



Sustainable development goals for the Central Africa subregion

Summary report



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa



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1. Introduction

Throughout the world, the Millennium Development Goals have led to advocacy actions and collaborative efforts focused on achieving goals that are measurable through indicators and targets. As the 2015 deadline draws near, initiatives are already underway at the global, regional and national levels to define the general outline of the post-2015 development agenda. In light of that, the entire international community concurred that the time was ripe to formulate new more appropriate sustainable development goals, indicators and targets for the post-2015 development agenda.

In preparation for the post-2015 development agenda, ECA, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) jointly organized subregional and regional consultations in Africa. These consultations were held in Accra, Ghana, in November 2011; Mombasa, Kenya, in October 2012; Dakar, Senegal, in December 2012; and Hammam et, Tunisia, in March 2013. At the regional consultations held in Hammam et, participants determined Africa's priorities for the post-2015 development agenda; identified enablers and critical success factors for the post-2015 development agenda; and aligned the priorities of the post-2015 development agenda with other development programmes and priorities, including the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The meeting participants adopted an outcome document in which it was agreed that the post-2015 development agenda should incorporate the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and those of the Africa-wide initiatives, national and regional consultations, and United Nations forums.

The meeting participants also agreed that the post-2015 development agenda should:

- (a) Emphasize economic growth and structural transformation;
- (b) Refocus the development model away from external initiatives and towards initiatives that are created and funded nationally, and founded on the basis of national ownership;
- (c) Make a priority of equity and social inclusion and measure progress against the availability and quality of services;
- (d) Pay closer attention to vulnerable groups, including women, children, young people, elderly persons, persons with disabilities and displaced persons;
- (e) Focus on development enablers and their results, in particular, the structural transformation of the economy and inclusive growth; innovation and technology transfer; human development; and the financing of partnerships.

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which was held in Brazil in June 2012, adopted a document entitled "The Future We Want", which was subsequently adopted by the General Assembly. This gave new impetus to the follow-up on and implementation of the commitments made at the Conference, including the development of sustainable development goals. These goals will be useful in planning targeted, coherent measures on sustainable development worldwide by taking into account the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

As part of the follow-up to the results of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, ECA, together with the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, held a meeting in November 2012 on regional implementation in Africa. Participants at that meeting reaffirmed the principles underlying the sustainable development goals and identified the broad priority areas for Africa as follows:

- (a) To eradicate poverty;
- (b) To reduce hunger by ensuring food security and adequate nutrition;
- (c) To provide access to drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities;
- (d) To provide access to quality education and health services;
- (e) To promote gender equality and women's empowerment;
- (f) To provide universal and equitable access to social services and social protection;
- (g) To foster sustainable and inclusive economic growth;
- (h) To reduce vulnerability and to promote resilience, including against the effects of climate change;
- (i) To create decent employment;
- (j) To further develop infrastructure;
- (k) To provide access to affordable and sustainable energy;
- (l) To combat land degradation and desertification, drought and deforestation;
- (m) To tackle problems resulting from climate change, including by adopting adaptation and mitigation measures;
- (n) To promote sustainable management of water resources;
- (o) To facilitate access to environmentally sound technologies and the transfer of these technologies, including with regard to adaptation to climate change and mitigation of its effects;
- (p) To promote peace and security.

In addition, participants called on the international community to give Africa the support needed to establish an effective, broad-based, bottom-up consultative process, and to develop goals, indicators and targets to underpin the sustainable development goals.

The present report

This report was drafted in the context of the African consultations on the post-2015 development agenda and the follow-up process of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, with a view to helping the African countries to meaningfully participate in the global process involving the sustainable development goals and to ensure that African sustainable development priorities are taken into account in a future global agreement. Five subregional reports, including this one, and a regional report on Africa were thus prepared. They were introduced at the Africa regional consultative meeting on the sustainable development goals held by ECA, together with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank, from 31 October to 5 November 2013. The meeting participants adopted an outcome document as technical input for consideration by the Africa High-level Committee on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

With a view to preparing a well-documented, analytical report on the sustainable development goals for the Central Africa subregion, the following specific goals were set: (a) to identify and analyse priority sustainable development issues in the subregion; (b) to identify, analyse and define Central Africa's key sustainable development areas and priority issues for the formulation of sustainable development goals,

taking into account the capacities of the subregion and the availability of data; (c) to propose a concise set of sustainable development goals as well as targets and indicators for the subregion; and (d) to make recommendations on the operational use and implementation of the sustainable development goals proposed for the subregion.

From a methodological point of view, the study, based on research and a literature review, involved a structured, in-depth and extensive use of all relevant documents that provided qualitative and quantitative information on sustainable development issues in the subregion. The subject areas covered related to economic development, social development, environmental development and vehicles for development.

E-mails were also sent to government officials of Central African countries, heads of subregional institutions, members of civil society, parliaments, universities and the private sector. Some of the e-mails contained an initial proposal, based on the documentation analysis, with a view to obtaining supplementary information, while others included an open questionnaire, indicating the format required for the input being requested. Twenty-four submissions were received from a total of six countries (Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe). Cameroon and the Congo submitted national positions that were based on a home-grown participatory process.

The data from the questionnaires was compiled and analysed in light of the results of the documentation analysis in order to identify and define priority areas and then formulate a proposal for sustainable development goals for Central Africa.

The report has been supplemented with inputs from the experts who took part in the Africa regional consultative meeting on the sustainable development goals. The first part deals with sustainable development priorities in the subregion, while the second addresses the priority areas or issues involved in formulating sustainable development goals for the subregion, with a proposed matrix of sustainable development goals with targets and indicators. Finally, recommendations are made for implementing the sustainable development goals in the subregion.

2. Sustainable development priorities in the subregion

2.1 *A great wealth of natural resources*

With its rich diversity of ecosystems and abundant water and forest resources, Central Africa is endowed with immense wealth for furthering its development. The subregion has the second largest reserve of dense rainforests in the world and 70 per cent of the humid and dense forest cover in Africa. It harbours a unique biodiversity area, home to nearly half of all species known on earth and numerous emblematic species such as gorillas, chimpanzees, bonobos, hippopotamuses, leatherback turtles, whales, duikers, picathartes and Congo peacocks. The Governments in the subregion quickly recognized the significant economic and sociocultural issues at stake and the critical environmental functions of these resources. They therefore introduced instruments, legal and institutional frameworks and coherent action frameworks for the conservation and sustainable management of these resources.

The subsoil of the subregion is also very rich, and in recent years, several countries have profited significantly from such resources through mining and oil activities. Governments have made remarkable efforts to promote and ensure transparency for social investments for the people, as part of poverty reduction efforts. Special funds have been set up to distribute the gains from these resources fairly between present and future generations. The public authorities' willingness to provide these resources to everyone without exception has been demonstrated, for example, by government commitment to ensuring transparency in the extractive industries.

