are the responsibility of the governments.

    (g) The CSOs engagement in the SDGs process is crucial.

24. **Ms. Salina Salou's responses:**

    (a) There is need to do more about the mechanism to involve women in the process.

    (b) Related to the persons with the disability, FEMNET has done a good work on "Leave No One Behind" (Side Event and Report) regrouping Kenya, Mali and Ghana. The FEMNET report issued could be used in different spaces as advocacy tool.

    (c) In Kenya they have the Constitution that allocated budget in the implementation of the SDGs, the spaces could be used and made at the disposal of groups working on SDGs such as youth, religious leaders and women.

V. Session 2 : Presentation and discussion on the global follow-up to and review of the Sustainable Development Goals and the preparation for the 2019 meeting of the high-level political forum (HLPF) on sustainable Development : "Voluntary national reviews and the role of major groups and other stakeholders"

Summary of the Presentation :

25. **Ms. Emily Hosek** (Associate Sustainable Development Officer, Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/DESA) presented on Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and the role of Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS). While the VNRs are state-led, she highlighted that the Secretary General's guidelines for the VNRs call for an open and inclusive process in their development, including the views of other sectors of society and other levels of government.

26. **Ms. Emily Hosek** included in her presentation some examples from various countries of different levels of stakeholder engagement in the implementation and follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, and provided suggestions on how MGoS can engage when their counties are developing a VNR. She also highlighted the global MGoS High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) coordination mechanism, which includes over 800 members from 17 different constituencies, and is the entry point for MGoS engagement in the HLPF and its preparations.

Discussion:

27. **Mr. Martin Tsounkeu** (General Representative, Africa Development Interchange Network), the first discussant, stated that engagement is important and it should start at the national level. But there is need for a framework for this engagement, to ensure a good coordination within the engagement and also an accountability framework. It is important to have criteria on how to engage. A dissemination framework is a part of the best practice to ensure effective engagement in VNRs.

28. **Mr. George Osei-Bimpeh** (Co-Chair of Ghana CSOs SDG Platform), the second discussant, shared the experience of his country Ghana, he mentioned that Ghana has put in place a multi-stakeholder platform for the implementation of the SDGs. A high-level forum on SDGs exists with CSOs as an observer status. There is a coordinating committee for implementation of SDGs, where

CSOs are represented. There is also a technical committee with 8 CSOs representatives.

29. **Mr. George Osei-Bimpeh** reported in his statement that the CSOs and other actors need to work together with governments to mobilize adequate resources for the implementation of SDGS. He noted that, there is political will from the side of governments to collaborate with CSOs for the submission of VNRs. Mr. Osei-Bimpeh emphasized that capacity building of communities and government ministries to integrate SDGs into their national development plan is key and appealed for CSOs to be given resources in order to contribute to complementing the government's efforts. Finally, he encouraged stakeholders to empower youth, coordinate their efforts, open up their spaces to allow everyone to contribute, and persons with disability need to be included and engage with work of SDGs and their voice to be heard.

Questions & Answers:

30. In the ensuing questions and answers (Q&A), the floor would like to know about the penalty to countries that do not comply with the system as the discussant explained that there is no system setup. The VNR is a voluntary process that countries are encouraged to achieve but there is no obligation.

31. Some challenges are related to the engagement processes as the government is shrinking the space for multi stakeholders' events. The CSOs, though committed, are lacking of strong experiences and capacity to report better. They need to enhance their capacities, and the process has to be designed to include many others groups including youth and marginalized people.

Recommendations:

32. **The session 2 recommended and concluded the following:**

a) Member States need to commit to reporting, through the VNRs, at the HLPF.

b) There is need to develop capacities to report on progress that takes on board the expertise of major groups and other stakeholders, and has clear distinction between the interests of the States and CSOs so that no one is left behind.

c) A coherent strategy is also needed in order to capitalize on good practices, and lessons learned through the VNRs, and also their implementation.

d) For a durable approach where CSOs want to play key role in the implementation of the SDGs by the government, it is important to build independent CSOs that does not depend on the government to achieve its plans;

e) Government should avoid shrinking the CSO's space to avoid conflicting and partial report;

f) Set up a coordinated mechanism that may facilitate the collaboration between CSOs and government;

g) The VNR remains a process and CSOs are willing to play a complementary role to reinforce the national and inclusive character of the report.

VI. Session 3: Round-table on promoting peer learning and the exchange of experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, with emphasis on selected Sustainable Development Goals 2019: "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality"

Discussion:

33. The roundtable was Chaired by **Ms. Edith Madela-Mntla** (Community Orientated Primary Care Research Unit, University of Pretoria). It consisted of six panellists from various formations, namely: human rights, disability inclusion; older persons, climate action, trade union and youth — in an interactive discussion; they shared lessons and highlighted solutions based on their respective experiences.

34. **Commissioner Joseph Whittal** (Chairperson, Ghana Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice) was the first panellist and he spoke about the speeding up of the implementation of the Agenda 2030 and 2063. Commissioner Whittal said the agendas are being used without a human rights approach. He gave an example of Ghana, were there is a positive change on focusing on human rights; to make it easier for people to recognise what are the human rights considerations per goal; this makes it easier for meeting international human rights commitments.

35. He noted that Goal 16 requires human rights, non-discrimination, accountability and participation, this is done through a number of in country structures and 44 African human rights organisations to ensure human rights obligations are met and leaving no one behind as a matter of fact instead of focusing on statistics alone. He further noted that 13 000 complaints on human rights are received annually and a report was compiled to link them to specific SDGs, e.g. link to Goal 5 when handling a matter that involves women.

36. The organisation also has a mandate on corruption through the development of a national anti-corruption action plan. Three reports have been produced so far to provide evidence that there is action being taken.

