

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) MAPPING ON REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS



UN Women East and  
Southern Africa



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

<b>1</b> NO POVERTY 	<b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER 	<b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	<b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION 	<b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY 	<b>6</b> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 
<b>7</b> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	<b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	<b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	<b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	<b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	<b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 
<b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION 	<b>14</b> LIFE BELOW WATER 	<b>15</b> LIFE ON LAND 	<b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	<b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	 <b>SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS</b>

# SDGs MAPPING ON REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS



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The acknowledgment extends to the eight regional institutions recognised under the African Union, the United Nations agencies and the regional CSOs. Specifically, we appreciate the UN Economic Commission for Africa, regional CSOs such as FEMNET, sub-regional intergovernmental bodies or commissions and that of their secretariats, such as the East African Community (EAC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS); the SDGs Centre among others for their valuable input into the mapping.

The exercise was undertaken under the overall leadership of Zebib Kavuma, the Deputy Regional Director for UN Women East and Southern Africa. Florence Hamimi and Jack Onyisi Abebe led the exercise with support from Michael Faraday Awino.

It is hoped that the mapping will benefit from sustained interaction with the regional institutions and other stakeholders towards accelerating progress on the localization of gender-related SDGs in Africa.

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# ACRONYMS

AfDB	African Development Bank
AGDI	African Gender Development Index
AU	African Union
AWARD	African Women in Agriculture Research and Development
CEDAW	Convention on the elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESARO	East and Southern Africa
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women Economic Empowerment
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
IRCL	Interface Research Consultancy Limited
MAPS	Mainstreaming Acceleration and Policy Support
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MSEs	Medium Scale Entrepreneurs
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGEC	National Gender Equality Commissions
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TORS	Terms of References
VNRs	Voluntary National Reviews
UN	United Nations
UNCTs	United Nations Country Teams
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistant Framework
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNISDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Reduction
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the empowerment of Women
WCARO	West and Central Africa Regional Office
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

African countries have signed and ratified different international and regional conventions and declarations as well as protocols that obligate them to develop a policy to end discrimination against women and girls. The latest of these commitments is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the continental level, African Member States have Agenda 2063 whose first 10-year Implementation Plan is in line with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. The commitments are in cognizance of the fact that the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (GEWE) is both a human right, a prerequisite for sustainable development and a development imperative.

Of the 17 goals of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, there is a stand-alone goal 5, which envisions to “achieve Gender Equality and empower all women and girls” with 54 gender-related indicators. It is important to note that all SDGs are relevant to the achievement of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE). UN Women has provided an analysis showing the relevance of each SDG to GEWE, and the potential for women’s contribution towards its achievement.

As the localization of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs gathers momentum, national development strategies, sectoral plans and funding streams are increasingly being aligned with these globally set targets. Concurrently, national statistical systems are mobilizing efforts to ensure that data generation meets the demands of the 232 indicators consisting of the SDG Monitoring Framework.

Regional institutions are therefore considered key actors in coordinating the implementation, follow-up, and review process of the SDGs. Within its mandate, UN Women was actively involved in the advocacy and support for the Rio+20 Conference (June 2012) that negotiated the SDGs, and for the inter-governmental process that culminated in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015. The Rio+20 summit outcome document emphasized the role of regional and sub-regional organizations, including UN regional commissions and the sub-regional offices in promoting balanced integration of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

As UN Women launches its work to support localization of SDGs, especially SDG 5 and other 10 SDGs of which gender issues are cross cutting, the agency can build on the lessons including the work with regional institutions. Effective capacity in the localization process is dependent on certain capacities-technical as well as soft skills including advocacy, partnership building and coordination skills. UN Women may be called upon to support the development of these capacities. Of importance is the fact that all SDGs are critical in advancing the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Additionally, it must be recognized that the substantive and effective contributions of women are inevitable in the quest for the attainment of all the SDGs. This has prompted UN Women to provide analyses of the relevance of every goal to gender equality and women’s empowerment.

The co-operation of regional bodies has also been sought in co-ordinating peer learning through Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), sharing best practices, and discussing mutual targets during follow-up and review processes at regional and sub-regional levels. It is against this background that UN Women conducted a mapping of the regional initiatives towards localization of GEWE-related SDGs within Africa. The study strengthened collective efforts of operationalizing the SDGs and identified actors both at the regional level and national level.

Specifically, the study analysed the process of implementation and localization of SDGs in Africa through regional institutions; identified

opportunities, including potential areas of collaboration with the partners identified in the study in their implementation and localization efforts; identified possible entry points for UN Women in the implementation of gender-related SDGs at regional and country level; and linked the regional initiatives identified through the study with the SDG framework of implementation.

To address the objectives, the study targeted regional institutions and representatives from regional inter-parliamentary and intergovernmental institutions and UN economic commissions. The study involved the review, analysis and synthesis of both published and unpublished literature from various sources. It was complemented by internal consultations with UN Women and key informant interviews facilitated through emails, skype, and telephone.

The key informants were selected among stakeholders currently involved in the implementation of SDGs and GEWE. The report also draws on analysis of case studies both at the national and regional level to identify targeted interventions on SDGs and GEWE. Accordingly, this publication has mapped all the 17 SDGs within the GEWE agenda including the various ways in which women and girls will remain key to the attainment of the global goals. Further, the publication has outlined a step by step localization process for the regional institution from a gender perspective, in terms of what it takes for a country or region to effectively implement the SDGs including step by step analysis and linking this to the MAPs Framework.

The publication has also reviewed the roles of various regional institutions on the localization and implementation of gender-related SDGs in terms

of collaboration and partnership, stakeholder participation, capacity building, policy dialogue, consistency and coherence, innovative financing, as well as peer learning and knowledge exchange on gender-related SDGs.

On monitoring and reporting frameworks for gender-related SDGs, the publication notes that such efforts have increased with key regional institutions developing indices for measuring gender equality such as the African Gender Development Index by UNECA, the African Gender Equality Index (AGEI) by the African Development Bank, the AU Commission's Gender Score Card, the Gender Status Index (GSI) by UNECA and AfDB. In addition, the Gender Asset Gap and Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) initiatives implemented in Africa by the UN Statistics Division (UNSD) and UN Women to support the measurement of entrepreneurship and asset ownership from a gender perspective and to contribute to the international classification of activities and for Time Use Statistics.

