



Republic  
of Rwanda



ARFSD 2022

# Forum Bulletin

8<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE AFRICA REGIONAL  
FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



United Nations  
Economic Commission for Africa

#ARFSD2022 PRE- EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

4 March 2022

## Climate Financing Must Prioritize African Island States

Climate Change, Natural Resource Management and Technology Director at the ECA, Mr. Jean-Paul Adam, has expressed concern about the difficulties faced by African island states in accessing green climate financing. This is despite African islands being the most vulnerable to climate disaster. Mr. Adam's remarks were made during an online discussion on "Harnessing the Potential of African Islands to Build Forward Better" ahead of the 8th session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD) in Kigali, Rwanda.

"It is often difficult for low-income countries to gain access to resources. These countries often have to borrow at high costs and agree to frameworks not necessarily adapted to their needs. There are hardly any countries in the world that are as vulnerable to climate change as small island states.", Mr. Adam noted. He explained that it is important to prioritize the most vulnerable states with regards to climate financing, adding that there is a need to mainstream this approach globally.

The Acting-Director of the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS), Heidi Schroderus-Fox, was vocal about the need to address the challenges faced by island states due to their specific vulnerabilities. "Sao Tome

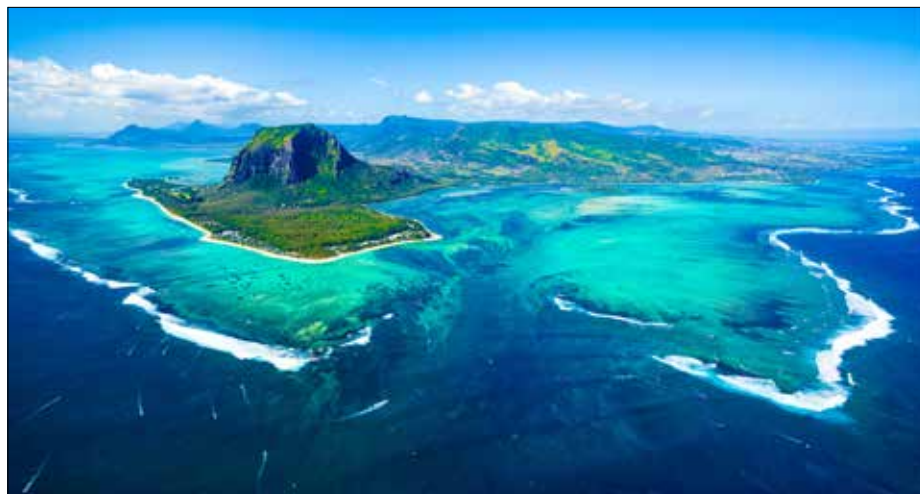
and Principe faces coastal degradation. We could lose the coral reefs in Seychelles and in Cabo Verde, the collapse of the tourism industry has coincided with drought and mounting debt. We need specific solutions for these." Ms Schroderus-Fox said.

The event brought together senior government officials from African islands states and development partners to discuss innovative actions and financial mechanisms to harness their potential to advance inclusive and resilient development for African islands. The discussions also agreed to strengthen the community of practice on climate resilient development. In attendance were representative from various levels of government in Guinea Bissau, Seychelles, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Mauritius and others from the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC),



Jean-Paul Adam, Director Technology, Climate Change & Natural Resources Division, ECA

as well as the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLS). ■



# Experts call for more support as Africa loses significant GDP to climate change

A senior environmental expert from the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Linus Mofor, has said that “African economies are losing on average 5% of GDP because of climate change, increasing up to 15% in some countries.”

He was speaking during a virtual meeting themed ‘partnerships for tools and capacities to integrate climate resilience in investments for the SDGs,’ organised on the margins of the Eighth Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD8).

Despite representing just 17% of the world’s population and emitting just 4% of global pollution, Africa stands as the most affected continent in terms climate change.

Thus, “in the absence of global concerted action on keeping warming at below 1.5 degrees, African countries must be supported with the tools and capacities needed to integrate climate resilience in the huge investments needed to close development gaps,” he said.