37. With reference to Goal 17, he reported that in order to leverage on internal partnerships with civil society, there are human rights forums and seven anti-corruption coalitions which ensure the internal driving of the partnership. He cited the following challenges: resources, difficulty working with government, counted by having independent reporting.

38. The second panellist, **Ms. Yetnebersh Nigussie** (Disability Inclusion Advisor, Light for the World) remarked that the addition of governance, rights, security, participation and accountability are key.

39. "Inequality somewhere is a threat somewhere". She also explained that equality should be done through one class for all, for example in Burkina Faso, children with disability attend normal schools. This contributed for attending girls to also be able to go to school instead of staying home to care for their siblings with disabilities.

40. She argued that inequality fosters violence, protests and is people's call to be heard -inequality is a threat for peace. She also said that inequality is worsened by income inequality, which is born at the household level as a result of gender inequality and made worse by women's inability to get access to finance.

41. Ms. Nigussie made the following recommendations: equality and inclusion should be understood comprehensively; human rights and development discourse should be linked "Geneva & New York discussions should be linked"; disaggregated data is key as what is not measured cannot be treasured; we need to understand who this that is left behind is – focus on individual level.

42. The next panellist, **Mr Mithika Mwenda** (Secretary General, Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance) said that Goal 13 is cross-cutting, so there is a need to ascertain its impact on other agenda.

43. He said that in Kenya the basis of advocacy is the alignment of the national vision 2030, agenda 2030 & 2063. The focus of the his organisation is on building legitimacy and working with partners (e.g. ECA) and meeting more regularly and the implementation of a 4-year plan and stakeholder mapping across the continent.

44. Mr Mwenda said Media involvement has been identified as an important role player, and a PAN African Media Platform was set-up to advance the climate change agenda.

45. Through the Africa Climate Initiative, the advancement of energy in Africa has been identified as one of the key focus area. Accountable government institutions & platforms are important for the achievement of Goal 13.

46. Partnerships and collaborations and human resources have been the key to success.

47. **Ms. Naome Chakanya** (Senior Researcher, Labour and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe) spoke as a representative of trade unions called ITUC, which represents 17 million workers in Africa and has 112 national centres in 52 countries.

48. Goal 8 especially descent work is central to meeting other SDGs, and the other SDGS for this year are important.

49. Ms Chakanya, identified the following challenges: informality, deindustrialisation, raise of working poor and youth unemployment. Digitalisation and CC are recognised for job creation but also losses.

50. She noted that practices which forge the agenda for Goal 8 are evidence based shadow reports development for 3 years now and this process has created

opportunities for dialogues, for e.g. this platform facilitates collaboration with government in home countries.

51. As a Trade Union they foster knowledge sharing and dialogue through hosting their own conferences with an agenda that provides own information and processes e.g. Zimbabwe in partnership with ILO.

52. The lessons she shared were as follows: there is a need for further consultation, negotiation and sharing of information with government; but this should go beyond HLPF and VNR and ensure that agreements are binding.

53. She identified the opportunities that were created as: social media and online trainings for consistencies.

54. Ms. Chakanya is of the view that speeding up of SDGs can be achieved through the advocacy of pro-descent work initiatives and ratifications of conventions that foster collective bargaining.

55. She said that Goal 16, human and labour rights should be the cornerstone of SDGs and that Goal 17on partnerships is valued but trade and investment agreements should not come at the cost of human rights, especially women, therefore aim for quality jobs.

56. In concluding, she called for African commitments for financing the implementation of SDGs; she said Africa is not poor and what is required is the reprioritisation of resources.

57. **Mr Kawsu Sillah** (Executive Secretary, African Youth Commission) was the next speaker and is a representative of the youth. He started his presentation by saying as far as implementation of SDG 4 is concerned, at Member State level, there is Political will to provide quality and relevant education for all. He cited the recent developments in some countries as living testimonies.

58. He mentioned that in The Gambia, in addition to its free primary education for all, the Government recently launched a project called "Second Chance" an initiative providing education opportunities for out-of-school children and youth to attain basic education and livelihood skills; University tuition free for all undergraduates in Liberia; Free primary and senior secondary school education in many countries in Africa including Ghana, Sierra Leone, Rwanda etc.

59. Mr Sillah said lessons learned throughout Africa is that young people are demanding for better education services and skills development for their peers, better wage for teachers, and demand accountability from their leaders.

60. With regards to emerging challenges, Mr. Sillah said even though young people welcomed these initiatives as important steps for achieving SDG4, and more so to empower youth to become agents and champions for change, they challenged the Governments to ensure that they do not only provide free education but equally ensure the service providers offer quality and relevant education and skills training that correspond to current and future labour market needs.

61. Sharing his perspective on SDG 16, Mr Sillah said there are a number of measures in place to engage the youth in promoting peace and security through preventing them from violence, as well as encourage peer-peer foster dialogue to enhance youth participation at the local, national, sub-regional and continental levels for peaceful and secure communities.

62. His views on emerging challenges were that even though those measures are in place, on the opposite, young people are concerned about the volumes of violent conflict that our continent is currently witnessing, state's inability to create or sustain economic opportunities for youth, corruption and mismanagement of public and state resources.

63. He said in order to address these man made challenges of our time, it is important to inspire and support youth to become the leaders of Africa, mentor them to work together with the older generation to create a sustainable future where a culture of integrity, good governance and zero tolerance to corruption will be promoted in all sectors of society.

64. Citing the lessons learned, Mr. Sillah said both Agenda 2030 and 2063 will be hard to archive if youth unemployment is not swiftly addressed, economic opportunities for youth not improved, and the creativity, energy and innovation of Africa's youth are not tapped into for the continent's political, social, cultural and economic transformation. He noted that from Transitional Justice, to Peace keeping, and to fight against corruption young people are contributing to the implementation of SDG 16.

