



## Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General

26 August 2022

Original: English

**Economic Commission for Africa****Statistical Commission for Africa**

Eighth meeting

Addis Ababa, 24–26 October 2022

Item 3 of the provisional agenda \*

**Statistics programme of the Economic Commission for Africa: statutory issues**

### Report on progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa

#### I. Introduction

1. The purpose of the present report is to examine the key challenges encountered, ongoing initiatives, opportunities, lessons learned and efforts to track progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa over the last two years. In assessing such progress, the report reviews the current status and the likelihood of Africa achieving the Goals by 2030. The outcomes outlined in this report will serve as crucial input to policy interventions geared towards accelerating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal targets in Africa, notwithstanding the challenges encountered in the measurement process, in particular the availability of data. Data collection challenges associated with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic have limited the ability to measure the full impact of the pandemic on the Goals. African governments and partners need to close the resulting gaps in data on the Goals and to improve their capacity in data production and dissemination.

2. In the report of its twenty-third session (E/2021/23),<sup>1</sup> held in 2021, the Committee for Development Policy noted the importance of monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on countries as more data became available. The Committee also noted that the most commonly unreported goals and targets in the 2020 voluntary national reviews are those most closely related to the environment and climate change, and to inequality. While this may be attributed to the legacy of the Millennium Development Goals and data availability, it is inconsistent with the integrated and indivisible nature of the Sustainable Development Goals, the need for balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development and the pressing crises of climate change, environmental degradation, and inequality, aggravated by the pandemic.

3. In its draft 2022 report on Africa progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, currently under preparation, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) reports that Africa has actually regressed in its efforts to combat climate change and its impacts. In 2019, 8 million people were affected by disaster in 11 countries, putting them at emergency levels of food insecurity or worse. Greenhouse gas emissions have been on the rise in Africa, in consequence of the growth of industrialization, with the continent's more developed countries representing the largest source of such emissions. The continent accounts for only 2–3 per cent of the world's carbon dioxide

\* E/ECA/STATCOM/8/2022/1.

<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3929589>.



emissions and is rendered particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters by its weak response capability.

4. Where inequality is concerned, the report states that, overall, Africa has stagnated on Goal 10. At the current pace, the prospect of reducing inequality within and among countries is far out of reach by 2030. Inequality remains one of the biggest challenges faced within African countries, which have high levels of income inequality as measured by the Gini index. The cost of remittances on the continent is among the highest in the world: as a proportion of the remitted amount, in 2019 these were estimated to range from 4.2 per cent in Liberia to 19.5 per cent in Angola. On the other hand, since 2017, there has been an observed downward trend in the number of refugees per 100,000 members of the population.

## **II. Main challenges in implementing indicators for monitoring and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals**

5. The *2021 Voluntary National Reviews Synthesis Report* submitted to the high-level political forum on sustainable development emphasizes, in keeping with previous such reports, that the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals requires the support of the national statistical system and that the collection, processing, analysis and release of reliable, timely, available, high-quality and disaggregated data on the indicators were fundamental for evidence-based policymaking.<sup>2</sup> The synthesis report recognized that countries had launched a series of measures to increase data availability for policymakers and other users to facilitate implementation, follow-up and review of the Goals.

### **A. Data availability**

6. Limited evidence and data availability, disaggregation and collection remain challenges for many countries. Even so, significant improvements have been made and the majority of the 2020 voluntary national reviews demonstrate that countries are taking important steps to surmount problems related to data availability, gaps, disaggregation and monitoring and data collection. They also show that most countries are incorporating data into their reviews, and over half of all the reviews in 2020 included a statistical annex (Benin, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gambia, Kenya, Liberia, Seychelles and Uganda).

7. Similarly, the 2021 voluntary national reviews demonstrate how countries have continued to tackle data availability and collection issues. For instance, Angola, Cabo Verde, Chad, Madagascar, the Niger and Zimbabwe included a statistical annex in their reviews, while Egypt launched an online Sustainable Development Goal data reporting platform to make the latest data available and show progress. That said, countries in Africa still struggle with the problem of limited data. Thus, Chad, Namibia and Zimbabwe, among others, cited gaps in data availability as major challenges to the monitoring of progress towards the Goals. Data collection challenges were also highlighted by Egypt, the Niger and Sierra Leone, among others.