Other panelists included representatives from the African Union, the African Development Bank and the World Bank Group, who all noted that in the absence of global concerted action on keeping warming at below 1.5 degrees, African countries must be supported



Panelists at virtual event on partnerships, tools & capacities

with the tools and capacities needed to integrate climate resilience in the huge investments needed to close development gaps.

Mr Mofor explained that African countries have shown “great leadership” on climate action, stating, “all but two African countries have ratified the Paris Agreement with ambitious NDCs requiring up to USD 3 trillion for implementation.”

He underscored the need for significant investments to be made on African youth SMEs in order to turn them into

successful and impactful global businesses that address climate change issues.

Professor Ken Strzepek, Industrial Economics Inc, while introducing the Africa Climate Resilient Investment Facility (AFRI-RES) Tools and Capacity Development Program emphasized that “the issue on how to provide Africa with adequate tools and capacities to build an integral climate resilient Africa should be addressed with actions.”

AFRI-RES is a partnership between the Africa Union, African Development Bank, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and the World Bank Group that was established with support from the Nordic Development Fund (NDF). It seeks to set up an Africa-based centre of technical competence and excellence to assist governments, planners and private developers in Africa to integrate climate change in project planning and design, thereby attracting funding from both development and climate finance sources.

More: <https://www.uneca.org/events/technology%2C-climate-change-and-natural-resource-management/eighth-session-of-the-africa> ■



## FOCUS: SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

# Science, Technology and Innovation is Africa's Blueprint for Accelerated Development

The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Vera Songwe, has called for the establishment of an African Technology Development and Transfer Network to spur innovation and accelerate development on the continent. She made the call during the opening of the 4th Africa Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) Forum in Kigali, Rwanda, on 1 March 2022.

An African Technology Development and Transfer Network could “identify emerging technologies, anticipate needs and encourage the sharing of knowledge” across the continent, said Ms Songwe, noting that such a network would lie at the heart of diffusing technologies to the continent’s SMEs.

“We need to build sound scientific, technological and innovation foundations to enable STI to deliver. As we have witnessed recently, many of our countries needed support to build capacities to test for COVID-19. As global supply chains collapsed, Africa’s over-reliance on imported medical supplies left the continent vulnerable in many aspects, and Africa was forced to innovate,” she added.

The Africa STI Forum is a collaborative multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established pursuant to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as part of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism. The mechanism was established under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to support the implementation of the SDGs. The forum is organized by the United Nations inter-agency task team on science, technology and innovation for the SDGs.

Rwanda’s Education Minister, Valentine Uwamariya, lauded the Forum, saying, “this congregation of some of Africa’s best and experienced minds will find ways in which Africa can deploy science and technology to meet these goals in less than a decade.”

UNESCO’s Regional Director for Eastern Africa, Hubert Gijzen emphasized the importance of collaboration: “We need cooperation between countries for Open Science. This is why UNESCO launched the First International Open Science framework which 193 member states have approved.” ■



STI Event Panelists

## Prioritize Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics in education sector – Experts at STI Forum

Only 20% of graduates in Africa are in STEM. But there is an increasing demand from the labor markets for STEM. The education sectors have not adjusted to this.

The increasing demand in labor markets for individuals with educational backgrounds in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) must be a key consideration in educational policymaking for African governments. During a High-Level Panel Discussion at the 4th Africa Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Forum in Kigali, Rwanda, speakers agreed there is a gap between what currently drives private sector investments and education outcomes in Africa.

Climate Change, Natural Resource Management and Technology, Director at the ECA, Mr. Jean-Paul Adam, who moderated the session, explained the importance of STI for Africa’s attempts to rebuild from COVID and tackle the climate crisis, calling STI a “a necessary tool”. Responding to this, Deputy Executive

Secretary and Chief Economist at the ECA, Hanan Morsy, advised the need for African countries to answer the call from labor markets. “Only 20% of graduates in Africa are in STEM. But there is an increasing demand from the labor markets for STEM. The education sectors have not adjusted to this. We’ve seen this in countries that have succeeded with STI like South Korea and China. We have seen promise in African countries in this vein in places like Rwanda,” she added.