The publication further showcases the different interventions and efforts such as programmes, advocacy for policy change and intergovernmental work that the UN Women Regional Office for East and Southern Africa has rolled out. It also presents the challenges, opportunities, lessons learned and recommendations for engagement with regional institutions in gender-related SDGs. Further, it proposes some mitigation factors in terms of challenges, as well as leveraging factors in terms of opportunities. The study findings will further assist in developing a roadmap for the successful implementation and localization of SDGs through regional institutions.

# DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Gender equality** refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men, girls and boys. Equality ensures that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people centred development.

**Gender equity.** The CEDAW Committee, in its General Recommendation 28, states that gender equity is the concept "used in some jurisdictions to refer to fair treatment of women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities." Please, note that CEDAW Committee calls upon the states to use the term "gender equality" and to avoid using the term "gender equity" in implementing the obligations under the CEDAW Convention.

**Gender-disaggregated data** is data collected and tabulated separately for men and women. Gender-disaggregated data allows to identify, measure and analyse differences between women and men in economic, social, demographic, cultural and political dimensions. Gender-related is any concern or problem that is determined, in its broadest sense, by differences between men and women based on gender and/or sex.

**Gender-responsive evaluation** assesses the degree to which gender and power relationships - including structural and other causes that give rise to inequalities, discrimination and unfair power relations, change as a result of an intervention using a process that is inclusive, participatory and respectful of all stakeholders (right holders and duty bearers). Gender-responsive evaluation promotes accountability to gender equality, human rights and women's empowerment commitments by providing information on the way in which development programmes affect women and men differently

and contribute towards the achievement of these commitments.

**Equity-focused evaluation** is "an assessment made of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of interventions on equitable development results." Equity-focused evaluations look at structural bottlenecks and power relationships and use an empowerment process.

**Gender-sensitive indicators** are indicators that should be disaggregated by sex in order to reveal the difference in impact, experience or progress in relation to women, girls, boys or men.

**Gender-specific indicators** are indicators that reveal circumstances specific for women, girls, boys or men.

**Gender statistics** is the scientific notation and interpretation of statistics that in an adequate and complete way are reflecting the living conditions and situations of women and men with respect to all policy fields and areas. Gender statistics allow for, and enable, systematic research and study of differentials and issues regarding gender.

**SDG localization/nationalization** is a process of adapting SDGs to national contexts, setting national targets and mainstreaming SDGs into national planning processes, policies and strategies without compromising the integrity of Agenda 2030. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development states: "The SDGs and targets are integrated and indivisible, global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.

**Targets** are defined as aspirational and global, with each government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition but taking into account national circumstances. Each government will also decide how these aspirational and global targets should be incorporated in national planning processes, policies and strategies. It is important to recognize the link between sustainable development and other relevant on-going processes in the economic, social and environmental fields."

**Sustainable development** is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.



CONTEXTUAL  
ANALYSIS OF  
GENDER-RELATED  
SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS (SDGs)

## 1.1

# INTRODUCTION

African countries have signed and/or ratified different international and regional conventions and declarations as well as protocols that obligate them to develop a policy to end discrimination against women and girls. The commitments further call on these countries to take appropriate steps to ensure the complete realization of the rights of women and girls. The latest in this chain of commitments is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the continental level, African Member States have Agenda 2063 whose first 10-year Implementation Plan is in line with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

The commitments are in cognizance of the fact that the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (GEWE) is a human right, a prerequisite for sustainable development as well as being a development imperative. There is compelling evidence regarding the positive linkages between gender equality, the realization of the women's and girls' human rights as well as the empowerment of women, including their well-being. This evidence has been the grease on the commitments to GEWE by African leaders. Nonetheless, the need for proper global support for regional institutions to the Member States towards realization of the gender-related SDGs is a fundamental prerequisite for the advancement of the GEWE agenda.

The 2014/2015 global review and appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action gave an impressive assessment of the progress on achieving gender equality, realizing women's human rights, empowerment of women and girls, including inordinate lessons learned while fast-tracking the complete and effective implementation of the Platform of Action. Besides, AU Member States reached a significant agreement on gender equality and realization of women's human rights by launching the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development which also compliments the Paris Agreement on Climate change.

The UN General Assembly espoused Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development in September 2015, and it is anchored on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 targets. The agenda is a global action plan geared at protecting the planet, ending poverty, while also ensuring the prosperity for all. It is a 15 years' development process envisaged in the people's, countries' and regions' needs.

Of the 17 goals of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, there is a stand-alone goal 5 which envisions to "achieve Gender Equality and empower all women and girls" with 54 gender-related targets. Of importance is the fact that all SDGs are critical in advancing the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Additionally, it must be recognized that the substantive and effective contributions of women are inevitable in the quest for the attainment of all the SDGs. This has prompted UN Women to provide analysis of the relevance of every goal to gender equality and women's empowerment. Accordingly, the publication has mapped all the 17 SDGs within the GEWE agenda, including the various ways in which women and girls will remain key to the attainment of the global goals. The publication further showcases the different interventions and efforts such as programmes, advocacy for policy change and intergovernmental work that the UN Women Regional Offices have rolled out. Specifically, the UN for East and Southern Africa and UN Women for West (ESARO) and Central Africa (WCARO).<sup>1</sup>

The SDGs delve on fundamental aspects of the feminist agenda, particularly its commitment to ending all forms of violence against women and girls. Unlike the Millennium Development Goals, the SDGs further focus on the advancement of sexuality education and rights, eradication of discriminatory laws, recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work, including support to increase the participation of women in meaningful decision-making. It is plausible that various dimensions of gender equality are not independently hinged on SDG 5 but spread out into various aspects of poverty,

education, hunger, water and sanitation, safe digital spaces, health, employment as well as climate change, peace and security. The dual approach to the advancement of GEWE presents a solid foundation, not only for national ownership but is also a coordinated and cohesive strategy. Accordingly, UN Women is focused on implementing the SDGs as well as gender data collection, analysis and utilization in monitoring and reporting on the SDGs.

Promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women and girls is critical to the realization of the 17 SDGs and their various targets. Accordingly, the ambitious and historic approaches advocated for by the Agenda 2030 needs some equally unprecedented efforts towards its effective implementation, particularly by instituting both amply resourced and firm framework for monitoring and accountability. Most importantly, quality data, together with strong indicators, are of critical significance and will, to a greater extent, define the impact of policy efforts.

These aspects will further determine whether the 17 DGs are achieved. In order to enhance a credible and reliable evidence base that can not only inform policies but also support advocacy with cohesive accountability framework, establishing incorporated information systems capable of addressing gender equality in all its scopes is inevitable.