65. The final speaker was **Ms. Roseline Kihumba** (International and Regional Policies Coordinator, HelpAge International); her organisation has presence in 27 countries (4 country offices), only North Africa is not represented.

66. She said that the only standalone framework for older persons that exists is the AU Protocol for older persons has not been ratified by 15 countries. Discrimination of older persons is not included in national frameworks and they experience ageism, neglect and violence which leads to their poverty.

67. She reported that her organisation has done the following raising awareness of the rights of older persons amongst themselves, others and within government through policy dialogues at all spheres of govt. Action and awareness raising been done through existing frameworks, e.g. Uganda Older Person Council.

68. She said that specific sectors have been engaged, e.g. Health ministries in Tanzania and Zimbabwe. One of the ultimate goals is to ensure that each country has an older person pension.

69. According to Ms Kihumba, research and development have been an influence, e.g. aging and disaggregated data, older persons consulted and assisted to record their voices.

70. She shared the following lessons: partnerships that leverage each other are important, and intergenerational platforms must be pursued.

71. Some of the challenges faced are limited understanding of how the 2 agenda relate to each other, low political will to advance age issues, limited capacity

of ministries that handle older persons., to counter these challenges, she proposed the following solutions: SDGs & Agenda 2063 should be grounded on older persons, including the spatial considerations of older persons; promotion of age friendly interventions and inter-generationality, enhance capacity of national statistics bureaus and building on existing partnerships.

72. She also made the following recommendations: Research, evidence and knowledge creation and sharing platforms including national indicators to be fit for purpose and age inclusive. She added that there should be capacity building on older people and policy makers including dialogue forums and that there should be deliberate efforts to harness and broker existing ageing and older people expertise to accelerate their inclusion.

Questions & Answers:

73. Following the inputs by the panellists, the Chairperson, identified the main challenges as: conflicting needs of vulnerable groups, lack of political will to take issues of vulnerable groups on board, resources challenges and slow pace of implementation of reforms. To this end, she noted that all groups are advocating for the prioritisation of their own groups - How then can this tension be handled? How do we ensure the prioritisation of one group does not disadvantage the other?

74. Response from Mr Sillah was that young people can tap into the experiences of older persons, there is room for collaboration. No need for the different groups to compete, the capabilities of older persons should continue to be harnessed. She added that there is a need for a mechanism to harvest the dividend of older persons, e.g. to create job opportunities for the home based care of older persons. Africa is not preparing older persons adequately which exposes them to discrimination.

75. In response to the Chairperson's question on how should society deal with labour action, Ms Chakanya responded by saying that as part of Goal 16 pushing for active social dialogue is important in order to be able to address challenges faced by labour. Government should institutionalise dialogue in its processes, as dialogue is a proven mechanism for conflict management.

76. Ms Kihumba noted that older persons are not safe to get out of jobs because they will not have social protection or pension; descent work would help to prevent this and that trade unions need to start preparing their members for retirement.

77. Mr Mwenda said that all African countries have signed up to the Paris Agreement and other agreements but there is zero implementation. Civil society should hold government accountable especially at national and sub-national level e.g. Kenya has a law that binds government to implement climate action, this allows citizens to take government to court for not delivering on commitments.

78. In response to the Chairperson's question of how to mitigate the lack of available skills of people with disabilities; Ms Nigussie indicated that the recruitment process and advertisement of posts are not done in an inclusive

way, e.g. does not take into consideration blind/deaf people etc. Need to communicate messages about employment better, but the starting point is at Early Childhood Development (ECD) and inclusive education this will ensure that the 200 million Africans with disabilities are included in employment opportunities.

79. Ms Nigussie stated that "Nothing about us, without us" and that disabilities are considered as inability and their disabilities are not incorporated into work conditions.

80. The audience was then invited to ask the panellists questions and make inputs, and an audience member commented that disabled people should be included in all the processes and provided with structures that allow them to be in schools.

81. Another audience member noted that indigenous people have not be included and this leads to exclusion of an important grouping. An example was given of Senegal's law on the inclusion of young people but reproductive health has not been included. There is a need for reasonable accommodation, as their exclusion leads to further segregation, e.g. if blind people are not in mainstream schools they are forgotten about and infrastructures are not changed.

82. It was also noted that the employment of older persons requires modalities, e.g. they should have the option to continue working or be reskilled so that they can continue to be alive and not just survive.

83. It was admitted that as a continent there is difficulty for young people to advocate for shared youth rights as a collective. Also on the discussion on youth it was said that Members of Parliament (MPs) in most African countries are older than 35 years as a result they cannot fully represent young people. A good practice on overcoming this was given as Nigeria's not too young campaign which was replicated in Gambia, where youth is assisted to be able to run for public office – this is something other countries can replicate.

84. It was also noted that Goal 16 has an indicator on National human rights institutions which are required to be independent and well-funded, with Ghana being one such and that civil society in various countries should advocate for this. Furthermore, in preparing for VNR there should be a database that links to human rights treaties.

85. Relooking at issues of disabilities in the labour market requires trade unions and organisations of people with disabilities to work together, which will also deliver on Goal 17. The exclusion of people with disabilities has labour and social costs, e.g. Labour union constitutions need to be disability friendly, requirement to be conscious of them, including the need to gather data on how many trade union members have disabilities.

Recommendations:

86. In concluding the session, the Chairperson summarised the roundtable's discussions as follows:

a. A number of goals are cross-cutting; we need to engage in dialogue and accommodate one another more in order to feel included.
b. We need to make our voices heard in national policy and advocate, not only at international meetings, but starting locally.
c. No vulnerable group should be forgotten just because they are not vocal.
d. Implementation of the two agendas should be embedded into national policies, but countries should also collaborate and learn from one another.
e. Countries should be held accountable for implementation of agreements they are signatory to.
f. Data and research and development need to be improved so we can implement and measure from an informed point of view to influence change.