For her part, Rwanda’s Education Minister, Ms. Valentine Uwamariya touched on what her government is doing to prepare young Rwandans for an increasingly digitalized world. “The Rwandan National ICT and Education Masterplan...which is to complement efforts to spread 4G connectivity across the country. It was one of the initiatives to prepare students to meet global ICT needs. We need to adapt our solutions to reality and that’s what Rwanda does” she pointed out. ■

# Africa's progress towards achieving the SDGs and targets needs strategic acceleration – 2020 Africa Sustainable Development Report

- **Achieving the SDGs could open \$12 trillion in market opportunities and 380 million jobs by 2030. For Africa, the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) provides a unique opportunity to implement the SDGs and Agenda 2063.**
- **The average score across all African member States was 53.82 in 2020, which is slightly higher than the 2019 average, but still implies that, after four years of SDG implementation, the African continent is only halfway towards achieving the SDG goals and targets by 2030**
- **This edition of the report uses an analytical lens that places all the SDGs into five “Pillars” or clusters: People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace, and Partnerships.**

Africa has made progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) goals and targets by 2030, according to the 4th 2020 Africa Sustainable Development Report: Accelerating Equitable and Sustainable Development in Africa launched at the 8th Session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD) side event on February 28, in Kigali, Rwanda.

The report shows that African governments have made significant efforts to incorporate the SDGs and Agenda 2063 goals into national strategies and development plans, have identified government units to coordinate their implementation and prioritized specific targets and indicators.

“Overall, the average score across all African member States was 53.82 in 2020, which is slightly higher than the 2019 average, but still implies that, after four years of SDG implementation, the African continent is only halfway towards achieving the SDG goals and targets by 2030,” says the report.

The report was produced by the United Nations Economic Commission of Africa (ECA) in collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

“We should celebrate the progress made by the continent: decline in ma-



Panelists at the Launch of the 2020 ASDR

ternal and child deaths, decrease in the incidents of infectious diseases, progress in primary school enrolment, increase in youth literacy, and improvement in women's representation in government, as seen in Rwanda, which is leading the path,” said Antonio Pedro, ECA Deputy Executive Secretary.

“SDGs represent tremendous investment opportunities, and the UN estimates that achieving the SDGs could open \$12 trillion in market opportunities and 380 million jobs by 2030. For Africa, the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) provides a unique opportunity to implement the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

Download the Report: [2020 Africa Sustainable Development Report | UNDP in Africa](#) ■



## ASDR 2020 ROUND UP

### PEOPLE. PROSPERITY. PEACE. PLANET. PARTNERSHIPS

## 2020 Africa Sustainable Development Report: Accelerating Equitable and Sustainable Development in Africa

### People Pillar

Nearly 40 percent of all Africans are still living in extreme poverty. The poverty headcount remains consistently low in Northern Africa, at around 2 percent, but slightly rises from 2015. To eradicate absolute poverty in Africa (excluding Northern Africa) by 2030, the speed of reduction has to be four times higher than between 2013 and 2019.

### Prosperity Pillar

Over four decades between 1980 and 2019, the economic growth (measured by per-capita income growth) has lagged behind real income growth in every sub-region of the continent, which implies that even periods of modest growth have not necessarily translated into higher standards of living for most Africans, but instead, resulted in the paradox of greater income inequality.

### Peace Pillar

Based on current trends, Africa is unlikely to achieve any of its goals for peace, security and governance found in either of the two Agendas. While there are State exceptions, the slow progress in improved governance is generally the overriding drag on the Peace Pillar. There has also been a decline in democratic values, challenges in holding free and fair elections, and unconstitutional changes of government. Africa underperforms on the rule of law, with even essential governing functions—such as civil registration systems— falling short.

### Planet Pillar

Although many African member States have put in place the legal and policy frameworks required to address environmental concerns, progress within this Pillar has been slow on many fronts. Seychelles was the highest-ranked in Africa, at thirty-third. Six other African States were among the top 100 States in the EPI: Egypt, Gabon, Mauritius, Morocco, South Africa and Tunisia. Conversely, 33 African States south of the Sahara were among the bottom 50.