It is worth noting that the implementation of the SDGs is not an individual actor's responsibility but requires concrete and concerted efforts from various players, particularly in monitoring and reporting of the goals' targets. These include, but are not limited to governments, UN agencies, donors, CSOs, CBOs, other non-state actors, and the private sector under the credible support of the various regional institutions. In fact, some of these actors have great work history on some of the SDG sectors despite the fact that the MDGs failed to either recognize, count or display their significant contributions to the attainment of the goals.

## 1.2

# BACKGROUND

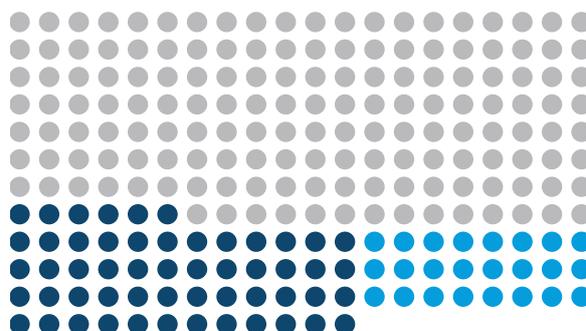
The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at the UN General Assembly Summit on 25-27 September 2015. The Agenda is centred on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 targets, a global action plan goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all. The 2030 Agenda which became effective on 1 January 2016 is the product of extensive consultations at local, national, regional and international levels, implying a level of consensus on what people, countries and regions want to get out of the development process over the next 15 years. The SDGs seek to build on the 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and complete what was not achieved under the MDGs set targets in the set time frame of 15 years.

The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda has a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women's empowerment (SDG 5). It is important to note that

all SDGs are relevant to the achievement of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE). UN Women has provided an analysis showing the relevance of each SDG to GEWE, and the potential for women's contribution towards its achievement. However, as noted by UN Women (2018), six of the 17 SDGs have no indicator to monitor progress for women and girls.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, of the 54 gender indicators out of the 232 SDG indicators, only 24 have data available since 2010. Just 17 per cent of indicators have data for two or more points in time and necessary for showing the impact of the SDGs over time. Of the 14 indicators to monitor implementation of the SDG 5 to 'Eliminate Gender Inequality and empower women everywhere,' 60 per cent do not have accepted international standards for measurement and or data collection is irregular UN Women, 2017.<sup>3</sup>



HAVE NO INDICATOR TO MONITOR  
PROGRESS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS



### 1.3

# LOCALIZATION/ NATIONALIZATION OF THE SDGs

Within the framework of the SDGs, the concept of SDG localization refers to the process of designing (or adjusting) national and sub-national government development strategies to adapt SDG targets and indicators to the local context and priorities. Localizing the SDGs involves promoting local multi-stakeholder ownership of the agenda-stepping down the globally agreed development agenda to the local in a way that it responds to local priority needs and interests.

Localization also means allocating resources necessary to achieve outcomes at the national and local levels.<sup>3</sup> Lessons from the localization of MDGs indicate that the involvement of local governments in the process of localization, for instance, significantly contributed to the participation of local community organizations, and private sector actors. On assessing a programme for localization of MDGs that was implemented in eight countries, the following four factors contributed to the effective localization:<sup>4</sup> involvement of non-state actors; capacities at the local level; coordination across development policies and strategies (Coherence between different levels of government); and availability of financial resources.

As UN Women launches its work to support localization of SDGs especially SDG 5 and the other 10 SDGs of which gender issues are cross cutting, the agency can build on these lessons including the work with regional institutions. Each of these factors is important for GEWE. It is critical for UN Women and regional institutions to work across sectors opening dialogue and building consensus on GEWE priorities in all gender-related SDGs whose targets are relevant to the achievement of SDG.<sup>5</sup> Effective capacity in the localization process is dependent on certain capacities-technical as well as soft skills including advocacy, partnership building and coordination skills. UN Women may be called upon to support the development of these capacities.

As the localization of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs gathers momentum, national development strategies, sectoral plans and funding streams are increasingly being aligned with these globally set targets. Concurrently, national statistical systems are mobilising efforts to ensure that data generation meets the demands of the 232 indicators consisting of the SDG Monitoring Framework. Regional bodies are therefore considered key actors in co-ordinating the implementation, follow-up, and review process of the SDGs.

Within its mandate, UN Women was actively involved in the advocacy and support for the Rio+20 Conference (June 2012) that negotiated the SDGs, and for the inter-governmental process that culminated in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015. The Rio+20 summit outcome document emphasized the role of regional and sub-regional organizations, including UN regional commissions and the sub-regional offices in promoting balanced integration of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Therefore, it is imperative that UN Women supports national governments and other regional institutions in the implementation and localization of SDGs as well as supporting the achievement GEWE. At country level, UN Women works within the UN Resident Co-ordinator System as part of the UN Country Team within which UN Women is mandated to lead and co-ordinate the UN system's work on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The co-operation of regional bodies has also been sought in co-ordinating peer learning through Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), sharing best practices, and discussing mutual targets during follow-up and review processes at regional and sub-regional levels. It is against this background that UN Women sought to conduct a mapping exercise of the regional initiatives towards localization of GEWE-related SDGs within Africa.

## 1.4

# STUDY OBJECTIVES

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The overall purpose of the study is to strengthen collective efforts of operationalizing the SDGs and identify actors both at the regional level and national level. The study findings will further assist in developing a roadmap for the successful implementation and localization of SDGs through regional institutions.

The specific objectives of the exercise are mainly:

- To analyse the process of implementation and localization of SDGs in Africa Regional institutions;
- To identify opportunities, including potential areas of collaboration with the partners identified in the study in their implementation and localization efforts;
- To identify possible entry points for UN Women in the implementation of gender related SDGs at the regional and country level;
- To link the regional initiatives identified through the study with the SDG Framework of implementation.

## 1.5

# METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The study targeted regional institutions and representatives from Regional inter-parliamentary and intergovernmental institutions and UN economic commissions. The study involved the review, analysis and synthesis of both published and unpublished literature from various sources. List of documents reviewed is attached as Annex B of this report. It was complemented by internal consultations with UN Women and key informant interviews that were facilitated through emails, skype, and telephone. The key informants were selected among stakeholders currently involved in the implementation of SDGs and GEWE. This report also draws on analysis of case studies both at the national and regional level as a means of identifying targeted interventions on SDGs and GEWE.

### 1.5.1

#### Reviews & analysis of key literature on SDGs and GEWE

The main information source was a desk review of key SDG documents relating to GEWE. This entailed a review of relevant documents from diverse regional agencies as well as web materials. The exercise also entailed an assessment of the level of alignment of the interventions with the various national development plans and policies for coherence.