Public authorities and decision makers of subregional institutions in Central Africa have properly assessed the issues, challenges and priorities relating to sustainable development, and their potential impact. Countries in the subregion are making significant efforts to enhance the rich potential of their natural resources. They have all developed medium- and long-term outlook papers and development plans and are also making efforts to monitor progress on the Millennium Development Goals. At the regional level, the countries of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa have developed a regional 2025 economic emergence programme. In 2007, the countries of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) adopted "Vision 2025", aimed at making the green economy a key sector for the economic development of the subregion, with the design and implementation of a Central Africa green economy system. The system uses policy, institutional, legal, regulatory, financial, promotional, security and operational approaches.

In countries unaffected by armed conflicts, ambitious infrastructure programmes such as roads and hydroelectric dams have been undertaken to better respond to national and cross-border and supranational needs. Notable efforts in subregional integration are beginning to show results where lasting peace has been restored.

2.2 *Generally inadequate development conditions*

The basic conditions for successful development programmes – peace and security, good governance, transparency, the fight against corruption and strong institutional capacities – are lacking in Central Africa, despite efforts by public authorities and development partners to improve the situation.

A significant security threat

Although ECCAS States are at varying stages of democratic transition, the area has, in recent decades, been beset with high sociopolitical instability, rebellion and intra- and inter-ethnic conflicts, inter-State conflicts, illicit trafficking in arms, drugs, humans and precious stones, and fighting over the control of resources. Armed groups have been active in areas such as north-eastern Cameroon, where they have links with Nigeria because of the porous borders; southern Chad; the Central African Republic; and the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They have undermined stability in those countries and caused serious damage to natural resources. This threat also impacts on wildlife and protected areas. Many species are endangered. Non-governmental organizations estimate that three quarters of the elephant population in Central Africa have been decimated by heavily armed poachers who come from the Sudan and Chad in search of ivory, and whose trafficking proceeds are typically used to buy weapons for regional conflicts. In large urban areas, organized crime is on the rise, together with ritual crimes and smuggling of persons and human organs.

Maritime boundary security is also gaining increasing importance on the global security agenda, as countries have to contend with both old and new threats such as smuggling of arms and drugs, kidnapping for ransom, piracy and terrorism. According to the latest statistics released by the International Maritime Bureau, there were 102 piracy attacks in the Gulf of Guinea in the first quarter of 2012 alone.

The insecurity and conflicts have had a significant impact on development efforts and have undermined prospects for structural stability. They have caused the death of millions of people, inflicted untold abuses, swelled the influx of refugees and displaced persons, as well as caused collateral damage to material resources. Restoring peace is therefore a major challenge for sustainable development in the subregion. Recognizing the disastrous social and economic impact of the conflicts, the countries of the subregion have introduced regional mechanisms, which have had varying degrees of success.

Lack of governance and weak institutions

The frequency of political crises, civil-military tensions, rebellions and military coups is closely correlated with weak national institutions and goes hand in hand with corruption and lack of transparency and accountability, which is rife in the exploitation of natural resources, particularly mining. The 2012 Ibrahim Index of African Governance awarded the highest rating in Central Africa to Sao Tome and Principe (ranking eleventh in Africa), followed by Gabon (ranking twenty-second in Africa). Development of the rule of law is high on the agenda for Central African countries. With a few exceptions, electoral processes and mechanisms are generally flawed, and the executive power is often accused of misusing its office to undermine the system of checks and balances (opposition political parties, civil society organizations and the media, except those owned by the executive) or to strip of their powers State bodies responsible for monitoring the actions of the executive. The executive's control over the legislature and judiciary has also hampered the independence of some national institutions, including the independent electoral commissions. Electoral processes do not automatically result in a democratic change of government. There are frequent political crises and the use of other forms of political participation based on abstention and voluntary political withdrawal is observed.

Tapping innovative sources of funding

One of the major limitations remains the lack of funding for sustainable development. Mindful of the serious global economic crisis and the new challenges that developing countries face, Central African countries are keen to look for innovative sources of funding. In addition to calling on developed countries and the rest of the international community to deliver on commitments made regarding funding for sustainable development, the authorities are exploring alternative avenues, including private-public partnerships, community-based savings through government bonds, solidarity fund mechanisms and a common subregional fund that could be used to finance national, cross-border and inter-State sustainable development projects. For instance, the Forseau project would benefit from the creation of a regional solidarity fund for water for Central Africa; such a fund could be financed in part by pooling the substantial surplus liquid assets of some countries in the subregion.

2.3 Weak infrastructure base

Infrastructures are essential for developing economies, reducing poverty and improving people's living conditions. The quality of infrastructure determines to a large extent the efficiency of public and private production systems for goods and services, and thereby the competitiveness of economies. Infrastructures are also considered to be powerful drivers for regional integration. In the years following independence, infrastructure featured prominently in the development policies and plans of States. However, the increase in geometric proportion of needs and the mathematical development of resources, coupled with flaws in infrastructure maintenance and facility rehabilitation systems, are to blame for acute shortages in transport, energy, water supply, sanitation and health infrastructure.

Inadequate transportation infrastructures

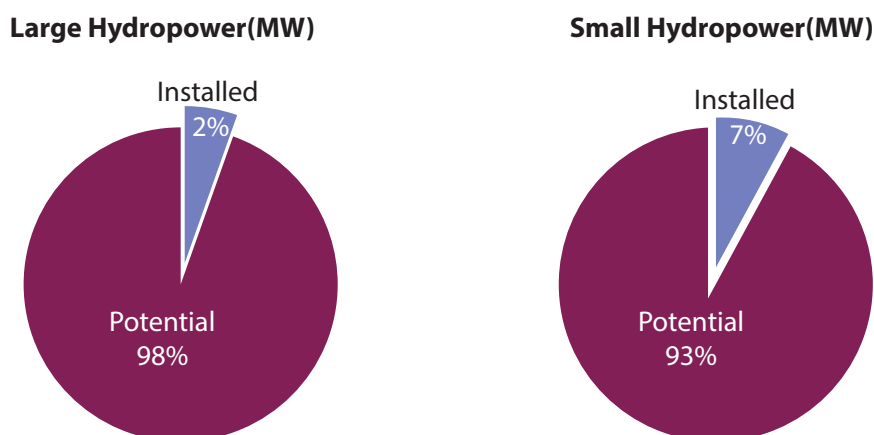
There is a clear lack of transport infrastructures. Links and interconnections between various modes of transport (air, sea, road and rail) are inefficient; air connections are inadequate and expensive; ports are poorly equipped and inefficient; and railway networks are outdated and too few in number. Intra-city public transportation in major cities is almost inexistent and roads are not usable at all times of the year; less than 10 per cent of roads are paved. Most agricultural areas are inaccessible because they are not connected to the road, rail or air networks.