### Partnerships Pillar

The majority of African member States are not on track to take “full responsibility for financing their development Goals” as defined by either the 2030 Agenda or Agenda 2063. The analysis also reveals that Africa’s debt management situation is unsustainable. Between 2011 and 2018, Africa’s average debt ratio as a proportion of Gross National Income increased by 22.2 percent (from 34.2 percent in 2011 to 39.6 percent in 2018) or 7.2 percentage points. At the time, the debt service coverage ratio increased to 183.3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2018.

### Recommendations.

The report calls for ‘higher order’ strategic approaches for pushing forward the two Agendas of the SDGs and Agenda 2063. Accelerating the pace of inclusive and sustainable development will require governments to commit to strong, proactive and responsible governance frameworks based on a long-term vision and leadership, shared norms and values; and rules and institutions that build trust and cohesion.

Download the full Report: [2020 Africa Sustainable Development Report | UNDP in Africa](#)



# AfCFTA - an opportunity to empower women

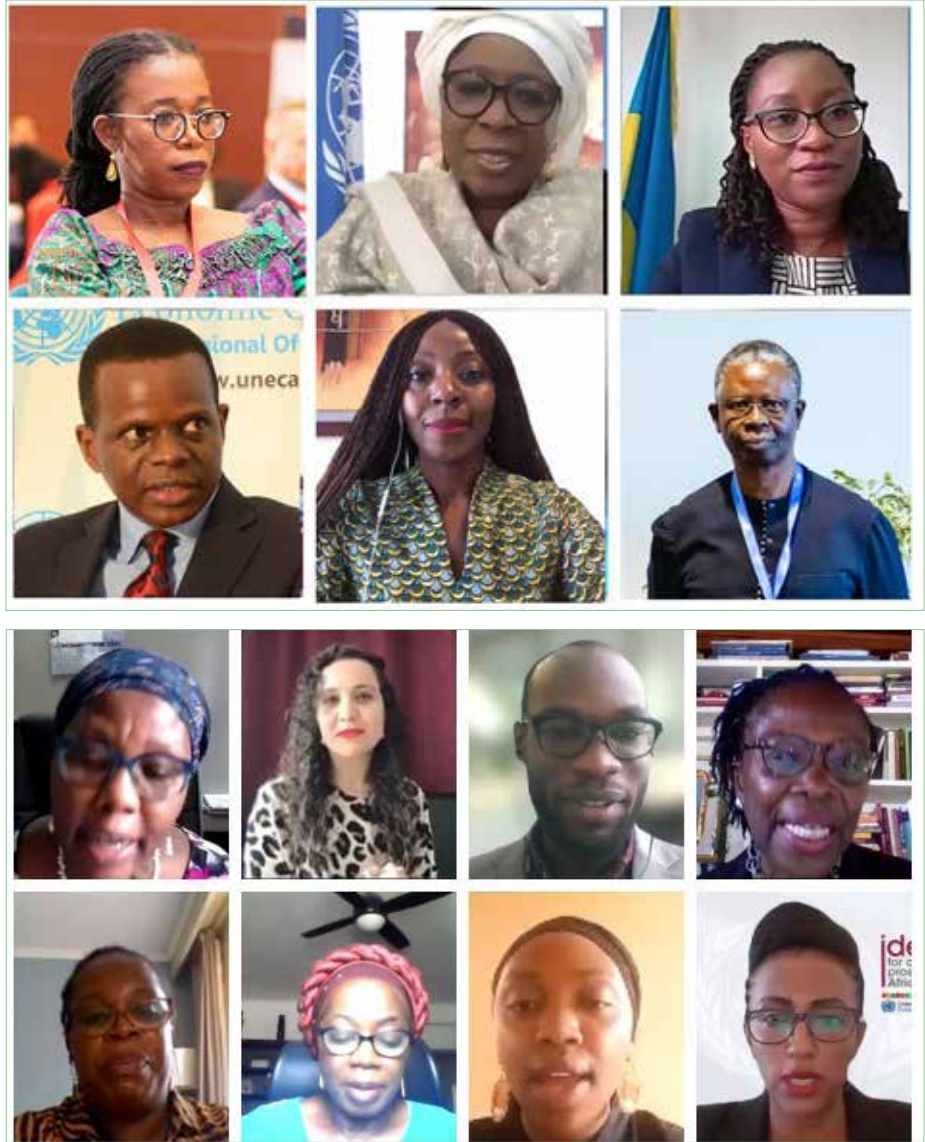
Experts from the United Nations system, including UNFPA, UN Women and other development partners working on gender equality met to advocate for the involvement of women in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which they agreed, offers tremendous opportunities to advance gender equality, women’s empowerment and self-determination.