This information yielded regional trends in gender equality and the national and regional landscape of policies and practices conducive for progress toward gender equality and women empowerment.

### 1.5.2

#### Internal consultation

This involved an in-depth discussion with UN Women in relation to current reforms aimed at improving gender equality and women empowerment in line with the SDG agenda.

The exercise also involved a review of existing SDGs platforms and collection of relevant documents.

### 1.5.3

#### Stakeholder consultations/key informant interviews

The key informant interviews were guided by research tool covering various aspects of SDGs and GEWE. Key informants were identified from 19 regional institutions including the eight recognised under the AU, United Nations agencies and institutions and regional CSOs. These interviews were meant to verify

and complement the findings from desk research and identify key areas of opportunities for UN Women while exploring potential partnerships.

#### 1.5.4

### Review of Case Studies

To gain experience on what is actually happening in the regional institutions, a case story approach was employed especially at regional and a few select national level case stories on regional mapping initiatives in SDG 5 and GEWE. This was to assist

in identifying areas where to employ targeted interventions. Case studies on existing regional interventions are also presented while identifying the lessons learned during the implementation.



STUDY FINDINGS,  
ANALYSIS AND  
DISCUSSION

## 2.1

# INTRODUCTION

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It is recalled that the overall purpose of this study is to strengthen collective efforts of operationalizing the SDGs related to Gender Equality and Women Economic Empowerment and identify actors at regional and national levels. They would further

assist in developing a roadmap for the successful implementation and localization of SDGs through regional institutions. The next chapters summarise major findings in relation to the study objectives.

## 2.2

# CONCEPTUALIZING SDGs LOCALIZATION IN THE CONTEXT OF GENDER- RELATED SDGs IN AFRICA

The SDGs provide a strong foundation for the promotion of GEWE through a stand-alone goal 5 and a mainstreamed focus on all other goals. This dual approach guarantees a more cohesive and co-ordinated approach, given the positive links between the achievement of GEWE and other development outcomes. The SDGs Framework has also identified 10 other gender-related SDGs which are of great significance to the UN Women and needs to be closely monitored to ensure that GEWE objectives are achieved. These 10 SDGs include SDGs 1-no poverty, 2-zero hunger, 3-good health, 4-quality education, 6-clean water and sanitation, 7-affordable energy, 8-decent work and economic growth, 11-sustainable cities and communities, 13-climate action and SDG 16 on reduced inequalities.<sup>7</sup>

Currently, different regional actors are already engaged in SDGs implementation and localization with diverse activities and interventions. However, there is need to map out current regional initiatives and interventions and strengthen collaboration, specifically as it relates to the roles of UN economic Commissions, regional CSOs, sub-regional intergovernmental bodies or commissions and that of their secretariats, such as: the East Africa Community (EAC), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), respectively, as it relates to the implementation and localization of gender-specific SDGs.

Within Africa, it is also important for UN Women to understand the progress of these regional initiatives and use this data to inform GEWE interventions that can support regional institutions and Member States seeking to align their development priorities with the SDG framework. African countries face the

added challenge of linking their efforts to advancing GEWE and the SDG agenda. UN Women appreciates ongoing efforts by diverse actors who collaborate to support these efforts. It is important that these interventions are mapped to build a co-ordinated and cohesive approach that ensures that SDGs are successfully and effectively mainstreamed in regional and national development plans and agendas.

On the other hand, almost all countries in Africa have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women signifying their commitment to promoting gender equality and women empowerment. Another significant commitment is the AU's declaration of 2010-2020 as the African Women's Decade.

However, although much progress has been made towards gender equality and women empowerment in Africa, gender inequality remains a challenge. Despite gender equality being a fundamental human-right, most African countries still lag behind on women participation in development matters mainly due to retrogressive traditional practices.<sup>8</sup>

Moreover, there are still more reported incidences of discrimination and violence against women and girls in every part of the world. Majority of women still work in insecure and poorly paid jobs, with limited advancement opportunities.<sup>9</sup>

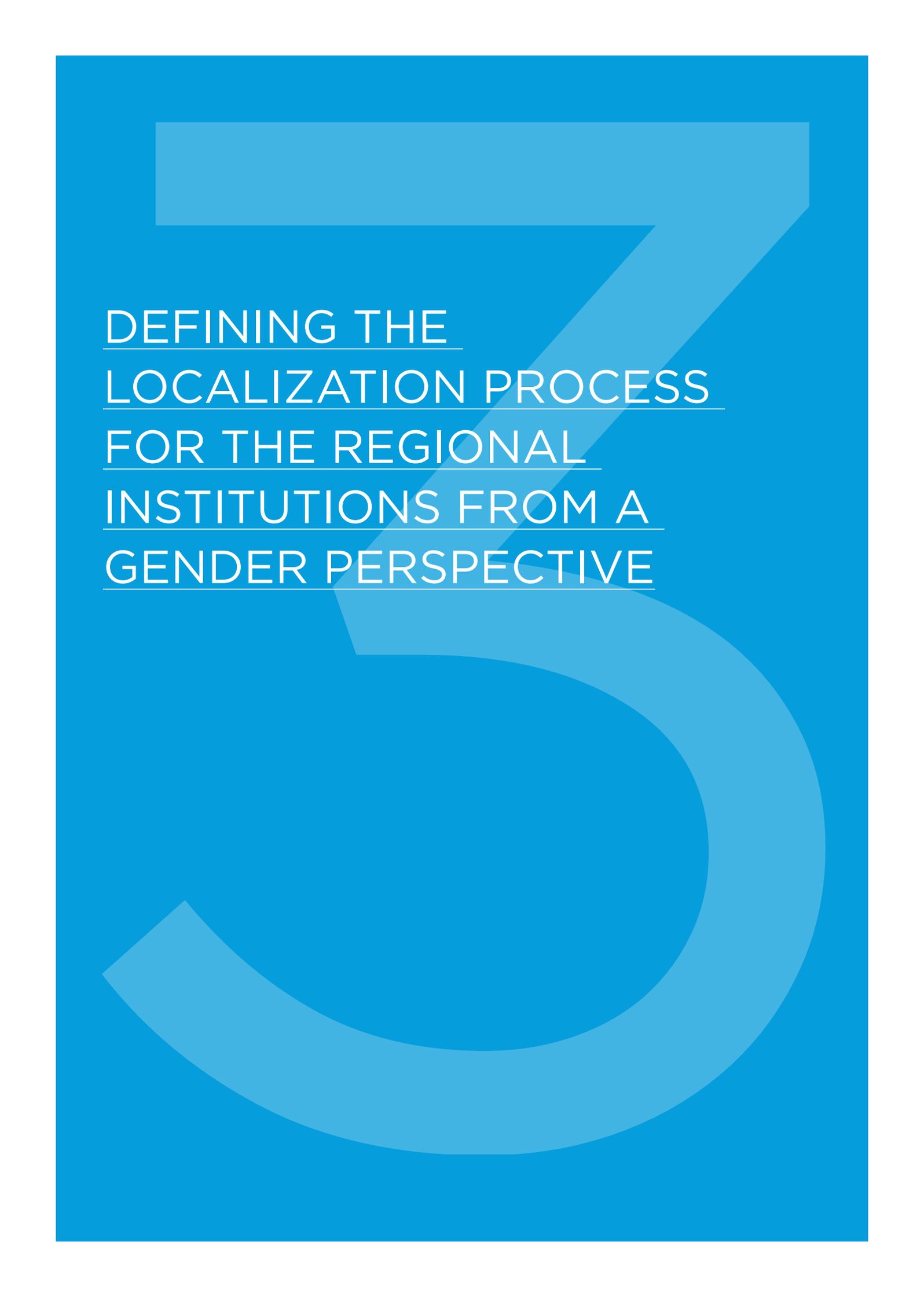
However, there is optimism that with the various initiatives through the regional institutions and with sustained efforts in localization of gender-related SDGs, Africa will make remarkable progress.