VII. Session 4: Presentation and discussion on the strengthening and formalization of the MGoS engagement in the work of the Regional Forum and sustainable development

Summary of the Presentation :

87. The Chairperson Mr Stephen Chacha (Chair, Interim Committee for MGoS Regional Engagement Mechanism) made a presentation (attached as annexure) on results of a research study of the civil society mechanisms which was conducted a mapping of MGOs to understand the landscape.

88. The survey can still be completed here: https://forms.gle/ahylwizyptrwvua (members still encouraged to fill form).

89. He started the presentation with on the chronological order of events and how the committee came about: Election of interim technical Committee- 15 May 2015; ARSCEM google group – June 2015; Letter to the Executive Secretary of UNECA- July 2015; Meeting with Acting Executive Secretary- UNECA. Addis – May 2017; Roadmap – June 2017- May 2018; Major groups and other stakeholders grouping sin Africa- March 2019; Discussions between Interim Technical Committee and MGOs regional reps, AU, ECOSOCC, AfDB, CSO Engagement Mechanism, AWG, RECS, CSOs.

90. He reported that NGOs and Women major group are the only 2 groups who are well known across the regions.

91. He indicated that the interim committee is requesting for the mechanism to be hosted by ECA, including the allocation of an officer and hosting of in person meetings and institutionalisation.

92. 170 organisations responded (from 32 countries) to the mapping survey (Mapping of Major groups and other stakeholder grouping in Africa) the

findings of which should influence next steps including co-design and coproduction of a coordination mechanisms.

93. He pointed out that there is a correlation between the focus of organisations in Agenda 2030 and 2063.

94. African Development Bank civil society forum was setup, AU civil society forum & Agenda 2063 forum and that currently 9 major groups as determined by the UN's definition.

95. He pointed out the following with regards to the roadmap: there should be a regional representation; the coordinating mechanism should take into account the 3 agendas in order to ensure coordination and avoid duplication. Many of the major group members are already part of sector specific structures (e.g. climate action is part of UNEP structure major groups). There are also dynamics and diversities e.g. indigenous people, Francophone & Anglophone representation.

96. He noted that there is a need for the technical interim committee to be expanded and that there is a need to build trust and commitment to moving together as a team. There should be a balance between the right networks, groupings and expertise.

Questions & Answers:

97. Comments from the interim structure and audience included that it has been too long having discussions about the coordination mechanism, should consider not having the mechanism if deciding on it is this difficult.

98. It was highlighted that resource mobilisation is key to moving forward and that there is a need to take into consideration Africa's reality e.g. internet problem which limit ability to connect digitally and other organisations do not have the resources to participate.

99. It was pointed out that there is a need for the localisation of the Major groups to ensure inclusivity as well as a need for a united major groups that is inclusive and able to mobilise at the national level and feed into the group. The interim structure should propose a coordination structure to develop an organisational structure. Lessons can be learned from Indian pacific. The major groups should be locally grounded to be able to be sustainable and the local should feel represented so that they can feed into the regional structure which will then feed into the global. It was pointed out that the group should be fully engaged with people's interest and that there is a need to know and understand what is happening in each country.

Recommendations:

100. Based on the findings from the mapping, Mr Chacha made the following recommendations:

   a. For the process to be effective, there is need to tap into the regional networks.
   b. There is a need to legitimatise, by localising the process down at national/district level.
   c. There is an over-lap of membership by the same people in different groups. How can we tap into this to ensure we drive our messages forward?
   d. Of the 3 groups in Africa (Agenda 2063/ Agenda 2030 and How to Transform Africa) it is only the AFRSD which brings all of the above agendas together; this can be used to set up strong coordination between members.

101. The following proposals were made:

   a. Avoid duplication of efforts by having a centralised coordination mechanism and need to have a right and inclusive approach – steering committee.
   b. There should be agreement to co-create jointly- to what extent does one have regional engagement and how to ensure we don't leave others behind? The response to this was to include each region- have everyone represented.
   c. Some questions that were raised are: How do trade groups- become involved in coordination currently? To what extent are MGOs are regionally located? Southern/Western? How will this be done given the diversification of Africa- language, culture, etc?
   d. Expand the interim committee- look at the regional networks; look at the MGOs not included; build trust- move together as a team in a transparent manner. There is a need to find the right balance between the right networks/grouping vis-a-vie expertise.
   e. Localise and appreciate the dynamics are different with different people on board. Awareness is a real challenge- work on packaging- to increase the value of MGOs, therefore there is a need to localise the process- set targets for the year 2019 and to have guidance on this; break it down with clear goals/targets. Importance of localisation from the regional level to be grounded at national level.
   f. There is a need to let go of vested interests and have an outward approach with the interest for the continent as the most important thing.
   g. Have an operational structure- sell it to AU/ECA and if approved can be used and hire a consultant to design this process.
   h. To become sustainable- ownership is key. At local, regional level feeding form bottom up. Ensure its people centred. Go back and ensure it is localised to ensure buy-in. We can learn from the Asia- Pacific example success and adapt to our situation,

102. The following conclusions were made:
   a. All members were advised to read the document that had been shared

b. Convene an informal session- with recommendations to move the process forward (Thursday 18th April- at 14:00).

c. Get input from those groups not at this forum

d. Africa coordination is unique as it deals with 3 bodies so have to consider this process

e. Asia-pacific paper has been taken on board

f. Setting trend in new board/mechanism etc- work together util we get it right. Working together – no longer interim- now committee and moving together.