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<sup>2</sup> Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *2021 Voluntary National Reviews Synthesis Report*, p. 67. Available at [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/294382021\\_VNR\\_Synthesis\\_Report.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/294382021_VNR_Synthesis_Report.pdf).

## **B. Data disaggregation**

8. Although countries recognized the importance of data disaggregation in observing the key principle underpinning the 2030 Agenda, namely that no one shall be left behind, in the 2021 voluntary national review synthesis report Angola described challenges in producing disaggregated data necessary for the better alignment of the country's review with, on the one hand, the Sustainable Development Goal indicators and, on the other, regular and systematic updating. Some other countries (Egypt, the Niger and Zimbabwe) mentioned the lack of data for special population groups.

9. The inclusion of persons left behind begins with the identification and analysis of their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, as noted by some countries. Egypt and Zimbabwe affirmed the importance of acquiring disaggregated data to support their policies, highlighted the need for disaggregated data to identify those suffering from multiple deprivations and stressed that the collection of disaggregated data from surveys and administrative sources was critical to informing the planning and implementation of tailor-made programmes for their populations.

10. Countries reported on the importance of ensuring that no nation or region was left behind. The differences in terms of well-being between urban and rural populations were highlighted by Cabo Verde, Egypt and Zimbabwe, with hard-to-reach areas suffering from lack of basic services and poor, and rural areas lacking adequate healthcare, nutrition and access to water and sanitation. These countries have been taking action to address this rural-urban divide. Namibia and Zimbabwe noted salient differences between the different subregions in their countries.

## **C. Awareness-raising and stakeholder engagement**

11. In Africa, Chad, Madagascar and Zimbabwe reported on initiatives to raise awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals specified in the 2021 synthesis report. In addition, Zimbabwe translated the Sustainable Development Goals and related official documents into the country's national languages. Egypt, Madagascar, and Zimbabwe reported on efforts to disseminate information on how the Sustainable Development Goals are being implemented. For instance, Egypt launched a mobile application (Sharek 2030) to publish project plans and integrate citizens in designing and monitoring the annual sustainable development plan. Zimbabwe reflected on the challenges and next steps related to awareness-raising for the 2030 Agenda. In addition, Zimbabwe recognized the need to strengthen efforts to raise awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals among people living in rural areas, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

12. Concerning stakeholder engagement, to ensure inclusiveness and multi-stakeholder participation in the voluntary national review process, in 2020, countries such as Ghana, Lesotho and Sierra Leone involved representatives of vulnerable groups, youth, minorities, migrants and indigenous peoples to join the process. Ghana and Sierra Leone described how stakeholders were consulted when the country's medium-term development plans were being formulated.

13. In 2021, Egypt, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe employed a whole-of-society participatory approach in stakeholder engagement with consultations involving all relevant stakeholders (public sector even within the lower tiers of government, parliamentarians, private sector, civil society, international organizations, youth, women, media, etc.).

## **D. Limited financial and technical support**

14. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impaired countries' ability to mobilize resources for the pandemic response and recovery and for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Many countries highlighted challenges relating to mobilizing resources towards these ends (Angola, Cabo Verde, Chad, Namibia and Zimbabwe). Egypt noted that pre-existing financing challenges had been exacerbated by the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, requiring the mobilization of finances to provide adequate stimulus packages and protect vulnerable segments against the background of waning government revenues.<sup>3</sup>

15. The Comoros cited the need for support in data production, analysis, and publication; Kenya noted that limited statistical capacity and the disaggregation of data at the lower level required large sample sizes which had cost implications; the Niger emphasized the persistence of constraints such as weak national financing of the statistical system, the need for more statistics professionals to support the Sustainable Development Goals data monitoring processes, weak data collection of administrative data and weak coordination and centralization of sector statistics articulated in its 2020 voluntary national review reports, to mention a few.

16. Furthermore, Benin expressed the continued need to strengthen the statistical information system; Nigeria highlighted challenges with the consistency of data produced by the National Statistics Office; Chad cited insufficient funding for statistical operations which are highly dependent on external finances from international and multilateral sources; and Egypt reported on its implementation of several projects with the financial and technical support of development partners.

## **III. Main initiatives to tackle challenges**

17. Statistical capacity-building in all areas, including collection, analysis, disaggregation and dissemination of data, continues to be identified as key to the monitoring and tracking processes necessary for reporting on progress in several development agendas, including national development plans, the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union, to mention a few. In 2021, as in previous years, Chad, Sierra Leone, Tunisia and Zimbabwe called for continued strengthening of data collection and statistical capacity of the national statistical systems.