Inadequate access to energy

Inadequate energy access is the greatest obstacle to economic growth. Several countries are afflicted by chronic power cuts. While Central Africa abounds in energy resources, with huge hydropower potential, such resources have not yet been adequately tapped.

Figure 1

Potential and installed hydropower capacities



Source: Africa regional paper "Bridging divides in Africa's water security: an agenda to implement existing political commitments". March 2009.

Lack of drinking water supply

In terms of the availability of drinking water and sanitation, the situation in Central Africa is of great concern. Overall, the rates of access to these services are very low. The lowest rates of access to drinking water are in Chad (34 per cent) and Equatorial Guinea (44 per cent). The lowest rates of access to sanitation services are in Chad (8 per cent) and the Congo (9 per cent). Countries with the highest rates of access to these services are Gabon (87 per cent for water and 36 per cent for sanitation), Burundi (79 per cent for water and 35 per cent for sanitation) and Sao Tome and Principe (79 per cent for water and 24 per cent for sanitation). In addition, the ineffective and poor quality of the water supply system in

urban areas in most countries, problems with potable water supply for rural and peri-urban areas and shortcomings in sanitation efforts have all led to the persistence of waterborne diseases, which are a major cause of mortality and morbidity in the countries of the subregion (ECCAS regional water policy).

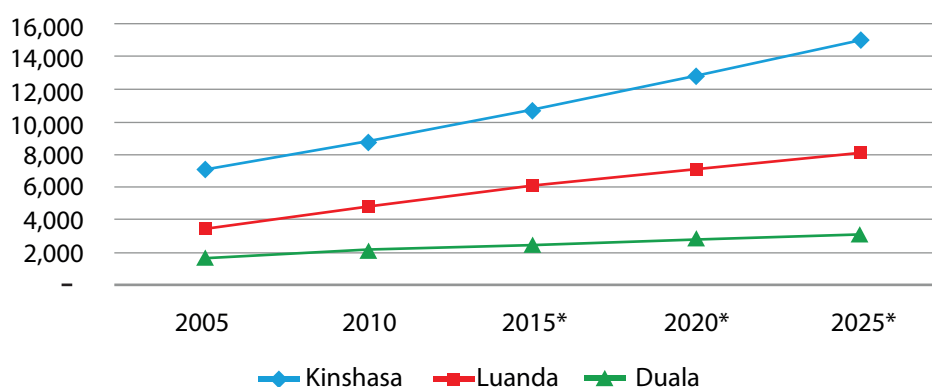
The problems stemming from the weak economic and social infrastructures in the subregion are exacerbated by significant population growth and rapid urbanization.

2.4 Strong demographic pressure

Despite the fact that the population growth rate has slowed down in the past decade, dropping from 3 per cent per year in 2002 to around 2.5 per cent per year in 2011, the population of Central Africa increased by one third in one decade. In 2025, the subregion's population will exceed the threshold of 200 million, against 108 million in 2002. In 2050, it will be 3.6 times that of the 2002 figure. Problems related to demographic pressure will be ever present and growing. Figure 2 shows estimates for Central African cities with a population of over one million.

Figure 2

Population trends in Kinshasa, Luanda and Douala



Source: Based on the figures of the United Nations Development Programme on human establishments; *State of the World's Cities 2012/2013: Prosperity of Cities*; 2012.

In the future, Central Africa will have to manage mega capital cities; these cities, comparable to countries, will cause land management problems, with various demographic pressures that will impact on the natural resources and sustainable development. There will be pressures on land, housing, intra-urban transport, water and sanitation and electricity. It will be necessary to deal with urban poverty; unemployment and underemployment, especially among young people; and the problem of slums. Food, health and education for this population will become serious issues. Access to improved sanitation facilities will be even more problematic as slums have already mushroomed in the big cities. Over 50 per cent of the urban population lives in slums in all ECCAS countries, except for Cameroon and Gabon. Sustainable urban development is thus of major concern.

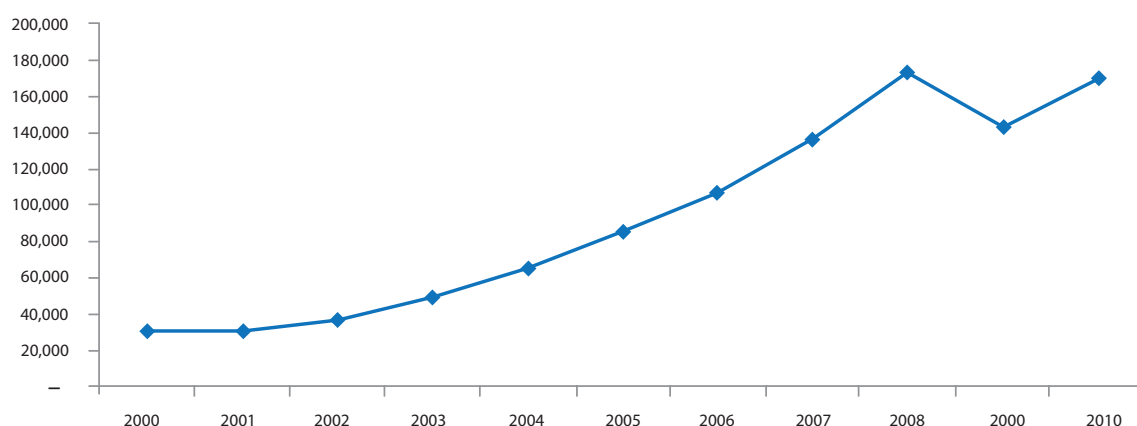
2.5 Positive economic growth overall

From 2000 to 2010, the total GDP in real value of ECCAS countries increased steadily, from \$31,390 million to \$172,451 million.

In general, the subregion's considerable progress in terms of GDP growth belies internal disparities. Over the 2000-2010 period, the real GDP of Angola increased nearly 20-fold, against nearly 12-fold for Equatorial Guinea, 6-fold for Chad and less than 4-fold for the other ECCAS countries. All the countries in the subregion have suffered the negative impacts of the crisis in 2008 and 2009. This clearly reflects the fragile economies of the subregion (see figure 3).