g. Consolidate the report with clear steps

h. Conclude by the next regional forum- deliverables

VIII. Session 5: Discussion by breakout groups on the views and keys messages of the major groups and other stakeholders on the subthemes of the fifth session of the Regional Forum

103. The participants dispersed to work on their key messages for each SDGs discussed in this year's Forum that was circulated within the MGoS' mailing list before the Forum took place. Detailed key messages from the breakout session is available in Annex 2 of this report. The following are the themes of the breakout session:

Group 1   Ensuring Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education (SDG 4)

Group 2   Promoting Decent Work and Inclusive Economic Growth (SDG 8)

Group 3   Reducing Inequalities (SDG 10)

Group 4   Scaling-up climate action (SDG 13)

Group 5   Ensuring peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)

Group 6   Strengthening the means of implementation and the partnership for sustainable development (SDG 17)

IX. Session 6: Joint hall session with voluntary national review workshop.

The MGoS Workshop's participants joined the VNR Workshop for a joint-closing session organized by UNECA, UN Foundation, UNDESA and the IDEP. The main points discussed during the joint session are as follow:

104. There is a need for increased peer learning.

105. There are significant challenges with measuring and alignment of the multiple agendas with the national priorities.

106. A case in point that was shared was Sierra Leone, which will be reporting for the second time and shared their experiences as follows: there was no institutional support and separate data collection, for 2019 civil society

has been requested to collect data so that they can have evidence based reporting.

107.   It was share that Sierra Leone's national development plan and SDGs alignment was challenging but allowed for comprehensive reporting in 2018. The country was able to engage development partners in order to avoid duplication through a consultative process with stakeholders. Corruption was found to be one of the key impediments for progress. The country was one of the first to do SDG budgeting, in 2019 Parliament was asked to align their budget to SDGs otherwise was not going to be approved.

108.   In the DRC, after the evaluation of the MDGs there were lessons learned, e.g. how to involve 70% of the rural population using a tool which is used on the field and is used mainly by the youth and enables them to be at the heart of data collection.

109.   Lesotho selected 152 indicators and is only able to report on 88 as a result of lack of data.

110.   There is a need for all countries to tap into citizen generated data.

111.   There should be the use of electronic tools which will hopefully provide solutions.

112.   Stakeholders should engage/exchange on VNR (UN Foundation/ECA/DESA).

113.   There should be a bottom up process at the implementation phase of the SDGs.

114.   Participants were asked to reflect on the following: Is there a multi-stakeholder platform and process where all parties work together to achieve the Agenda? Do we have the data to measure? Are we able to translate our development priorities into development goals? What are the capacity gaps in the implementation of VNR?

X.   Closing of the Workshop

115.   Mr Stephen Chacha said that there is big need to mobilize the CS0s to engage more into the SDGs process. Need for professional and working and institutionalized mechanism of the MGoS, to be able to have strong voices, also involving more of the grassroots groups.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Statement of major groups and other Stakeholders, MGoS on "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality"

STATEMENT OF MAJOR GROUPS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS ON "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality" AT THE 5TH AFRICA REGIONAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
MARRAKESH, APRIL 16, 2019

We, representatives of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders met in Marrakesh on 16th April 2019, ahead of the 5th Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development themed *"Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality".*

We highly appreciate and are encouraged by UNECA and the African Union Commission's commitment to engage with Major Groups and Other Stakeholders; and their recognition of the role of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders towards realizing Sustainable Development in Africa.

With the forthcoming HLPF having the theme "Empowering People and Ensuring Inclusiveness and Equality" we have the commitment of returning to the five key highlights of the Agenda which are people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership and question ourselves on the progress Africa has made in terms of these key areas which directly relates to the goals under review at the forthcoming HLPF.

With support from the Major Groups and Other Stakeholders at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, African Governments and their partners need to strengthen their commitment towards empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality. To realize this goal in the implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063, we recommend some of the key messages as follows:

On ensuring inclusive and equitable education (SDG 4):

- The enactment, strengthening and implementation of laws and policies that address key barriers to access and completion of education especially for young girls.
- Promote lifelong inclusive and quality education for all, including marginalized and vulnerable groups.
- Strengthen and invest in alternative education system and vocational training including apprenticeship and skills based certification to reduce youth unemployment and pay gaps.

- Ensure access to inclusive environments in educational institutions by most importantly including people with disabilities in the design and development of educational infrastructures and equipment.

On promoting decent work and inclusive economic growth (SDG 8):

- Address the persisting high levels of youth unemployment through investment in key sectors and create an enabling environment for youth to develop sustainable enterprises through the provision of mentorship and financing programs for start-ups.
- Implement and enforce policies on investment that create opportunities for partnership with local enterprises, promote worker safety, decent and safe labour practices, safe guard workers' rights; and also policies that promote investment in skills development, prevent child and indecent labour, and that recognize and reduce unpaid domestic care work for women and girls.
- Prioritize the agricultural sector to boost productivity and deliver decent incomes
- Remove age restrictive policies on access to microcredit, loans and financial investments and provide social protection for older persons and other marginalised groups to facilitate and improve living conditions.

On ensuring reduced inequalities (SDG 10):

- Encourage the implementation of macroeconomic policies and progressive tax regime that are favorable to all, especially women and girls development.
- Improve public financial management to escape the debt trap and advocate for fair trade practices and policies that promote equality and equitable investment.
- Ensure meaningful participation of marginalized and vulnerable groups through the implementation of legal instruments, such as those that promote the rights of older persons, persons with disabilities, women, children and youth, etc.
- There is need to invest and strengthen mechanisms that promote effective collection of disintegrated data at all levels and for effective monitoring of Agenda 2030 and 2063.