In addition, despite the existence of many actors in SDGs implementation and localization, mapping out current regional initiatives and interventions and strengthening collaborations specifically as it relates to the roles of various regional bodies and institutions has rarely been done. Moreover, understanding the progress of these regional initiatives and use the available data to inform GEWE interventions is also important. Mapping out these interventions is also

approach to ensure that SDGs are successfully and effectively mainstreamed in regional and national development plans and agendas. This is where regional institutions come into play as they can utilize their convening power to foster regional dialogue and peer learning while enhancing multi-stakeholder partnerships and policy innovation.

Building on the dual approach to achieving GEWE in Agenda 2030, continuous advocacy is crucial to ensuring the adoption of a systematic approach for mainstreaming GEWE in ongoing SDG localization, including during the determination of national priorities and SDG indicator frameworks. The process of localization is key to ensuring the inclusion of GEWE targets and indicators, as well as prioritizing GEWE in the means of implementation, financing and accountability at national and local government levels.



The background is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this are several abstract, semi-transparent blue shapes. At the top, there is a horizontal bar. Below it, a large, stylized number '7' is formed by a thick blue stroke. In the lower half, there is a large, thick, curved blue shape that resembles a stylized 'C' or a partial circle. The text is white and positioned in the upper left quadrant, overlaid on the '7' shape.

DEFINING THE  
LOCALIZATION PROCESS  
FOR THE REGIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS FROM A  
GENDER PERSPECTIVE

## 3.1

# INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) created an overall strategy for SDGs implementation for the UN systems to support governments. The MAPS (Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support) strategy was developed to integrate the new post-2015 agenda into regional, national, subnational, and local plans for development and specifically to target priority areas identified in the mainstreaming process.<sup>10</sup>

*What does it take for a country and a region to effectively implement the SDGs including step by step analysis from a gender perspective linking to the MAPS Framework?*

The localization of SDGs is linked to the Mainstreaming Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) framework. The approach is as follows:

**Mainstreaming** - refers to the critical steps involved in making the SDGs reality at the national and sub-national levels including through:

- Raising public awareness;
- Applying multi-stakeholder approaches;
- Adapting SDGs to national, sub-national, and local contexts;

- Creating horizontal policy coherence (i.e. breaking the silos);
- Creating vertical policy coherence (i.e. “localizing” the agenda reflecting both local and global considerations);
- Budgeting for the future;
- Monitoring, reporting and accountability;
- Assessing risks and fostering adaptability.

**Acceleration** - enables the identification of synergies and trade-offs across possible interventions by regional institutions. Potential “accelerators” that could lead to faster progress across multiple SDGs at the same time are identified. Depending on the context, this could lead to the identification of factors ranging from social protection to energy access, citizen security to girls’ education, from HIV prevention to youth employment, among others.

**Policy Support** - aims to address the need for coordinated, pooled advice from across the United Nations Development System (UN Women report, 2017).

## 3.2

# IMPLEMENTATION AND LOCALIZATION OF GENDER-RELATED SDGs IN AFRICA WITHIN THE MAPS FRAMEWORK

According to the UNFPA Eastern Europe & Central Asia SDG Gender report, there are four steps of gender-responsive SDG implementation that embraces all three elements of the MAPS strategy as presented below.

### Step 1: Nationalization and localization of gender-related SDGs and targets

**Purpose:** Regional institutions could leverage this opportunity to support Member States to mainstream gender equality in their national development plans. The mainstreaming of gender equality into national plans for SDG implementation should be made a priority from the earliest stages of the nationalization and localization processes. Countries often start with **developing a vision of nationalized SDGs**. Given the complexity of Agenda 2030, awareness raising, advocacy for the inclusion of a strong gender lens in SDG nationalization and the development of a national vision will often go hand in hand. Integrating gender equality in the general vision for nationalized SDGs provides a foundation for all future mainstreaming efforts. Securing the national ownership of gender-related SDGs and targets at the earliest stages will strengthen negotiation for the fullest possible integration of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls into national strategies of SDG implementation.

**Where to start:** In many countries, United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) start preparing awareness-raising and advocacy materials that can be used during national consultations on SDGs, in co-operation with national partners.

*Tip: Create a group of supporters/experts (gender advocates, civil society organizations, government representatives, private sector actors and academics) prior to the start of national consultations. The group's key role is to further support the process of engendering SDGs nationalized targets (Turkmenistan).*

Consultations are open or closed discussions about the SDG framework and its relevance for national and continental development. Whether it is an inclusive discussion, closed government session or a meeting of experts, regional institutions should be prepared:

- **Raise awareness of the centrality of gender equality for the SDG framework.** Explain the twin-track approach and special focus areas covered by stand-alone SDG 5 and its targets. Visual representations of SDG networks help highlight the connections between SDGs through gender-related targets.
- **Demonstrate how SDG implementation will help national and continental progress towards gender equality.** Show connections between gender-related SDGs and the national landscape of policies and programs concerning gender equality. Explain how progress towards specific SDGs and targets will help to address challenges

faced by women and girls (or men and boys).