Figure 3

GDP trend of ECCAS, 2000-2010 (in\$ million)

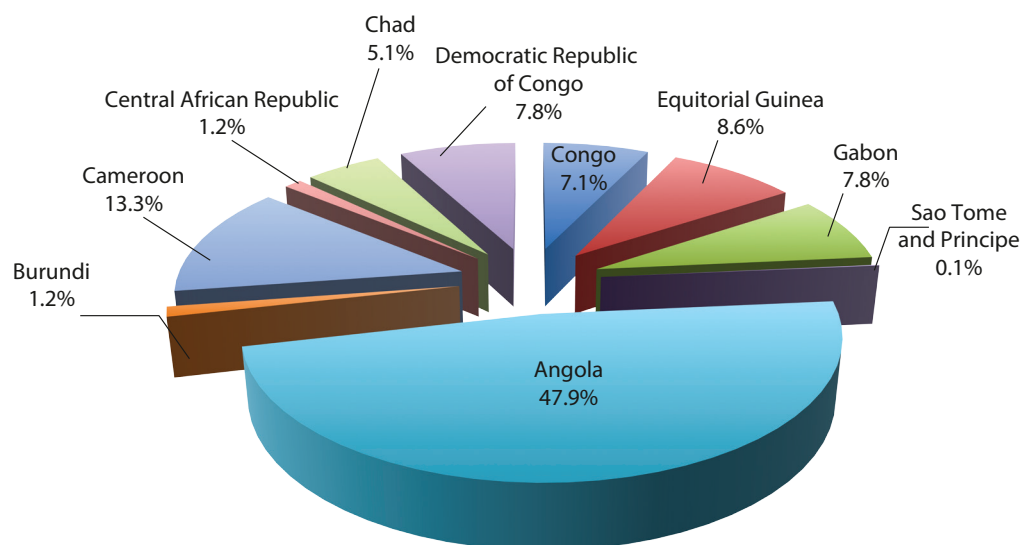


Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank, 2012.

The contribution of the subregion's countries to total GDP in real value is also very uneven; Angola alone accounts for 48 per cent, as shown in figure 4.

Figure 4

Contribution of the subregion's countries to total GDP in real value



Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank, 2012, 2010 figures.

Economic growth from natural resources

Such progress is highly vulnerable owing to: (a) poor diversification of the economy; (b) strong dependence on agricultural, forestry, oil and mineral raw materials; and (c) high vulnerability to primary commodity price fluctuations on the international markets. In half of the countries in the subregion, primary commodities account for more than 40 per cent of GDP: in Angola, they account for 46.3 per cent of GDP; in Chad, 43.27 per cent; in the Congo, 64.14 per cent; in Equatorial Guinea, 47.72 per cent; and in Gabon, 49.77 per cent. Countries such as Angola, Equatorial Guinea and Chad are now actively involved in the oil industry.

A promising green economy

The concept of the “green economy” only emerged very recently in international political discourse, but has been recognized as an option likely to contribute effectively to sustainable development goals. While several initiatives are ongoing in the subregion, it is too early to assess their true worth.

Sustainable agriculture for food security and sovereignty

Central Africa has enormous agricultural potential, with agro-ecological conditions conducive to the production of a wide variety of crops. Vast tracts of agricultural land are unused. Out of a surface area of 6.7 million km², 1.6 million km² is arable land, and yet only 3.75 per cent is farmed. Despite this potential, countries in the subregion have achieved paltry results in terms of agricultural production. A new threat has been observed, that of land grabbing, making it imperative to implement conservative land policies.

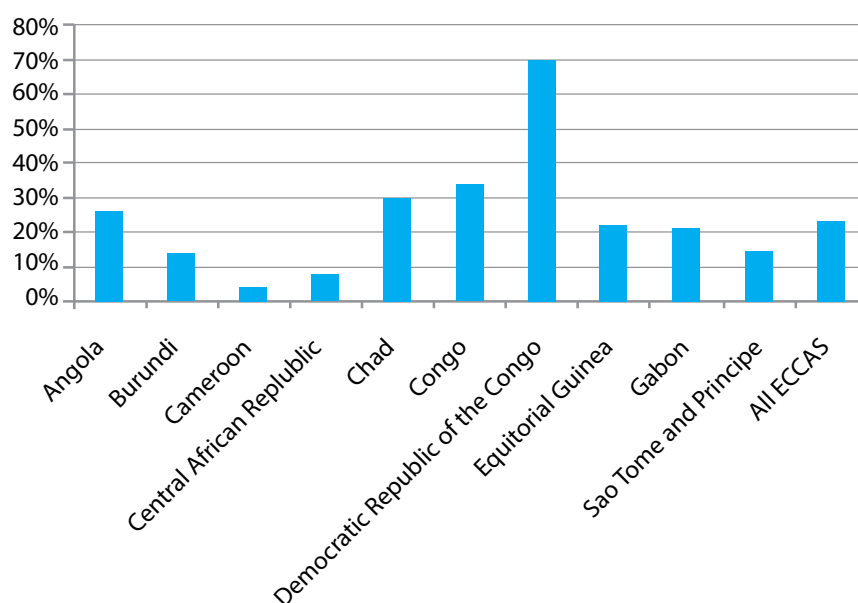
A sluggish industrial sector

The industrial sector, with the exception of mining, remains sluggish in the countries of the subregion. Its exports are mainly raw, unprocessed products that are not highly diverse. The manufacturing sector contributes very little added value, with the exception of Cameroon, where it stood at 16.72 per cent in 2007. Indeed, the industrial environment lacks incentives and is fraught with smuggling, fraud, counterfeiting and unfair competition from clandestine factories. Other constraining factors are poorly developed intracommunity trade and a financial system devoid of long-term financing programmes.

2.6 Extremely high unemployment and underemployment rates

The subregion has a very high unemployment rate (23.12 per cent), with even higher rates for countries such as Chad (30 per cent) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (70 per cent). The creation of decent jobs is a major goal for the coming years as part of sustainable development. Youth unemployment is of serious concern. Given the already special nature of this group of persons and the fragile social and political systems in the countries, Central Africa’s young unemployed have become a veritable time bomb that could explode and set the subregion ablaze at any time, if nothing is done to defuse it (see figure 5).

Figure 5

Unemployment rate in Central Africa

Sources: Data from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator> and <http://en.worldstat.info/Africa>, 2010 data.

Three avenues can be explored to address youth unemployment: (a) allocate more budgetary resources for youth employment initiatives; (b) systematically evaluate public employment policies to ensure that the issue of youth and women employment is properly managed ; and (c) mainstream entrepreneurial capacity-building for young people and women at all levels through appropriate training and financial and non-financial support for project leaders, the training of trainers in supporting young micro-entrepreneurs, and the building of life skills for young people. These skills would help them to build self-confidence in themselves and in the future, and to develop the critical thinking and sense of civic duty that would allow them to refuse risky ventures.

2.7 Unsatisfactory living conditions

Limited access to basic social services

Not surprisingly, limited access to basic social services (water, housing, health, education) is often linked to a strong propensity for poverty. This is due to inefficient social policies and inadequate health, water, education, housing, transport and communication infrastructures. Despite marked economic progress in the Central Africa subregion over the past decade in terms of GDP growth, the level of poverty and living conditions have not greatly improved. The poverty rate is high in all the countries in the subregion, with an average of nearly 55 per cent. Standard of living indicators, including access to drinking water and electricity, vaccination of children, the rural population, life expectancy at birth, unemployment and underemployment rate, are also unsatisfactory.