*“The AfCFTA is expected to create a huge market and will bring together the continent in ways that will increase productivity and job creation,”* said Acting Director of the ECA’s Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division, Edlam Yemeru.

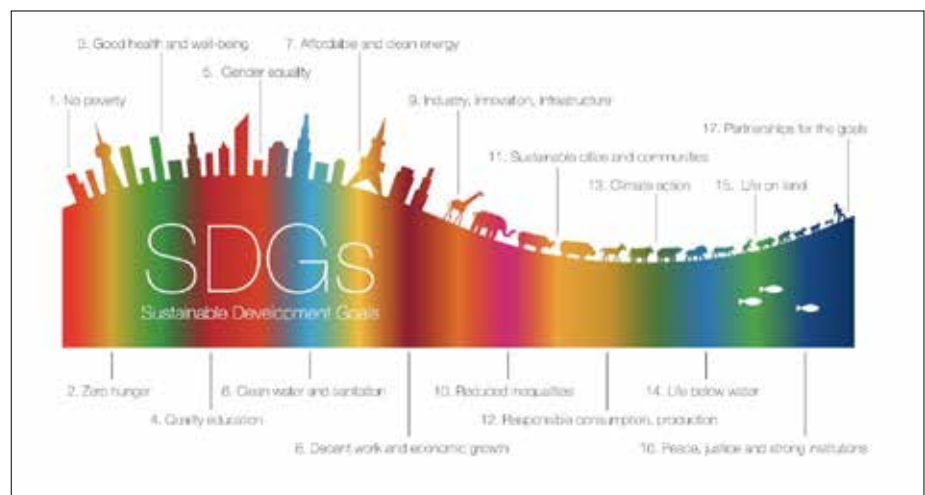
“The growth and expansion of technologies promised by intra-African trade will also be of considerable benefit, particularly in enhancing the financial inclusion of women, she added.

Held ahead of the ARFSD8, the “Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls in Africa” side event reviewed the progress in Africa’s journey towards Sustainable Development Goals 4, 5, 14, 15 and 17 and acknowledged the gains eroded due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, while outlining the opportunities for a green and inclusive gender equality and women’s development.

Resident Representative of UN Women in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Awa Ndiaye Seck, also praised the integration of progress indicators and targets on gender equality into the AfCFTA implementation process by the stakeholders. Stating that this constitutes *“a significant step to monitoring and implementing a gender responsive development agenda and facilitates the building of evidence on the gender responsive implementation for Agenda 2030 and 2063.”*



Speakers during the discussion on #AfCFTA as a vehicle for gender equality towards agenda 2030 and 2063 expressed their delight that the gender dimension has been integrated into the negotiation phase of the #AfCFTA



# ARFSD8 Soundbites



"We need to ask ourselves, what are the ingredients for a winning STI policy and what are the ingredients that can make implementation a success. Is it a question of resources, capacities, or participation? Are we involving all the actors?"

*Karima Bounemra Ben Soltane, Director of IDEP at STI Forum, ARFSD8*



"Even if we are not able to access and develop technologies, we should be smart enough to adapt to the technologies that are developed elsewhere. It is the technology that has to benefit the citizens in terms of social economic well-being of nations"

*Eugene Mutimara*



"What I found to be key about this "goldfish generation": things have to happen very quickly before we forget. We would take up pieces and start implementing because we knew where we wanted to go, we didn't need a strategy document to tell us where to go."

*Bogolo Kenewendo*



"Young people are not going anywhere; they are here and they will be here longer than us. We need to create structures where young people have their voices"

*MMBONENI MUOFHE*



"Women own only 15% of exporting companies, 40% of SMEs and as workers, earn 30 to 40% less than their male counterparts. This must change as we know that better empowerment of women could increase the African GDP by 40%"

*Fode Ndiaye, UN Resident Coordinator for Rwanda*