On scaling-up climate action (SDG 13):

- Innovatively mobilize domestic resources and international climate finance to support climate interventions and ensure transparency and accountability on utilization of the received climate funds.
- Implement national and local climate change resilience plans and strategies that have already been developed but not adequately implemented and ensure that they are in line with the Paris Agreement and Agenda 2063.

- Use innovation and environmentally-friendly, affordable and accessible technological tools that compliment traditional/indigenous practices.
- Set or improve monitoring and evaluation frameworks that track and assess implementation of commitments under 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Africa's 2063 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. This should be supported by the creation of or advancement of national database which can be easily accessed by all stakeholders for inputs and sharing of information.
- Raise environmental awareness and establish national demonstration centers from which everyone can learn techniques for environmental protection.

On ensuring peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16):

- Institute conflict-resolution interventions in war-torn countries, conflict areas and regions to reduce on the influx of refugees and migrants as well as engaging women in the peace-building missions to instill peace in the conflict zones.
- Create a sustainable future where a culture of integrity, good governance and zero tolerance to corruption will be promoted in all sectors of society.
- Increase financing support to state institutions such as the Gender Commissions, Human Rights Commission and National Peace and Reconciliation Commission for the effective implementation of women's human rights.

On strengthening the means of implementation and partnership for sustainable development (SDG 17):

- Institute cross-border joint learnings and benchmarking on SDGs for increased partnership formations.
- There is need to promote and advocate for participatory governance that take the form of bottom up approaches and ensure that the principles of good governance are followed by all members.
- Strengthen and finance the collection of disaggregated data collection and support National Statistical Offices to gather and systematize, as well as ensuring access of data by Major Groups and other stakeholders.
- Encourage and support local, national, regional, continental, and global actors to discuss openly, share experiences and challenges, network and collaborate for achievement of the sustainable development goals.
- Enhance a supportive environment to facilitate for multi-stakeholders' engagement.

MARRAKECH, 17 APRIL 2019

Annex 2: Detailed key messages from the breakout session.

Group 1: On ensuring inclusive and equitable education (SDG 4):

1. Include age appropriate, gender sensitive, sexual and reproductive health education that empowers adolescents and young people, especially adolescent girls and young women to make better decisions that reduce risk and enhance completion and transition rates. Enact, strengthen and implement laws and policies that address key barriers to access, transition and completion of education especially child marriage, teenage pregnancy, violence at school, economic inequalities that promote completion of education and especially keep girls in school.
2. Governments and stakeholders should invest in free, universal and quality education for all to foster chances of lifelong learning.
3. Ensure access to lifelong inclusive and quality education for marginalized and vulnerable groups such as children and youth with disability, older persons, orphans, out of school youth and indigenous groups.
4. Ensure discriminatory laws and policies that prohibit young mothers, pregnant girls and older people from attending school and that allow child marriage are eradicated.
5. Strengthening and invest in alternative education system and vocational training including apprenticeship and skills based certification to promote employability of youth and reduce pay gaps
6. Ensure life-long learning opportunities that respond to the rights and preferences of older persons. Reskilling, training and retraining equips older persons to be active agents in a complex and changing world.
7. Adapt learning opportunities, content and methodologies to the interests and preferences of older persons.
8. Ensure basic literacy and numeracy for all older persons, a prerequisite to fulfilling the right of all to education and ensuring full participation in society.
9. Put in place mechanisms that promote, encourage young mothers and pregnant girls to continue with their education
10. Put in place measures and mechanisms that protect children from School Related Gender Based Violence
11. Ensure, including through integration into official education curriculum, the acquisition of knowledge and skills by all learners (girls, boys of all ages) at all levels to promote sustainable development
12. Ensure the use of adequate language including mother's one and promotion of culture in all aspects of learning to overcome linguistic barriers
13. Ensure access to inclusive environments in educational institutions by most importantly including people with disabilities in the design and development of educational infrastructures and equipment.

14. Ensure easy access to basic social and economic amenities, especially in deprived communities to remove the usual barriers to education, especially the girl child.
15. Ensure financial inclusion for rural women and young girls to close the inequality that currently exist in our countries.

Group 2: On promoting decent work and inclusive economic growth (SDG 8):

1. Governments should accelerate investments in structural economic transformation of African economies that promotes broad-based industrial development and diversification;
2. Invest in building local and regional value chains not only for import substitution but to ensure that they develop strong back-ward and forward linkages with all sectors of the economy;
3. Adopt industrial, investments and sectorial policies and strategies that target sectors with high labor-intensive employment creation potential such as agriculture and tourism;
4. Design and implement pro-decent employment and demand-driven macroeconomic policies and strategies, in line with the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), supported by progressive and livable minimum wage policies;
5. Governments must take the necessary steps to speed up the implementation of the transition from the informal to the formal economy including the ILO Recommendation 204;
6. Governments should commit themselves to fully finance and promote Decent Work Country Programs (DWCPs) at national level.
7. Ensure partnerships, private development financing, trade and investment agreements do not ignore/neglect fundamental human and workers' rights and in particular women and girls worker's rights. Focus should be placed not only on the quantum of employment but the quality of the employment created and its propensity to catapult the majority of the people from high poverty and "working poor" status to productive and sustainable and decent livelihoods.
8. Government should insure the establishment of a functional legislative framework providing the necessary protections and guarantees, institutions to facilitate collective bargaining and address possible conflicts and ensuring effective labor market institutions and administration.
9. Governments should address the persisting high levels of youth unemployment and underemployment through investment in active labor market policies and program, quality public education and vocational training and systematically take
10. Governments should break and restore the existing difference between governmental, private and civilian workers due to difference of payment of pension after retirement;
11. Governments should invest adequate resources (human and financial) in the capacity of labor market institutions to ensure effective participation of the social partners in social dialogue;