18. The present section deliberates on the lessons learned, best practices and the most common initiatives employed to enhance the monitoring and reporting on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **A. Lessons learned and opportunities**

19. Many lessons learned and opportunities arising from the challenges associated with tracking progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals are registered in various documents and platforms. For example, the 2020<sup>4</sup> and 2021<sup>5</sup> voluntary national reviews highlight country experiences and a range of opportunities in this regard.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p.82.

<sup>4</sup> 2020 voluntary national reviews available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2020#vnrs>.

<sup>5</sup> 2021 voluntary national reviews available at <https://hlpf.un.org/countries?f%5B0%5D=year%3A2021>.

20. To improve data availability, most of the country voluntary national reviews prepared over the last two years stressed the central role played by the national statistical system in Sustainable Development Goal monitoring, in addition to the role played by the national statistical office in coordinating its work with other players in the national statistical system, including line ministries, to provide the data required for assessing progress on the Sustainable Development Goals in their respective thematic areas.

21. The use of technology to improve data collection, analysis, and accessibility considering the broad scope of the Sustainable Development Goals, including improvement of dissemination platforms for the Sustainable Development Goals indicators. Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe noted the crucial role of technology in ensuring proper data collection and research for monitoring attainment of the Goals. The following are some of the lessons learned from the 2020<sup>6</sup> and 2021<sup>7</sup> voluntary national reviews:

(a) Strengthening the use of non-traditional data sources, including administrative data systems, and of big data would go a long way towards closing data gaps in the monitoring of the Goals, as reported by Kenya in 2020 and Zambia in 2021. Kenya is making use of big data to produce new and policy-relevant ICT statistics;

(b) The establishment of new and reinforcing institutional mechanisms for effective coordination of the Goals would facilitate the tracking of progress, as reported by Malawi, the Niger and Uganda in 2020 and Zimbabwe in 2021;

(c) National sustainable development frameworks should be designed that mainstream, integrate and realign the national visions and national development plans and policies with the Sustainable Development Goal indicators, as reported by Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Nigeria in 2020.

22. The United Republic of Tanzania conducted awareness-raising workshops on the Sustainable Development Goals for regional secretariats and local governments, to ensure that these bodies mainstreamed and incorporated the Goals into their plans and budgets. Other countries used media campaigns to reach larger population groups. Ghana has set up a Sustainable Development Goals media network. Experience and lessons learned in raising awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals are reported by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Gambia and Kenya in their 2020 voluntary national reports.

23. Where funding for the efforts to attain the Sustainable Development Goals is concerned, the following steps were identified:

(a) *Harnessing domestic resources and financing*: These included reforms to boost countries' taxation capacities (Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Rwanda in 2020; and Zimbabwe and Chad in 2021)); strengthening audit procedures to enhance the efficiency of tax administrations (Cameroon and Rwanda in 2020); tax compliance and enforcement measures (Sierra Leone in 2020); and promotion of modern means of payment (Burkina Faso and Cameroon in 2020). In 2021, Chad reported the development of a national health financing strategy;

<sup>6</sup> 2020 Voluntary national reviews include: Benin, Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gambia, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Seychelles, Uganda and Zambia.

<sup>7</sup> 2021 voluntary national reviews include: Angola, Cabo Verde, Chad, Egypt, Madagascar, Namibia, Niger, Sierra Leone, Tunisia and Zimbabwe.

(b) *International development assistance*: Chad, the Congo and Lesotho reported that international partners provided the larger share of resources used to finance the Sustainable Development Goals. In its 2021 voluntary national report, Cabo Verde cited financing through official development assistance, and concessional loans;

(c) *Other sources of financing*: These comprise, first, the private sector (Algeria, Congo, Ghana and United Republic of Tanzania in 2020; and Madagascar and Zimbabwe in 2021); second, public-private partnerships (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Tunisia in 2020; and Angola, Egypt and Zimbabwe in 2021); third, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (Algeria, Cameroon, Chad and Eswatini in 2020); fourth, foreign direct investment (Algeria, Burkina Faso and Cameroon in 2020); and, fifth, remittances and contributions from the diaspora (Algeria, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritius, Rwanda and Sierra Leone in 2020; and Zimbabwe in 2021). Sixth, innovative financing mechanisms such as blue economy financing (Cabo Verde in 2021) and the Green Economy Financing Facility (Egypt in 2021).