- **Explain why ignoring and marginalizing gender equality will dramatically impede the achievement of nationalized/localized SDGs** (alternatively, how gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls act as accelerators in achieving many SDGs). The messages can be conveyed through specific examples. For instance, regional institutions can show how ignoring gender gaps in access to agricultural equipment, loans and knowledge prevent women from participating in agricultural production and, if not addressed, can impede the government's efforts to increase the output of the agricultural sector.

**Regional institutions should reach out to diverse stakeholders:** The dissemination of messages should strive to cover a diverse set of stakeholders, including line ministries, the national statistical system, parliament, local government, the private sector, civil society organizations, the expatriate community and the media. They must be conscious of working with different constituencies and adjust their mode of engagement accordingly. For example, an awareness raising campaign with a heavy presence in social networks (targeting young, Internet-savvy citizens) should run in parallel with a campaign targeting groups in remote rural areas, senior citizens and language minorities.

National consultations provide an efficient way to empower groups of the population subjected to different forms of exclusion and discrimination (including gender-based discrimination). If conducted in an inclusive and participatory fashion, national consultations should result in incorporating diverse interests and concerns ("leaving no one behind").

**Partnership building:** The consultations also offer a great opportunity to start building coalitions across sectors and geographical locations amongst regional institutions from Africa. Obviously, the institutions and long-time partners in specific ministries and civil society organizations will be actively involved and serve as a driving force in delivering on the gender related SDGs. However, do not hesitate to seek allies in unusual places (for example, government agencies not normally engaged in assisting women and girls) and continuously work to sensitize and build capacity within the national government. Parts of the government traditionally viewed as dealing with supposedly "gender-neutral" fields (for

example, the Ministry of Energy/Natural Resources) can play an important role in SDG implementation and should be sensitized by the regional institutions to the centrality of gender equality to achieve the SDGs. Securing private sector involvement in consultations can be instrumental in sensitizing private sector employers and bringing in additional funding. Connections established through gender mainstreaming across SDGs provide ample opportunity for issue-based coalitions.

For instance, helping women farmers gain equal access to community-based sources of renewable energy (sun energy related grants distributed by local government) connects SDG 5 to SDG 7.1 ("By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services") and SDG 2.3 ("By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women"). Such a coalition can bring together local government, ministries of energy and agriculture, environmental groups, rural community development structures, large and small companies involved in food production, farmers' associations and women's NGOs and co-ordinated by regional institutions to deliver on gender-related SDGs.

**Finding the right language for communication:** All the regional institutions studied confirmed that their messaging on gender-related SDGs has been culturally sensitive and highlight not only the challenges in national and regional progress towards gender equality but also the achievements. An example is the SADC Gender Monitor which highlights progress made in the region in women's leadership.

The messages should be crafted to speak to specific audiences. For example, if the country has already widely used the concept of "sustainability" in its development strategies (as in the case of Turkey), messages targeting government officials and experts should highlight the links between sustainable development and gender equality in Agenda 2030. If the concept of "social and economic exclusion" gained traction in national policy discussions, it is important to emphasize the role of gender-based discrimination as a common generator of social and economic exclusion. Private sector actors may respond well to messages that combine human-rights-related language with a business case approach. For general audiences, it is best to avoid technical terms and provide clear, memorable

and culturally recognizable references. This is the approach recommended for collaboration with regional institutions.

#### Getting prepared for national and regional consultations:

Several exercises can assist regional institutions and their national partners in the development of an inclusive, coherent vision that places gender-related SDGs and targets squarely within the nationalized SDG framework. The exercises will assist in:<sup>11</sup>

- Mapping the policy and program landscape; mapping national commitments relevant for national progress towards gender equality (including obligations under international treaties).
- Taking stock of relevant policy resources.
- Revealing and analysing connections between key country/regional trends in gender equality and SDGs.
- Envisioning consecutive stages of progress towards gender equality through SDGs. Please see the addendum “Exercises” for descriptions.

**Joining discussions with concrete inputs:** When joining national consultations, regional institutions and national partners should be prepared to offer specific suggestions about gender related goals and targets across Agenda 2030, which they believe are crucially important for national and regional progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Currently, several platforms for engagement do exist both at the regional, and national level and these include: Specialised Technical Committees, Experts Meetings and Workshops, Ministerial Meetings, First ladies Round Table Discussions, as well as Heads of State Summits.

In line with this, there is a need to specifically:

- Have the **list of gender-related SDGs and targets** that carry the utmost priority for national and regional progress towards gender equality. It will be useful to highlight the links between national commitments (for example, under CEDAW or the Universal Periodic Review, or according to national plans for gender equality, if applicable) and SDG nationalization priorities.
- Have a **list of adjustments to gender-related targets** that reflects the national and regional

context and have a preliminary list of indicators for each target.

- Have a **list of entry points** for mainstreaming gender-related SDGs and targets into national and regional strategies. For example, outline specific targets/objectives in the national sustainability strategy (or other overarching programs and plans for national and regional development), which can be expanded, adjusted or built upon to embrace gender-related SDGs and targets.
- Have **one-pager(s) (a)** explaining the importance of gender-related SDGs and targets for overall national and regional progress towards
- The Sustainable Development Agenda, **(b)** demonstrating the linkages between existing national and regional commitments towards gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and the prioritized SDGs and targets and **(c)** offering relevant national data to highlight gender equality challenges.

*Tip: Capitalize on the past experience of engagement with the national government gained from different national and regional consultation processes (Turkmenistan).*

**What to watch for:** Regional institutions have limited resources for implementing gender-related SDGs: some tough decisions will have to be made to avoid stretching financial and administrative resources too thin. Regional institutions should collaborate with UN Country Teams and the Member States and other stakeholders to develop an action plan for gender mainstreaming that includes courses of action for various scenarios, such as possible trade-offs (gender-related targets substituted for more general ones), the marginalization of gender equality in the discussions and the weakness of the national machinery, both in terms of power and resources.

**What to watch for:** Commitments not supported by relevant budget allocations run a high risk of failure. Gender-responsive budgeting tools help to analyse how much money regional institutions assign for the SDGs and what share of these allocations is likely to benefit women and girls. The tools can also estimate how addressing the needs of women and girls can increase the efficiency of budget allocations under specific objectives.

## Step 2: Institutional mechanisms for gender-related SDG implementation established and functional

The analysis shows that the majority of the regional institutions targeted by the study including the AUC, ECOWAS, AMU, EAC, SADC, SADC PF, IGAD and UNECA have either set up a specific institutional mechanism to co-ordinate and supervise SDGs implementation (for example, an inter-ministerial council) or assign a task to an already existing regional structure. These institutions also have gender directorates and/or departments who are responsible for the implementation of gender-related interventions. The study, however, notes that regional institutions and national actors should use advocacy to ensure strong representation of stakeholders supportive of gender equality in the national co-ordinating mechanism for gender-related SDG implementation.