12. Ensure universal access to social protection for all including older persons through investments in quality public services such as health, education, transport, water and sanitation to lessen the burden of unpaid care work on women and girls;
13. Noting that, public contracting consumes at least 70% of government budgets and is a major employment creation market in Africa, the government should adopt proactive disclosure, meaningful public participation and accountability across the public contracting cycle to facilitate sustained, inclusive, economic growth and decent work for all;
14. Implement and enforce policies on foreign investment that create opportunities for partnerships with local enterprises, promote worker rights and decent labor practices, and ensure evidence-based assessment of financial risk

Group 3: On ensuring reduced inequalities (SDG 10):

1. Address the rampant corruption tendencies in nations that create inequalities by implementing anti-corruption policies
2. Ensure adequate and equitable domestic financing for implementation of SDGs
3. Put in place strict and stringent migration policies that will address Human trafficking and cheap labor exports from Africa to the Middle East where Africans are being mistreated and injustices
4. Protect migrants from Africa to Europe to foster inclusive development especially reducing the deaths of Africans crossing to Europe. Governments should be compelled to provide favorable working and living conditions back home to reduce on migrants dying in oceans and lakes.
5. Promote a progressive tax regime that ensures that there is less emphasis on consumption tax especially as applied to goods and services known to be patronized by those who eke a living out of the lower ebb of society.
6. Improve public financial management to escape the debt trap that affects the rate and quantum of social expending by African governments
7. Make public spending more equity-enhancing to tackle multiple disadvantages and inequalities
8. Governments need to spend more on social services and make public spending more equitable
9. Support initiatives that developing countries take at national, regional or international levels to diversify the commodity sector.
10. Assist developing countries in applying commodity policies and collecting and using market information.
11. Encourage the implementation of macroeconomic policies that are favorable to women's and girls' development.
12. Ensure all people across the life course have age, disability and gender-equitable social protection and pension systems by means of the universal implementation of Goal 1, Target 1.3 on social protection floors and other measures.

13. Enact affordable, high-quality, person-centered and accessible social services, including health and long-term care, for all older persons.
14. Ensure meaningful participation of older persons in all planning and decision making processes, including through information on rights and entitlements.
15. Put in place a binding international legal instrument to protect the rights of older persons and ratify and implement African Union Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights of Older Persons in Africa.
16. That there is need to strengthen systems and legislation for the movement of persons with disabilities not only domestically also internationally so as to prevent human trafficking.
17. There is need to find mechanisms that will address the inequalities that exist between the people living with disabilities in rural and urban areas
18. There is need major groups and other key stakeholder to seriously committee to the principles of equality, non-discrimination and participation to ensure inclusion all people (Living no one behind)
19. There is need to strengthening mechanisms that promote effective data collection and monitoring mechanisms which can be used as a means for alternative data that is complementary to government information
20. There is need to hold government and policy makers to account on the implementation of existing policies that guarantee rights for vulnerable groups and their participation at all levels.
21. There is need to advocate for fair trade practices and policies that promote equality and equate investment ratio. E.g improving the position of African countries in determining commodity pricing.
22. There is agent need to address corporation and political capture within and among African countries.
23. There is need to promote and advocate for participatory governance that take the form of bottom up approaches and ensure that the principles of good governance are followed by all members.
24. There is need to ensure systems are put in place that promote effective management of the social protection safety net for the poor people particularly those living with

Group 4: On scaling-up climate action (SDG 13):

1. Innovatively mobilize domestic resources to support climate interventions with focus on strengthening climate resilience and also contribute to global mitigation efforts. Domestic resources should be complemented through strategically tapping on international climate finance. African governments and non-governmental actors' recipients should ensure continuous

capacity building to access climate finance at international level and also transparency and accountability on utilization of the received climate funds;

2. Implement national and local climate change resilience plans and strategies that have already been developed but not adequately implemented. African governments should enhance coherence among number of on-going processes under climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development in general. Specifically, the second generation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) should be aligned with 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Africa's Agenda 2063. In addition to mobilizing climate finance and capacity building, African governments should make use of the best available environmentally-friendly technologies including traditional/indigenous technologies to enhance awareness and support climate resilience interventions;

3. Enhance supportive environment to facilitate for multi-stakeholders' engagement and gender just transition on climate actions. Supportive rather than hindering legislature, institutions and infrastructure should be put in place for major groups and stakeholders to play their roles and fulfil their mandates. Also, our African government should uphold human rights of and make deliberate actions to protect environment defenders who have been under siege in recent years;

4. Set or improve monitoring and evaluation frameworks that track and assess implementation of commitments under 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Africa's 2063 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. This should be supported by the creation of or advancement of national database which can be easily accessed by all stakeholders for inputs and sharing of information.

5. Benchmarking studies should be undertaken by policy makers on what works well in other con countries.

6. "Climate justice" should be used in place of climate change to highlight unequal and unjust development practices by countries and corporations as well as their responsibility and accountability to reverse and mitigate against climate impact.

7. Implement environmental awareness programs and creation of national demonstration centers from which women can learn techniques for environmental protection.

Group 5: On ensuring peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16):

1. Institute conflict-resolution interventions in war-torn countries and regions to reduce on influx of Refugees and migrants

2. Effective enforcement to combat all forms of organized crime including illegal wildlife trade, complemented by action to

protect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities and secure their livelihoods and welfare

3. Inspire and support youth to become the leaders of Africa, mentor them to work together with the older generation to create a sustainable future where a culture of integrity, good governance and zero tolerance to corruption will be promoted in all sectors of society.