Persistent poverty

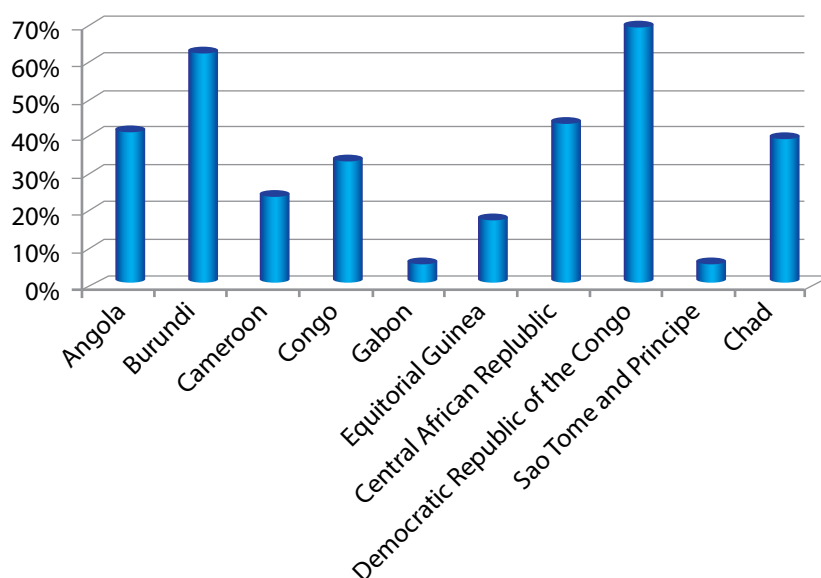
In many cases, there has been no progress towards achieving the goal of poverty reduction. Cameroon, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe are the only countries where less than one third of the population earns under \$1 a day. The situation is all the more worrying as the figures for other countries in the subregion indicate that over 50 per cent of the population earns less than \$1 a day; in the case of Burundi and Equatorial Guinea, over 60 per cent of the population is thus affected. Moreover, these rates fail to reflect considerable disparities within countries, in which there are pockets of extreme poverty in slums and peri-urban and rural areas.

High prevalence of malnutrition

With regard to the reduction of hunger, the results are not encouraging. Central Africa, in general, recorded the highest prevalence of malnutrition in the world. This underperformance of the subregion is mainly due to the poor results of Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the prevalence of malnutrition among the total population increased significantly (over 60 per cent) from 1990 to 2007. These rates are due to the many conflicts in the Great Lakes region.

Figure 6

Percentage of the population that is undernourished



Source: <http://perspective.usherbrooke.ca>

Access to quality education

The efforts of the subregion have been successful in ensuring primary education for all. Several countries such as Burundi, Cameroon, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe are approaching the 100 per cent target. This is not the case in other countries such as the Central African Republic and Chad because of the low expenditures earmarked for primary education as well as conflicts which have considerably damaged educational infrastructures. Teachers have to cope with very large class sizes, especially in the Central African Republic (84.3 children per class) and Chad (60.9 children per class). The percentage of teachers who have undergone teacher training is also quite low in countries such as Chad (34.6 per cent), Sao Tome and Principe (48.1 per cent) and the Central African Republic (45.3 per cent). Education continues to be of serious concern in Central Africa.

Persistence of gender-based discrimination

Governments have introduced new laws protecting the rights of women, in line with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. However, serious injustices against women persist in many areas: for instance, there continue to be disparities in access to education, even if they are not apparent at the primary level. Girls' enrolment compared to that of boys has increased in most countries, with the exception of Angola. Sao Tome and Principe has successfully eliminated inequalities between girls and boys in primary education, while in Burundi, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and, to a lesser extent, the Congo, this rate approaches 100 per cent.

The numbers for the political participation of women are not as good. In no country in the subregion has the number of women in parliament reached that of men. Worse still, in 8 of the 10 ECCAS countries, women have less than 20 per cent of parliamentary seats, a far cry from the 30 per cent benchmark for

power-sharing. Economically, women have less access to land than men, are confined to the agricultural and informal sector and rarely reach the position of business managers in the corporate world or directors of State corporations.

2.8 Significant pressure on the environment

Most countries have completed action plans on the environment and taken steps to incorporate social and environmental concerns into economic projects. The status reports prepared to support the policies, plans, strategies and programmes highlight the importance of the issues, recommend initiatives and provide guidance, stressing above all the importance of monitoring the situation.

Pressing need to better manage the negative impacts of climate change

The impacts of climate variability and climate change on the subregion's natural resources and economy have not yet been systematically assessed. A study should be carried out to: (a) identify the most common climate risks, the resources and the socioeconomic groups and areas most exposed to these risks; and (b) determine the level of vulnerability of the populations and ecosystems and prioritize them. This will help determine adaptation options for the resources and socioeconomic groups that are most vulnerable to climate risks.

Sustainable management of water resources

The water sector suffers from hydro-climatic variability, inadequate storage, a rising demand and lack of cross-border cooperation. Many challenges remain in this area, namely:

- Knowledge management and hydrological information: the subregion should seek to (a) improve management of the hydrological information needed for development planning; and (b) educate the population in order to ascribe more responsibility to them in water resource management.
- Management of water-related risks: the subregion should seek to prevent and better manage water-related risks, particularly through the implementation of prevention and early warning systems.
- Management of shared bodies of water: the subregion should seek to (a) strengthen cooperation between countries that share river basins, particularly by developing joint projects and programmes; (b) establish permanent bodies to manage these basins; and (c) ensure the sharing of water between surplus and deficit areas for the harmonious development of the subregion. Central Africa has 16 international river basins whose area exceeds 5,000 km². They are either located in the subregion or shared with other subregions. However, only five of these basins are managed through inter-State commissions or basin organizations. These are the basins of the Congo, Chiloango, Nile, Lake Chad, Cunene and Okavango. It is necessary, therefore, to develop formal frameworks for basins that are not yet managed institutionally. The development of large-scale infrastructures for managing water use while avoiding conflicts is a huge challenge.
- Water governance: the subregion should seek to (a) provide regional economic organizations, basin organizations and Governments with the appropriate tools for integrated water resources management; (b) ensure capacity-building for development actors involved in integrated water resources management; and (c) create an enabling environment for integrated water resources management at all levels.

Conservation of ecosystem biodiversity

The conservation of biodiversity is of paramount importance for the entire planet. Massive industrialization, pollution, extraction of land and marine resources and accumulation of waste are responsible for damage to or the destruction of many ecosystems. Massive tropical deforestation, expansion of urban areas and trafficking of rare animals and plants are other threats. Today, it is the entire living world that is affected.

In Central Africa, several species are gradually being wiped out. In January 2012, nearly 300 elephants were slaughtered in the Boubou Njida Park by heavily armed poachers from Chad and the Sudan in search of ivory, the proceeds from which are generally used for weapons acquisition. To curb these activities, regional authorities must set up a regional, legal and institutional framework to ensure sustainable management of sites and protected areas. This would contribute significantly to accelerating economic growth and creating jobs, as well as preserving and protecting biodiversity. This body should involve all stakeholders (local populations, economic operators, etc.) in a participatory process for managing and conserving protected areas.