It is important to have regional institutions for gender equality participating in the co-ordinating body and policy framework that cascades down to member countries. However, it is not enough, regional institutions should work with all member countries line ministries and committees to raise awareness and gain support for gender equality within the SDGs. For example, advocacy briefings can be conducted with key decision-makers in respective ministries. The institutions and partners should also continuously build the government's capacity to use a gender lens in the development of their SDG implementation strategy or when adjusting existing policies and programmes. The expertise and platform for the regional institutions are indispensable for ensuring that a coordination mechanism continuously upholds gender-related SDGs and targets the nationalized SDG Agenda.

**What to watch for:** Given the complexity of SDG implementation, national and regional coordination mechanisms are likely to start branching out. Working groups (theme groups, sector-based task forces or units) will be tasked with carrying out SDG implementation in their respective sectors or ministries. As these working units become more

sector specific, the discussions are likely to turn more “technical,” and there is a risk that gender-related issues will be marginalized. To address the risk and building on the Regional bodies’ convening power, they should: **(a)** conduct advocacy briefings and capacity building with members of “technical” units; **(b)** use gender focal points based in government structures (where available); **(c)** ensure that the gender lens is applied to all suggested changes to already established SDG policies and targets (include the requirement in Terms of Reference (TORs) for all units tasked with SDG implementation); and **(d)** disseminate user-friendly tools to help non-specialists view implementation steps through a gender sensitive lens.

*Tip: It is essential to harmonize the technical inputs provided by regional institutions and UN Agencies (and possibly by other development partners in the frameworks of the Gender Theme Group) internally prior to sharing with the government to ensure that inputs related to the localization of the SDG Targets, including the selection of relevant global SDG indicators and their customization to the national context (Georgia), are coherent and of the highest quality.*

**What to watch for:** The localization of gender-related SDGs will be done through the active involvement of the member states and, in some countries, community-based structures. Keep in mind that informal (and sometimes formal) authority in local communities may be embedded in patriarchal structures. In such environments, women and girls may have a hard time voicing their disagreement or talking about their concerns. Therefore, regional institutions and its partners at national level should make every effort to ensure the real involvement of women and girls in decisions regarding the prioritization of gender related SDGs or the adjustment of targets to reflect local needs.

## Step 3: Setting up monitoring and reporting frameworks and ensuring accountability

**Purpose:** Setting up a comprehensive and reliable monitoring framework with *gender sensitive indicators and targets* is key for tracking national and regional progress towards the localization and implementation of gender related SDGs and holding national governments (the main duty bearers in SDG implementation) accountable.

This step is essential for regional institutions, civil society, experts, and local and national government institutions interested in monitoring the progress achieved under the implementation plans. The gender-sensitive monitoring framework generates data, which can then be used to report on progress, in line with national and regional commitments to Agenda 2030. Both governmental and civil society sectors involved in this task can greatly benefit from the expertise provided by UN agencies and specifically, UN Women as it relates to gender related SDGs.

**Where to start:** It is best to start by reviewing and mapping already existing regional monitoring frameworks relevant for gender equality. Questions that may inform such exercises, include *Which gender-sensitive indicators already exist; How much do these indicators match the gender-related SDGs and targets; and Which indicators need to be expanded by adding a requirement to disaggregate data by sex (and other characteristics); Which necessary indicators are not available?*

The mapping of existing indicators should also determine **(a)** baselines for available indicators, **(b)** comparability of national and regional indicators to global ones, and **(c)** regularity and consistency of monitoring frameworks. Identifying gaps is an equally important part of that activity. Gaps in monitoring frameworks (the absence or weakness of indicators) are important: gaps reflect the areas that do not receive necessary attention and areas with low institutional capacity to collect data.

Gaps can also show that a relevant indicator is present but lacks disaggregation by sex/age/residence and other factors. After the mapping is completed, regional institutions and national partners (including the National Statistical System) can proceed to build a monitoring framework for national and regional priorities on gender-related SDGs.

**Adjusting and disaggregating national and regional indicators:** It is estimated that roughly a quarter of all SDG targets implicitly or explicitly address gender equality, about 32 per cent of indicators are gender-relevant and about 21 per cent explicitly need to be disaggregated by sex.<sup>12</sup>

Regional institutions can use global SDG indicators, supplement global indicators with national and regional ones created from scratch, adjust existing global indicators, or modify those related to gender equality. In line with the principle of leaving no one behind, the Sustainable Development Agenda requires that indicators be fully disaggregated by sex (and other factors such as age/residency/wealth quintile/marital status, etc.). Disaggregation by sex will help monitor the gendered aspect of progress on all targets and indicators. The correlations between sex and other socio-economic and demographic characteristics assist in identifying population groups left behind or rendered “invisible” by national averages.

Disaggregation by sex is specifically important for mainstreaming a gender perspective into SDG implementation: by introducing sex disaggregation into the monitoring framework, regional institutions can ensure that gender-based differences in progress towards specific targets will not go unnoticed. To adequately reflect the **twin-track approach**, monitoring frameworks should include indicators that measure the prevalence of a specific condition or practice among women and girls as well as sex/age disaggregated indicators that register the share of women, girls, men and boys among the population impacted by SDGs implementation. For example: There are several lists of gender-relevant indicators, including those compiled by UN Women, United Nations Economic and Social Council, Statistical Commission, Bureau of the UN Statistical Commission and “Ready to Measure: Sixteen Indicators for Monitoring SDG Gender Targets” by Data2x0.<sup>13</sup>

**Tiers of indicators:** After a list of suggested gender-related indicators is compiled, with respective baselines and sources, it may be helpful to use a three-tier classification to sort through existing and suggested indicators. The three-tier classification of SDGs indicators was developed by the Expert Group on SDG Indicators. The indicators were classified into

three tiers based on their level of methodological development and data availability.<sup>14</sup>

**Tier 1:** *Indicator conceptually clear, established methodology and standards available and data regularly produced by countries.*

**Tier 2:** *Indicator conceptually clear, established methodology and standards available+ but data are not regularly produced by countries.*

**Tier 3:** *Indicator for which there are no established methodology and standards, or methodology/standards are being developed/tested.*

It is important to take into consideration that the three tiers present three different situations with regard to data quality and availability in the context of gender related SDG implementation and localization. Only the first-tier indicators are based on a consistent and rigorous methodology and have data regularly produced at the country level.