## B. Main initiatives

24. The key initiatives undertaken to track challenges associated with achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators include the following:

(a) Voluntary national reviews, initiated by the high-level political forum in 2016, have continued annually across different sets of participating countries per year, thus providing a platform for continuous periodic tracking and assessment of progress on Sustainable Development Goals and other development agendas including National and sub-national levels;

(b) Drive to identify and employ non-traditional data sources, including administrative data, big data, geospatial data, and other non-official data for the purpose of keeping pace with the requirements to monitor and report on the Sustainable Development Goals and to provide more disaggregated data, guided by the principal of leaving no one behind;

(c) Organization of the annual Sustainable Development Goal Moment, held with the aim of reinforcing the continued relevance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and building momentum in advance of major summits and intergovernmental meetings. The Moment also highlights urgent actions needed to ensure that coronavirus disease (COVID-19) response and recovery efforts are equitable and inclusive and that they accelerate the transition to sustainable development, while also demonstrating that transformative change at scale is possible between now and 2030;

(d) Continued efforts by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators and activities relating to the work streams for enhancing data availability, data disaggregation, and activities of the three working groups on interlinkages, the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) and geospatial information, among others;

(e) Annual report on the assessment of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa based on the methodology adopted from the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).<sup>8</sup> The report provides measures to answer two questions: first, how much progress has been made since 2000? Second, how likely is it that the targets are

<sup>8</sup> Available at <https://ecastats.uneca.org/unsdgsafrica/SDGs/SDG-progress/Progress-Assessment-Methodology>.

achieved by 2030?<sup>9</sup> In addition, the Africa Sustainable Development Goals progress dashboard has been launched, providing a snapshot of the continent's status in achieving the goals and, in a dashboard format, assessing the likelihood of achieving the various targets by 2030.

#### **IV. Prospects for Africa: Sustainable Development Goal indicators by 2030**

25. The present section highlights the methodology used to track progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa since 2000, followed by summary results demonstrating that progress in terms of the various Goals and targets. The continent's prospects of attaining the Goals by 2030, if the current trends and pace of progress are maintained, are also presented, along with an assessment of progress towards the Goals as measured by the Goal indicator level.

##### **A. Progress by Africa towards the Sustainable Development Goals**

26. The present subsection summarizes results obtained by ECA in tracking and assessing the progress achieved by Africa, based on the ESCAP methodology mentioned above. The methodology provides two measures for tracking progress: "the current status index", which measures progress since 2000 towards a specific target value; and "anticipated progress", which measures the gap between the predicted value of an indicator and its corresponding specified target value, hence giving an indication of the likelihood that the target value will be achieved by 2030.

27. The current status index is presented at the goal level (snapshot) while the anticipated progress is at the target and indicator levels (dashboard and progress gap). Since the dashboard indices are only calculated for indicators with at least three data points, and the snapshot indices for indicators with at least 2 data points, the dashboard and snapshot results are not comparable.

##### **B. Status of progress made by Africa in 2020**

28. The following paragraphs summarize progress by Africa in 2020 towards fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda.

29. In the assessment of progress on the 2030 Agenda at the continental level, data for an indicator were considered sufficient if they could be aggregated over a minimum of two years (2 data points) and covered at least 40 per cent of all African countries to ensure representativeness. The Sustainable Development Goal indicators without a single datapoint include: Goal 1 – no poverty (1.b.1), Goal 2 – zero hunger (2.4.1), Goal 5 – gender equality (5.2.2), Goal 8 – decent work and economic growth (8.5.1), Goal 9 – industry, innovation and infrastructure (9.3.1), Goal 10 – reduced inequalities (10.7.1), Goal 11 – sustainable cities and communities (11.2.1, 11.3.1, 11.3.2, 11.7.1, 11.7.2), Goal 12 – responsible consumption and production (12.7.1), Goal 13 – climate action (13.2.1/13.b.1, 13.a.1, 13.2.1/13.b.1), Goal 14 – life below water (14.2.1), Goal 15 – life on land (15.7.1/15.c.1, 15a.1/15.b.1), Goal 16 – peace, justice and strong institutions (16.1.2, 16.3.3, 16.4.1, 16.6.2, 16.7.2, 16.10.1), and Goal 17 – partnerships for the Goals (17.2.1, 17.5.1, 17.11.1, 17.18.1). Accordingly, the following results were based on the available data

<sup>9</sup> The current draft report, in preparation by ECA, is entitled "Africa Sustainable Development Goal report: Is Africa on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030?"

on 122 indicators, distributed among 93 targets.