Desertification control

Desertification is a real threat in Central Africa. It particularly affects the northern part (northern Cameroon, northern Central African Republic and Chad) and the southern part (Angola) of the subregion. Indeed, erosion has degraded the soils and led to a decrease in agricultural production, soil fertility and arable lands. Similarly, recurrent droughts and demographic pressure in the Sahelian region are accelerating desertification through degradation of soils and plant cover. This situation has led to the illicit and unsustainable exploitation of forests, which, it must be acknowledged, nevertheless enables urban and rural communities to meet their energy needs, and provides local and even international markets with wood and timber.

Management of chemicals and non-biodegradable industrial waste

The management of chemical products and non-biodegradable industrial waste is also a major challenge. The most challenging waste is associated with electronics, appliances and hospitals. In many developing countries, 80 to 90 per cent of the waste discharged into rivers or on coasts is raw sewage, i.e. waste that has not been processed. Pollution, associated with uncontrolled population growth and inadequate sanitation and waste treatment infrastructures, is a threat to public health and wildlife, as well as to income sources such as fishing and tourism. It is important to conduct a comprehensive study on the state of waste management in the subregion, together with a capacity-building plan for stakeholders.

3. Priority areas for the formulation of sustainable development goals

3.1 Identification of priority areas for sustainable development goals in Central Africa

This entails identifying areas to focus on in order to obtain the desired trigger effects and to benefit from leverage and ripple effects in other areas.

Table 1

Grouping of issues in priority areas

Issues of sustainable development	Priority areas
1. Peace and security - electoral mechanisms - equal human rights for all - access to justice and equality - rule of law, credible electoral processes, strong institutions, etc.	Peace, security and sociopolitical stability
2. Good governance - participation in citizenship – capacity for formulating, managing and evaluating public policies - decentralization and local development - combating corruption and fraud - combating impunity - combating illicit enrichment - accountability - transparency in the management of mineral resources	Governance and accountability
3. Integrated transportation policies (road, air, rail, sea and intra-urban transportation), energy policy development, integrated water resources management	Physical infrastructures for transportation, energy, water and sanitation
4. Agriculture - food - agricultural productivity - agricultural inputs - nutrition - hunger - imports of staple food commodities - diversification of agricultural production - employment - income - consumption - marginalization - inequality, monitoring of pesticide use, traceability of imported food, etc.	Poverty and food security and sovereignty
5. Private investment, private sector development, public-private dialogue and partnership, national policy and strategies for growth and jobs, competition policy, improvement of the business environment, public procurement policy, policies on subcontracting and partnerships - green growth, human capital development, decent jobs, corporate social responsibility, development of social security and civil security, inequalities, social cohesion, social legislation, social assistance, social transfers, social services, disaster prevention, disaster management, refugees and displaced persons, extension of social security, health insurance, research and development, intellectual property, culture and the cultural industry, greater appreciation of local knowledge, etc.	Green growth and creation of decent jobs
6. Hospital technical platforms, availability of health care personnel, spatial distribution of health care facilities, maternal and child health, development of standard and supplementary health insurance schemes, more extensive research, etc.	Improvement in access to healthcare for all
7. Primary, secondary, higher - vocational training - non-formal education - funding for education in general and higher education in particular	Improvement of access to quality education and professional training for all

Issues of sustainable development	Priority areas
8. Management of protected areas - conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity - sustainable natural resource management - strengthening of regulations on pollution and destruction of the environment – reduction of greenhouse gas emissions -set-up and management of green funds - sustainable management of forests and trees, agroforestry and reforestation, economics of protected areas, waste reclamation, clean energy and technologies, sustainable urban planning and construction, water and sanitation, oil waste management, management of emissions and economics of carbon, climate change economics. Combating of desertification and drought –land management and prevention of land grabbing, management of social consequences of artisanal or illegal mining, etc.	Protection of the environment, management of natural resources, and climate change
9. Equal opportunity and access to education and health, access to elected positions, access to high State positions, access to productive resources and funding, elimination of all forms of discrimination or violence. Promotion of social inclusion	Gender equality and women's empowerment

3.2 Relationship of priority areas to other sustainable development issues

Table 2 shows the critical conditions and expected outputs for each area in the case of successful action.

Table 2

Priority areas, critical conditions and expected outputs

Priority areas	Critical conditions for improving the situation	Expected outputs if situation improves
1. Peace, security and sociopolitical stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong, balanced institutions, that carry out efficient checks and balances (including with civil society and the media) • Equality of all before the law • Rule of law and true democracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved country risk rating and greater investor attraction • People's empowerment as a result of guaranteed rights of action and expression • Peace and social justice • Effective public policy • Credibility of public policy
2. Governance and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability obligations • Zero tolerance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved country risk rating and greater attraction for investors • Better use of public resources • Effective public policy • Participation by all in decision-making and production, and enjoyment of the profits from production • More competitive economy
3. Physical infrastructures for transportation, energy, water and sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A culture of forward-looking management of infrastructure needs and a culture of preventive maintenance • Framework for public-private partnerships • Peace and security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More competitive economy • Reduced cost of living • Improved living conditions • Attractiveness of improved economies • Strengthened regional integration

Priority areas	Critical conditions for improving the situation	Expected outputs if situation improves
4. Poverty and food security and sovereignty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable systems of production and consumption • Policies on managing social inequalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of hunger and poverty • Improvement in the quality of food consumed • Better health • Reduction of post-harvest food losses
5. Green growth and creation of decent jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human and institutional capacity • Institutions for the sustainable financing of the economy • Institutions for the regulation of competition • Effective institutions and mechanisms for preventive and corrective management of disasters and individual and collective shocks • Social security institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of wealth • Poverty reduction • Employment of the active workforce • Healthier competition and development • Improved social cohesion • Non-exclusion in case of individual shocks (e.g. loss of job, loss of spouse) • Fight against poverty • Better health
6. Improvement in access to health care for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable health-care financing • Capacity for training of health-care personnel • Sound management of health-care needs • Health insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved productivity of workforce • Better access to health care in terms of cost, distance, etc.
7. Improved access to quality education and vocational training for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable education financing • Forward planning of educational needs • Adequate number of quality educational personnel • Database on trades and programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human capital • Increased availability of a skilled workforce • Improved labour productivity • More competitive economy
8. Protection of the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subregional drive to support the green economy • Establishment of policies and institutions that promote the green economy • Establishment of green funds • National regulations that are favourable to the green economy • Private investment in the green economy • Enhanced effectiveness of the frameworks for sustainable management of natural resources and protected areas • Harmonization of regulations on environmental protection • Harmonization of forest taxation in the subregion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved human well-being and social equity • Creation of green jobs and greater social inclusion • Green growth (efficient use of resources and low carbon emissions) • Reduction of environmental risks and ecological scarcities • Development of green industries • Sustainably managed natural resources • Better protection of biodiversity and ecosystems • Improved forest management

Priority areas	Critical conditions for improving the situation	Expected outputs if situation improves
9. Gender equality and women's empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of national legal frameworks and legal practices with the principles and requirements of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women • Incorporation of the gender perspective in the budgets of member States' ministries • Implementation of policy on gender equality and quotas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimal opportunity costs • Better access to education • Better access to health care • Better access to productive resources

3.3 Similarity of priority areas from one country to another

A cross-analysis of the priority areas with the situational context shows a high level of convergence. Similarly, there is strong agreement in the proposals of the parties consulted, which suggests that the priority areas identified are considered relevant by the parties.