4. Uphold the rule of law even when undergoing major reforms , human rights are fundamental and they should be protected at all times

5. To ensure transparency and accountability, African governments should adopt an open and inclusive public contracting, beneficial ownership registers; and design national and regional frameworks that promote accountability and protection of taxpayer money from wastage, leakage , illicit financial flows and other malpractices

6. Recognize and protect civic space, by creating a safe environment where civil society can engage from the lowest community levels, national and regional

7. Establish strong, transparent mechanisms for following up the implementation of Sustainable Development at national level and at regional level.

8. Mediation, training, education and research must be among the actions with an emphasis on women's capacity-building at the grassroots levels. Promote respect for fundamental rights and dignity.

9. Engage women in the peace-building missions to instill peace in the conflict zones.

10. Increase financing and legislative support to state institutions such as the Gender Commission, Human Rights Commission and National Peace and Reconciliation Commission for the effective implementation of women's human rights.

11. Strengthen laws and policies which safeguard young people's access to their sexual and reproductive health, which protect them from child marriages, sexual exploitation, rape and gender-based violence including trafficking for sexual violence and strengthen institutions to police, legislate and create a safe environment for young people, women and all to access their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Group 6: On strengthening the means of implementation and partnership for sustainable development (SDG 17):

1. Institute cross-border joint learnings and benchmarking on SDGs for increased partnership formations
2. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of CSOs in data collection
3. Encourage and support local, national, regional, continental, and global actors to discuss openly, share experiences and challenges, network and collaborate for achievement of the sustainable development goals.
4. Balance the gender in the implementation of the SDGs.
5. Prioritize and finance the collection of age-disaggregated data at the national, regional and global level.
6. Support National Statistical Offices (NSOs) to gather, systematize and disaggregate age-related data.
7. Take notice of, finance and support the ongoing work of the Titchfield City Group on Ageing-Related Statistics and Age-Disaggregated Data.
8. Ensure systematic inclusion of upper age groups in SDG monitoring and reporting

Lastly, we are living with the reality that 21 SDG targets have a timeline of 2020, which by the time we hold the HLPF in July will be just 18 months away. We call upon member states to ensure that there's a timely (logically by September 2019 - at the UNGA also coinciding with the SDGs summit) initiation of a coherent, transparent and inclusive process of determining how these targets will be continued in order to maintain the ambition and integrity of the 2030 agenda and to ensure No One is Left Behind. This must be done with safeguards to ensure the ambitious 2030 agenda and its SDGs framework is not reopened for discussion.

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Annex 4: Programme of work

Economic and Social Council

Economic Commission for Africa
Preparatory and capacity development workshop for
major groups and other stakeholders in the Africa region
for the fifth session of the Africa Regional Forum
on Sustainable Development

Palais des Congrès de la Palmeraie de Marrakech, Morocco
16 April 2019

Provisional programme of work

8.30–9 a.m.	Registration
9–9.15 a.m.	**Opening and introductory session**

Facilitator: Edo Mahendra, Associate Economic Affairs Officer, Technology, Climate Change and Natural Resource Management Division, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Opening statements:

- Lilia Hachem Naas, Director, North Africa Office, ECA

- Jacqueline Amongin, Member of Parliament, Pan-African Parliament

- Emily Hosek, Associate Sustainable Development Officer, Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations

- Stephen Chacha, Chair, Interim Committee for the Regional Engagement Mechanism of Major Groups and other Stakeholders

9.15–10 a.m.	**Presentation and discussion on the global follow-up to and review of the Sustainable Development Goals and the preparations for the 2019 meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development: "Voluntary national reviews and the role of major groups and other stakeholders"**

Chair: Stephen Chacha, Co-founder, Africa Philanthropic Foundation

Presenter: Emily Hosek, Associate Sustainable Development Officer, Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations

Discussants:

- Martin Tsounkeu, General Representative, Africa Development Interchange Network

- George Osei-Bimpeh, Co-Chair, Ghana Civil Society Platform on the Sustainable Development Goals

10–10.15 a.m.	Tea and coffee break
10.15–11 a.m.	**Presentation and discussion on the regional report on progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063**

Chair: Emily Hosek, Associate Sustainable Development Officer, Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations

Presenter: Paul Mpuga, Economic Affairs Officer, Macroeconomics and Governance Division, ECA

Discussant: Salina Sanou, Global Co-Chair, Global Call to Action Against Poverty

11 a.m.–1 p.m.	**Round table on promoting peer learning and the exchange of experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, with emphasis on selected Sustainable Development Goals for 2019: "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality"**

Chair: Edith Madela-Mntla, Community Orientated Primary Care Research Unit, University of Pretoria

Panellists:

- Joseph Whittal, Chairperson, Ghana Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice

- Yetnebersh Nigussie, Disability Inclusion Advisor, Light for the World

- Mithika Mwenda, Secretary General, Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance

- Naome Chakanya, Senior Researcher, Labour and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe

- Roseline Kihumba, International and Regional Policies Coordinator, HelpAge International

	• Kawsu Sillah, Executive Secretary, African Youth Commission
1–2.30 p.m.	Lunch
2.30–3.30 p.m.	**Presentation and discussion on the strengthening and formalization of the engagement of major groups and other stakeholders in the work of the Regional Forum and sustainable development**

Chair: Stephen Chacha, Chair, Interim Committee for the Regional Engagement Mechanism of Major Groups and other Stakeholders

Presenters: Interim Committee for the Regional Engagement Mechanism of Major Groups and other Stakeholders

3.30–3.45 p.m.	Tea and coffee break
3.45–5 p.m.	**Discussions by breakout groups on the views and key messages of the major groups and other stakeholders on the subthemes of the fifth session of the Regional Forum**
5–6.30 p.m.	**Way forward and wrap-up of the workshop: joint Town Hall session with the voluntary national reviews workshop**

Statements by representatives of ECA, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, the United Nations Foundation, the voluntary national reviews and major groups and other stakeholders

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