



**Sub-Regional Meeting on SDGs Implementation in North Africa**

**Rabat (Morocco), 26-27 June 2018**

**Aide-Memoire**

**I- Context**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,<sup>1</sup> which officially entered into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2016, is now the global reference framework for guiding policies and actions at the national, regional, and international levels. All countries are invited to translate this global framework at the national and local levels, integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into their policies, strategies, and budget processes, while heeding their own priorities and specificities. It is also their responsibility to ensure SDG mainstreaming in public policies as well as SDG implementation and regular monitoring, as part of an inclusive approach involving all stakeholder categories, so as not to leave anyone behind.

The 2030 Agenda now is the centrepiece of United Nations strategies and programmes. The United Nations System provides support to countries to facilitate (a) SDG ownership and mainstreaming into public, sector-specific, and local policies, (b) the development of integrated policies, (c) the improvement of statistical capacities for SDG-implementation monitoring, and (d) reporting through the preparation of voluntary national reports submitted by countries to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF).<sup>2</sup>

At the regional and sub-regional levels, the United Nations supports the African Union and its Regional Economic Communities (RECs), which constitute an important link in the multi-level system intended to monitor and review the progress of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.<sup>3</sup> RECs have a key role to play not only in helping their member states to homogeneously incorporate the 2030 and 2063 Agendas in their national development strategies and plans, but also in ensuring that regional perspectives are duly considered.

Two years after the adoption of Agenda 2030, little progress has been made in North Africa as far as SDG national ownership and contextualisation are concerned. By and large, governments are slow both in defining their priority objectives and targets and in setting the appropriate governance instruments that would promote the coordinated development and implementation of integrated, coherent, and inclusive policies, and address the complex and interdependent issues related to the SDGs. Aside from a handful of tentative initiatives, the contribution of civil society, the private sector, and local governments remains marginal. Thus,

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<sup>1</sup> The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted on 25 September 2015 by Heads of State and Government in New York during the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development, held during the 70th session of the General Assembly under the theme of "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

<sup>2</sup> The High Level Political Forum (HLPF) is the entity in charge of global political leadership, as well as monitoring and reviewing progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development (Resolution 67/290 of 09 July 2013).

<sup>3</sup> A Memorandum of Understanding between the United Nations and the African Union was signed in January 2018 at the 30th African Union Summit. Its aim is to strengthen the partnership between the two institutions so as to ensure a coordinated and harmonised implementation of the 2030 and 2063 Agendas. (The latter was adopted by the African Union in January 2015).

it is indispensable to maintain regular dialogue and forge partnerships between governments and these key actors in the process of implementing and monitoring the SDGs.

The ECA Office for North Africa has prepared a report that provides an initial assessment of the progress made by the Maghreb countries (Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, and Tunisia) in the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. This report analyses, more particularly, the efforts made in terms of ownership and contextualisation, institutional governance, and monitoring. It also highlights six themes of importance to the countries and of priority interest for regional integration: food security (SDG2), energy transition (SDG7), industrialisation (SDG 9), youth and women employment (SDG 8), climate change (SDG13), and desertification (SDG15). The report also discusses the role of regional cooperation in implementing the SDGs, before providing guidelines to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs in the Maghreb countries. The report will be presented for discussion and improvement at the sub-regional meeting on the implementation of the SDGs in North Africa.

The preparation of this report is part of the mandate assigned to the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions for monitoring the implementation of Agenda 2030<sup>4</sup> and, in particular, for taking into account regional perspectives and strengthening regional integration. It responds to the request addressed to the ECA Office for North Africa by the Secretary General of the Arab Maghreb Union (December 2016).

## **II- Overall Objective of the Meeting**

The overall objective of the meeting is to serve as a forum for discussion and exchange in order to assess the progress, challenges, good practices, and lessons learned as the implementation of the SDGs in North Africa evolves.

## **III- Specific Objectives of the Meeting**

The meeting has two specific objectives:

- Present and discuss the results of the report on the implementation of the SDGs in the Maghreb and share information, experiences, and good practices of North African countries as well as the challenges they face with regard to actualising and monitoring the SDGs;
- Deepen the thought process and make recommendations on areas that need to be strengthened, including the effective participation of civil society and the private sector, the integration of the SDGs into public, sectoral, and local policies, the monitoring of the SDGs, and, finally, budgeting and resource-mobilisation mechanisms.

## **IV- Expected Results**

- Collection of additional information to improve the SDGs' monitoring report;
- Sharing of good practices and challenges regarding achieving and monitoring the SDGs;
- Identification of areas that need strengthening and recommendations to guide policy and reform and build capacity of countries and key actors. These recommendations will be presented at the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the ECA Office for North Africa (October 2018) and at the meeting of the Sub-Regional Coordination Mechanism (first quarter of 2019).

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<sup>4</sup> The 2030 Agenda Declaration and the United Nations General Assembly (resolution 67/290 and 70/299) emphasised the role of the United Nations Regional Commissions in supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in the overall monitoring process, led by the HLPF.

## V- Participants

The meeting will bring together representatives of the institutions involved in steering and monitoring the SDGs in the seven countries covered by the Office (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Tunisia, and Sudan), including:

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation;
- Ministry of Planning and Finance;
- Ministry in Charge of Sustainable Development;
- Body in Charge of Statistics;
- Economic, Social, and Environmental Council;
- Civil society and private sector organisations;

In addition, the following institutions will also be represented:

- The Arab Maghreb Union General Secretariat;
- UN agencies;
- Regional and international development organisations.

## VI- Meeting Proceedings

The meeting's proceedings will be organised as follows:

**Plenary Session:** Implementing the SDGs in North Africa and Integrating Agenda 2063

**Plenary Session:** SDGs Ownership by Key Actors (sector-specific departments, local governments, businesses, and research institutions)

**Focus Group Thematic Sessions:** Two groups will be set up to address the themes of employment and food security:

- Employment (led by ECA)
- Food Security (led by FAO)

**Parallel Sessions:** The parallel sessions will cover the following four themes:

- SDGs-Inclusive Governance;
- SDGs Integration and Public Policy Harmonisation;
- Budgeting and Resource-Mobilisation Mechanisms;
- Indicators and Data.

**Plenary Session:** Summary of the main recommendations/messages and closing.

## VII- Expected Products

At the end of the meeting, the following products will be prepared and disseminated:

- The meeting report, including the main recommendations for monitoring and implementation;
- A publication on SDGs implementation in the Maghreb.

## VIII- Documents & Materials

The meeting's working papers include: this aide-memoire, the programme of the meeting, the papers to be presented by the experts and the report on SDGs implementation in the Maghreb.

## **IX- Working Languages**

The meeting proceedings will be in French, English, and Arabic, with simultaneous translation from and into the three languages.

## **X- Date and Venue of the Meeting**

The meeting will take place in Rabat (Morocco), on June 26-27, 2018.

## **XI- Contact Information**

Information about the meeting can be obtained from:

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