30. Overall, since 2000, Africa has recorded progress on 15 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, although the current pace of progress is insufficient for attainment of the Goals by 2030. In 2020, Africa recorded moderate progress on Goal 3 – good health and well-being, Goal 4 – quality education and Goal 15 – life on land, since 2000. For instance, under Goal 3, although Africa may not achieve the promise of ensuring healthy lives and well-being for all by 2030, the continent has recorded good progress on under-5 mortality, neonatal mortality, incidence of HIV infections and vaccination programmes. While maternal mortality, malaria, non-communicable diseases, road traffic deaths and health workforce density, among others, remain daunting challenges where progress should be accelerated. It is worth noting that support donated to Africa for medical research and basic health increased from \$5.2 billion in 2015 to \$5.7 billion in 2019 respectively. Gaps in funding due to the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to undermine the progress recorded so far.

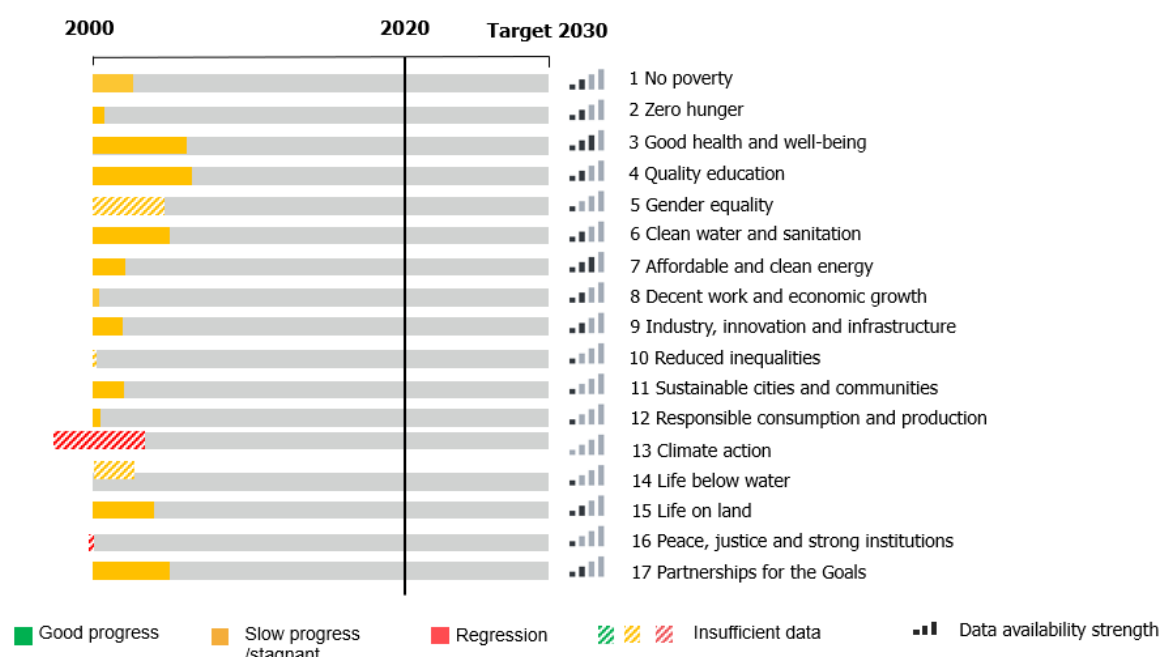
31. On the other hand, slow progress was registered on Goal 1 – no poverty, Goal 5 – gender equality, Goal 6 – clean water and sanitation, Goal 7 – affordable and clean energy, Goal 8 – decent work and economic growth, Goal 9 – industry, innovation and infrastructure, Goal 14 – life below water, and Goal 17 – partnerships for the Goals. For example, Africa needs to accelerate progress on Goal 1 to deliver on the promise of ending poverty in all its forms everywhere. Extreme poverty declined by only 1 percentage point in three years (from 35.7 per cent in 2015 to 34.7 per cent in 2018). In Sub-Saharan Africa, an estimated 34 million so-called “new poor” fell into extreme poverty in 2020, as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, which jeopardized efforts made over previous years. In addition, in 2020, only 13.7 per cent of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa were covered by social protection.