Table 3

Comparison of the priority areas of Cameroon and the Congo

Priority areas for the Congo	Priority areas for Cameroon
1. Governance and poverty eradication	1. Development of the rural sector and food security
2. Universal access to social services and social protection	2. Poverty
3. Access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation	3. Strong inclusive growth
4. Access to affordable and sustainable energy	4. Development of a healthy human capital
5. Curbing of vulnerability, promotion of resilience and control of deforestation, land degradation and desertification and drought	5. Development of infrastructures
6. Sustainable and inclusive economic growth	6. Sustainable environment management
7. Strengthening of infrastructure development	7. Promotion of equality and inclusion
8. Promotion of peace and security	8. Peace and security
9. Easy access to environmentally sound technologies and their transfer	
10. Promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment and strengthening of the rights of indigenous peoples	

Matrix of sustainable development goals, targets and indicators

Matrix of sustainable development goals	
Objectives and targets	Progress indicators
Goal 1. Promote democracy, the rule of law, peace, security and sociopolitical stability	
<p>Target 1: Increase the credibility of electoral processes and mechanisms</p> <p>Target 2: Ensure the autonomy of institutions for checks and balances</p> <p>Target 3: Increase the powers of subregional agencies for conflict prevention and peacekeeping, as the subregional peacekeeping force</p> <p>Target 4: Strengthen the capacity to combat cross-border crime; ensure maritime safety and security in the Gulf of Guinea</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percentage of peaceful political handovers 2. Degree of the autonomy of constitutional checks and balances 3. Number of media offenses punished, articles censored and media houses shut down 4. Number of members of civil society arraigned for crimes of opinion 5. Frequency of constitutional amendments 6. Frequency of intra and inter-State conflicts 7. Early warning system on insecurity in the subregion 8. Response capacity of regional forces
Goal 2: Promote good governance and accountability	
<p>Target 1: Boost credibility of national and regional systems for the prevention and punishment of corruption, fraud, embezzlement, conflicts of interest, insider trading and illicit enrichment</p> <p>Target 2: Strengthen institutional, human and material capacities to fight against corruption, fraud, embezzlement, conflicts of interest, insider trading and illicit enrichment</p> <p>Target 3: Improve local development management</p> <p>Target 4: Improve economic governance</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corruption index (National Democratic Institute) 2. Governance index (Mo Ibrahim) 3. Competitiveness index 4. "Doing Business" indicators 5. Number of days taken to complete funds disbursement procedure
Goal 3: Develop physical, economic and social infrastructures to improve livelihoods	
<p>Target 1: Develop road, rail, port and power infrastructures and inter-State connections to increase subregional trade</p> <p>Target 2: Significantly reduce the percentage of the population that has no access to quality electricity</p> <p>Target 3: Improve efficiency of road, rail, air and sea connections</p> <p>Target 4: Improve water management and governance to meet potable water requirements for various uses</p> <p>Target 5: Increase investment in the water sector to increase the rate of access to water, including the management of cross-border water sources</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion rate of the trans-African highway 2. Frequency of supranational and national traffic 3. Time needed to travel 100 km in a city 4. Percentage of population with no access to drinking water 5. Percentage of population with no access to quality power 6. Percentage of urban population with access to adequate sanitation facilities 7. Percentage of households with access to security of tenure (as owners or tenants)
Goal 4: Combating poverty and promoting food sovereignty	
<p>Target 1. Reduce by at least one half, from 2015 to 2035, the percentage of people whose income is less than \$1 per day</p> <p>Target 2. Reduce by more than 90 per cent, from 2015 to 2035, the percentage of people without access to a balanced diet</p> <p>Target 3. Reduce by at least one half, from 2015 to 2035, percentage of imports of staple foods consumed by the population</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percentage of population living on less than \$1 per day in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) 2. Poverty gap index 3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption 4. Prevalence of underweight in children under five 5. Percentage of the population below the minimum level of dietary energy consumption 6. Share of imports in staple foods consumed by the population

Goal 5: Promote green growth and creation of decent jobs

<p>Target 1: Multiply the 2008-2012 private investment growth rate from 2015 to 2035 by two or more</p> <p>Target 2: Increase percentage of decent jobs between 2015 and 2040</p> <p>Target 3: Provide more green jobs to diversify jobs available by 2040</p> <p>Target 4: By 2035, reduce by at least one half, the unemployment and underemployment rate of young university graduates</p> <p>Target 5: Strengthen social security and civil protection systems</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Level of net discounted savings 2. Unemployment rate of young university graduates 3. Underemployment rate of young university graduates 4. Growth rate of GDP per person employed 5. Employment/population ratio 6. Percentage of employed people living on less than \$1 - PPP per day 7. Percentage of self-employed and family workers of the total employed population 8. Percentage of forested areas 9. Energy use (kg of oil equivalent) per \$1 of GDP (PPP) 10. Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita) and consumption of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) depleting the ozone layer (tons of ozone-depletion potential) 11. Percentage of population using solid fuels 12. Sectors' contribution to growth 13. GDP growth rate 14. Social security coverage 15. Number of casualties following a disaster 16. Evaluation of material losses following a disaster
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Goal 6: Improve access to health care for all	
Target 1: By 2035, divide malaria mortality rate by at least 4	1. Percentage of population located over 15 minutes away from a health centre
Target 2: By 2035, divide prevalence of HIV/AIDS by at least 4	2. Ratio of medical laboratory analyses to population
Target 3: By 2035, ensure access to HIV/AIDS treatment for all those in need	3. Ratio of doctors to rural population
Target 4: Reduce under-five child mortality rate by two thirds between 2015 and 2035	4. Mortality rates associated with malaria
Target 5: Reduce maternal mortality rate by three quarters between 2015 and 2035	5. Rate of prevalence of HIV/AIDS
Target 6: By 2035, halt other major diseases and begin to reverse the current trend	6. Maternal mortality rate
	7. Percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel
	8. Contraceptive prevalence rate
	9. Birth rate among adolescent mothers
	10. Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit and at least four visits)
	11. Unmet family planning needs
	12. Prevalence of HIV among population aged 15 to 24 years
	13. Frequency of condom use during the most recent high-risk sexual encounter
	14. Ratio of school attendance rate of orphans to school attendance rate of non-orphans 10-14 years of age
	15. Percentage of HIV-affected persons who have access to antiretroviral drugs
	16. Malaria incidence and mortality rate
	17. Percentage of under-five children sleeping under insecticide-treated bed nets
	18. Percentage of under-five children with fever who received the appropriate antimalarial drugs
	19. Incidence and prevalence of tuberculosis, and tuberculosis mortality rate
	20. Percentage of tuberculosis cases detected and treated under directly observed treatment short course (DOTS)
Goal 7: Ensure secondary education and professional training for all	
Target 1: By 2035, provide all boys and girls with the means to complete a full course of secondary education	1. Net secondary school enrolment rate
Target 2: Establish life-long training	2. Net primary school enrolment rate
Target 3: Achieve a critical mass of specialized skilled technicians and workers in high-tech sectors	3. Percentage of students starting the first year of secondary school and who completed the final, seventh year
Target 4: In mining areas, put an end to the flow of children leaving school to work in mines	4. Literacy rate of women and men, 15-24 years old
	5. Percentage of pupils who started first year primary and who completed primary school
	6. Percentage of organizations with a vocational training plan
	7. Number of skilled technicians in the high-tech sectors
	8. School enrolment ratios in areas of artisanal or illegal mining