32. Furthermore, stagnation was observed on Goal 2 – zero hunger, Goal 8 – decent work and economic growth, Goal 10 – reduced inequalities, Goal 11 – sustainable cities and communities, and Goal 12 – responsible consumption and production. In respect to Goal 2, the magnitude and severity of food crises worsened in 2020 as protracted conflict, COVID-19 and extreme weather conditions exacerbated pre-existing fragilities. The Russian Federation-Ukraine crisis is also expected to disrupt the agricultural value chain on the continent. In all, 19.1 per cent of the population in Africa suffered hunger in 2019. While this is a decrease of 5 percentage points compared to 2000, it also represents an increase of 1.5 points when compared to 2014. Since 2014, the food insecurity situation in Africa has worsened, with women more likely to suffer. In addition, although stunting in the continent continued to decline, dropping from 41.5 per cent in 2000 to 30.7 per cent in 2020, more than 60 million children were still estimated to be moderately or severely stunted in 2019.

33. The results also reveal major challenges related to Goal 13 – climate action, and Goal 16 – peace, justice, and strong institutions, in respect of which regression was observed and also a lack of data. Where Goal 16 is concerned, human trafficking – principally for sexual exploitation and forced labour – has manifested an increasing trend since 2015. Slow progress was also observed on unsentenced detention: in sub-Saharan Africa, 41 per cent of the prison population were unsentenced detainees in 2018, compared to 44.3 per cent in 2005. Moreover, in 2019, 21 per cent of businesses in sub-Saharan Africa experienced at least one bribe request compared to 13 per cent in Northern Africa. Progress recorded in many countries has been offset by the deterioration in other countries which continue to backslide.



## Snapshot of SDGs progress in Africa, 2020



### C. Anticipated progress by 2030: likelihood of Africa achieving the targets by 2030

34. The following results show the projected status of Africa where realization of the 2030 Agenda is concerned.

35. At the current rate of progress, Africa is likely to meet only 5 out of the 169 targets of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Those targets are spread across the Goals, comprising target 4.b – on scholarships, 7.a – on international cooperation on energy, 9.c – on access to information and communications technology and the Internet, 14.5 – on the conservation of coastal areas, and 17.4 – on debt sustainability. Where target 4.b is concerned, Africa received more than \$341 million in official development assistance (ODA) for scholarships, constituting 20 per cent of the reported world total (\$1.7 billion) in 2019. Compared to 2015, when the continent received close to \$203 million, the amount of ODA received in 2019 represents a 67 per cent increase. The COVID-19 pandemic is highly likely to decrease ODA flows to the continent as donor countries reassign their financial means to combating the pandemic.

36. The targets for which accelerated progress is required largely fall under Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 15 and 17. Moreover, at its pace of progress in 2020, Africa is unlikely to meet a number of targets if no drastic policy interventions are taken to reverse the trend. These include 2.1 – undernourishment and food security, 6.4 – water-use efficiency, 7.2 – renewable energy, 9.b – domestic technology development, 10.2, 10.4, 10.5, 10.a – inclusion (social, economic, and political), fiscal and social protection policies, regulation of financial markets, and special and differential treatment (in accordance with the World Trade Organization), respectively. Other targets are: 11.5 – resilience to disasters, 12.4 – managing chemical and wastes, 13.1 and 13.2 – resilience and adaptive capacity, and climate change policies respectively as well as 14.1 – marine pollution, 15.1 and 15.5 – terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems, and loss of biodiversity respectively and, 16.2 and 16.6 on human trafficking and effective institutions respectively.

## D. Gaps in progress

37. The present section investigates possible challenges to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by identifying gaps in progress at the indicator level. Accordingly, it looks at specific indicators that demonstrate where Africa has progressed, those that show where Africa needs to accelerate progress, and others that reveal where Africa has regressed and requires to reverse the trends measured at the indicator level.

### 1. Indicators for which Africa is on track

38. According to the 2022 ECA report on progress in achieving the Goals, Africa has progressed on only the following 10 indicators and needs to maintain the current pace of progress to achieve the targets by 2030: 1.5.3 – number of countries adopting and implementing national disaster risk reduction strategies (also 11.b.1 and 13.1.2); 3.2.1 – under-5 mortality rate; 3.3.1 – number of new HIV infections; and 3.b.1 – population covered by all vaccines in national programmes. In addition, the continent is achieving progress on 4.b.1 – flows of ODA for scholarships; 7.a.1 – international support for clean and renewable energy; 9.c.1 – population covered by a mobile network; 10.7.4 – refugees by country of origin, 14.5.1 – protected marine areas, and 17.4.1 – debt service.

39. Data on indicator 1.5.3 reveal that, in sub-Saharan Africa, over the period 2015–2020, 25 countries reported having a national disaster risk reduction strategy aligned to some extent with the Sendai Framework. The median value of the score of adoption and implementation of national disaster risk reduction strategies for Africa was theoretically estimated at 0.7 in 2020 and is expected to reach the maximum of score 1 by 2030. Despite significant progress, achievement of target (e) of the Sendai Framework Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030<sup>10</sup> will require further concerted effort.

### 2. Goals that require acceleration for targets to be achieved

40. Concurrently, Africa needs significantly to accelerate progress in such areas as partnerships for the Goals; life on land; industry, innovation and infrastructure; affordable and clean energy; and ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, among others, to meet the targets of the 2030 Agenda. For example, although there has been a declining trend in the continent's under-5 mortality rate, the number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, and an increase in international support for education and energy sectors, the rate of progress in 2020 is insufficient to achieve the expected outcome for the related targets by 2030.

### 3. Indicators on which Africa is regressing

41. The results at the indicator level show that Africa is regressing in the following indicators: 15.5.1 – Red List Index; 15.1.1 – forest area; 12.4.2 – hazardous waste generated and hazardous waste treated; 6.4.2 – water stress; 16.6.1 – government expenditure in relation to approved budget; 16.2.2 – detected victims of human trafficking; 7.2.1 – share of renewable energy; 2.1.2 – moderate or severe food insecurity in the population; and 2.a.1 – agriculture orientation index. In addition, regression is observed for indicators 14.1.1 – coastal eutrophication; 3.8.2 – household expenditure on health; 9.b.1 – medium and high-tech industry value added; 1.5.1 – deaths, missing persons and persons directly affected by disasters; 1.5.2 – economic loss from disasters; 13.2.2 – greenhouse gas emissions; 11.5.2 and 11.5.3 – economic loss and damage to infrastructure and service from disasters; 10.a.1 – tariff lines applied to imports with zero-tariff; 10.4.1 – labour income

<sup>10</sup> Target (e): Substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020; see <https://www.undrr.org/publication/status-report-target-e-implementation-2020>.

share of GDP; 10.2.1 – population living below 50 per cent of median income; 10.5.1 – Financial Soundness Indicators; 10.7.3 – death and disappearances recorded during migration; 9.2.2 – manufacturing employment; and 17.3.2 – personal remittances. Through effective and urgent policy intervention, the continent may stand a chance of reversing the current direction of these indicators.

## V. Conclusion

42. The purpose of the present report is to identify and highlight the main challenges limiting the monitoring of and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals and the principal initiatives undertaken to address and mitigate their impact in Africa over the last two years, as reported in the voluntary national reviews. The report also presents key results of the assessment of progress made by Africa since 2000 towards the Sustainable Development Goals, with a view to indicating how far Africa is from achieving the 2030 Agenda.

## VI. Points requiring the decision of the Statistical Commission for Africa

43. The Commission is invited:

(a) To support the overall system of statistics in Africa by strengthening coordination of the continent's national statistical systems and to ensure that policymaking in Africa is evidence-based and supported by the collection, processing, analysis and release of reliable, timely, available, high-quality and disaggregated data on the indicators;

(b) To take note of the continuing efforts and initiatives undertaken to track the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals at the national, subregional and continental levels in Africa in the context of sustainable development, notwithstanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic;

(c) To call upon African countries to continue aligning their national development plans and budgeting processes with the 2030 Agenda, other regional frameworks, such as Agenda 2063, and international frameworks;

(d) To call upon African countries to embrace a whole-of-society approach in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals that ensures the participation and engagement of all stakeholders and, in particular, line ministries and departments, in recognition of the interlinkages between the Goals.