Goal 8: Ensure environmental protection and promotion of resilience to climate change	
Target 1: Protect biodiversity from anthropogenic activities and by 2035, eliminate losses due to human activity	1. Percentage of land and marine protected areas
Target 2: Improve the effectiveness of the framework for sustainable management of forests and trees	2. Percentage of protected areas to total surface area
Target 3: Ensure implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets on protection of biodiversity and extend them beyond 2020	3. Percentage of species threatened with extinction
Target 4: Increase resilience to climate change	4. Deforestation rates
Target 5: Improve the management of water ecosystems	5. Water resource extraction rate
Target 6: Combat drought and desertification	6. Soil degradation rate
	7. Strategy papers written on resilience to climate change
	8. Number of people trained in climate change management
	9. Number of awareness campaigns on climate change
	10. Total reforested area
Goal 9: Promote social inclusion, gender equality and women's empowerment	
Target 1: Eliminate gender disparities in education and in citizen participation by 2035	1. Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and higher education
Target 2: Incorporate into all policies and strategies the concerns of disadvantaged people, including indigenous people, people living with a disability and elderly people	2. Ratio of literate women to literate men, aged 15-24
	3. Percentage of women employed in non-agricultural sectors
	4. Percentage of seats held by women in parliament and locally elected positions
	5. Socially inclusive policies and strategies

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The sustainable development goals are likely to fail if ownership of the process is lacking, particularly in terms of inappropriate policies, lack of reliable data and appropriate instruments, problems of governance, instability and other sociopolitical unrest, lack of financial resources and climate change. The conclusions and recommendations are designed to build capacities for ownership and operationalization of sustainable development goals in the subregion.

For Governments

- (a) Continue and strengthen national initiatives for conservation and sustainable use of the environment, including tools and frameworks for the management of protected areas, sustainable forest and tree management, integrated water resource management and soil protection;
- (b) Continue efforts to restore and/or consolidate peace, security and safety in individual States and the subregion as a whole;
- (c) Strengthen governance and accountability mechanisms; strengthen the capacity of control mechanisms at the highest government levels; and strengthen local governance mechanisms;
- (d) Pursue ongoing infrastructure programmes and guide them so as to produce powerful subregional integration drivers;
- (e) Continue and strengthen economic diversification and growth consolidation programmes based on the development of a green economy;
- (f) Implement programmes for sustainable urban development, incorporating components related to land development, urban infrastructure, socioeconomic integration of young people, mass education on citizenship and support to the private sector for corporate social responsibility, etc.;
- (g) Further mainstream the three pillars of sustainable development into country policies, strategies, plans, programmes and projects on development;
- (h) Set up a mechanism to assess progress towards achieving the sustainable development goals at the national level;
- (i) Set up a participatory mechanism for implementing sustainable development goals at the country level;
- (j) Strengthen regional integration by better converting into national legislation and national budgets existing common policies, such as the regional water policy, the common agricultural policy and the common forestry policies;
- (k) Place particular emphasis on the development of the green economy and develop appropriate funding mechanisms;
- (l) Ensure donor coordination and strengthen the capacity of Governments to design, implement and monitor an effective sustainable development planning framework;
- (m) Establish or strengthen mechanisms for promoting and protecting human rights in the country;
- (n) Design and implement an information and awareness strategy on sustainable development goals;
- (o) Improve the effectiveness of national statistical data production and dissemination systems for formulating and managing public policies that facilitate identification of priorities and monitor-

ing of progress. The challenge is to transcend the physical implementation in order to quantitatively and qualitatively assess progress and the final outcomes of public policies.

For regional organizations

- (a) Set up a subregional observatory for sustainable development;
- (b) Create an observatory on the rule of law in Central Africa;
- (c) Strengthen regional integration and make it more effective by improving policy formulation and management and the free movement of goods and people;
- (d) Continue to develop a common policy and strategy for the sustainable development of the wood processing industry in the Congo Basin and, more generally, a regional industrial development policy;
- (e) Incorporate evaluation and development of sustainable development goals into public engineering tools to increase the effectiveness of public policies;
- (f) Help donors to coordinate efforts and build the capacities of member States to design, implement and monitor effective planning frameworks;
- (g) Carry out a study on the creation of green jobs to identify how the green economy may affect job creation, namely: (i) creation of additional jobs; (ii) substitution between jobs; (iii) elimination of some jobs without direct replacement, as when packaging materials are discouraged or banned and their production discontinued; and (iv) reorientation and re-skilling of many existing jobs, notably in construction;
- (h) Pursue the operationalization of the fund for the green economy in Central Africa, which is managed by the Central African States Development Bank;
- (i) Establish a subregional body to manage monitoring of the achievement of sustainable development goals.

For civil society organizations

Become more involved in initiatives and debates on the formulation, implementation and monitoring of the sustainable development goals. This requires the international community and States to create a favourable environment for greater involvement, both in terms of resources and in terms of setting up dedicated forums for discussion.

For the international community

- (a) Provide support to subregional security mechanisms;
- (b) Maintain the funding mobilization drive observed in the framework of the Millennium Development Goals;
- (c) Develop at international level a sustainable development index that combines human development and environmental impact with a view to better assessing and monitoring countries' progress;
- (d) Take specific circumstances of each country into account in the implementation of sustainable development goals.