With the second tier, we are entering a territory where indicators were developed based on a clear methodology and concepts. However, for a variety of reasons, data were not collected or released regularly.

The third tier indicators present further challenges since they are not based on well-tested methodology, involve unclear concepts, or are possibly still a subject of discussion among experts. In such circumstances, reliable data are highly unlikely to be available for Tier 3.

Given that the collection of *gender-specific* and *gender-disaggregated data* is still weak in the region and amongst the regional institutions, dealing with the second-tier indicators is likely to be a challenge common to all the studied institutions and national partners. Regional institutions can leverage on country-specific data sharing protocols and frameworks to improve indicator capture specifically geared towards gender. To turn the challenge into an opportunity, regional institutions may use the lack of data as a reason to insist on incorporating regular data collection as a requirement to increase the efficiency of proposed implementation plans. Also, the absence (or insufficiency) of quantitative data should not be an obstacle for focusing the implementation efforts on specific gender-relevant targets. Regional institutions can rely on qualitative research outcomes (specifically, interviews with local experts) to formulate arguments stressing the

importance of the incorporation of specific targets into the nationalized/localized SDGs.

References to comparable international examples can also help. Assessing indicators will help determine the reliability and methodological rigour of the proposed monitoring frameworks. Gender-sensitive indicators classified according to the three tiers can be found in *UN Women's Monitoring Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development: Opportunities and challenges*.<sup>15</sup>

**What to watch for:** there may be indicators that operate with the “household” as a unit, without disaggregation by sex. Regional institutions should address the gap immediately; otherwise, monitoring will fail to register the gendered impact of SDG implementation, and governments will not introduce corrections in their implementation plans.

**What to watch out for:** Certain changes (for example, in cultural and social norms restricting women's access to resources and mobility in public spaces) are hard to measure with quantitative indicators and are likely to be missed if countries only use quantitative methods of data collection. The monitoring of progress towards the implementation and localization of gender-related SDGs should also pay attention to social changes (attitudes, stereotypes, and norms). These changes can be measured using qualitative indicators.

**Reporting:** Agenda 2030 views reporting as a voluntary action, performed by states. Reporting summarizes the changes reflected by indicators and creates a narrative based on these changes. To ensure that reporting on SDGs is realistic and comprehensive, reporting templates should have a clear requirement to mainstream gender-related data (gender-specific indicators and indicators disaggregated by sex). It might also be helpful to ensure representation from the regional institutions in the government unit responsible for periodic review and reporting.

Many national governments in the region build on existing frameworks (national development strategy or CEDAW), rather than setting up a completely separate monitoring and reporting operation for SDGs. The purpose is to save resources and avoid double reporting cycles. Merging reporting on SDGs with reporting on the National Development Strategy

offers several advantages for a gender-responsive monitoring framework: It secures the government's commitment, the regularity of data collection, and makes resource allocations more stable. However, the actors involved, including regional institutions, should be persistent in ensuring that gender-relevant indicators specific to SDGs are not subsumed by the old reporting frameworks.

It is crucial to ensure that reporting reflects the twin-track approach to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the national, local, and regional process of SDG implementation. The capacity building activities of government and non-government actors responsible for reporting should include a detailed explanation of how periodic reports can reflect the progress under SDG 5 in its connection to the gendered dimension of advancement across all SDGs.

Depending on the specific nature of the programmes implemented, a report can show, for example, connections between expanded access to educational and vocational opportunities for women and the gendered dimension of poverty reduction programmes.

#### Step 4: Gender-responsive evaluation of progress towards SDGs

**Purpose:** Gender-responsive evaluation enables an analysis of the gendered impact of SDG implementation (or specific interventions), highlights the gendered aspects of exclusion, measures the pace of progress towards gender-related SDGs and targets, reveals the bottlenecks and draws lessons from challenges, failures, and achievements.

The gender-responsive evaluation of the SDG implementation should not be a repetition of monitoring reports but should explain why the dynamics and outcomes of implementation are the way they are. Designing an evaluation framework for SDG implementation is a challenging process. SDG implementation is a very complex multi-level operation (three thematic areas, cross-sectoral, several levels of government, different geographical locations, a vast and diverse pool of beneficiaries), which requires evaluation techniques capable of processing complexity.

**What to watch out for:** Gender equity at times gets lost in discussions surrounding gender equality, and the concept is often misunderstood by non-specialists. Targets and indicators directly addressing gender equity (like the following indicator related to Target 1.b.1 *Proportion of government recurrent and capital spending to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor and vulnerable groups*) are relatively scarce in the Agenda. However, the “no one left behind” approach is very equity focused. The approach requires national governments to deliver SDG progress to vulnerable and disenfranchised groups of the population and must be a priority of all regional institutions. This has been confirmed from the study as all regional institutions in the study already appreciate this principle and are involved in advocacy for inclusion by all stakeholders and Member States in the implementation and localization of SDGs. Subsequently, it is essential to sensitize national and regional actors to the role of gender equality and develop capacity to monitor the effects of SDG implementation on gender equality.

**Where to start.** Regional institutions and national partners should strive to include the commitment to regularly conduct gender-responsive evaluations in the national and regional strategies. All the regional institutions in Africa indicated the weakness of national Monitoring and Evaluation capacities as one of the primary challenges in the SDG implementation.

The capacity of regional institutions and their support is indispensable in building the capacity of national and regional M&E systems to conduct gender-responsive evaluations. It is also crucial for UN Women to raise awareness of national governments and civil society about the importance of gender-responsive evaluations for achieving sustainability. Any evaluation starts with formulating evaluation questions. Regional institutions and national partners should dedicate time to determine what they would like to know and understand as a result of gender-responsive evaluations. Questions can focus on overall progress towards SDGs or specific interventions. For example,

- *How did SDGs implementation deliver on a specific set of gender-related SDGs and targets?*
- *Does the progress towards nationalized SDGs and targets reflect the twin-track approach to gender equality?*
- *Have specific interventions had the intended impact of increasing economic opportunities for women?*
- *Which setbacks and bottlenecks slowed/reversed the progress towards SDG 5 at local level (among specific groups)?*

**Tip 1:** *Qualitative evaluation methods enable the evaluation to trace changes in gender-based stereotypes and attitudes, which will not be captured by numerical indicators.*

**Tip 2:** *Ensure that the twin-track approach is included in the evaluation questions and reflected in the key elements of the evaluation framework. For example, while determining the performance standards to evaluate gender related SDG implementation, it is important to ensure that the “successful performance” of specific programmes include benchmarks of progress in the status of women and girls.*

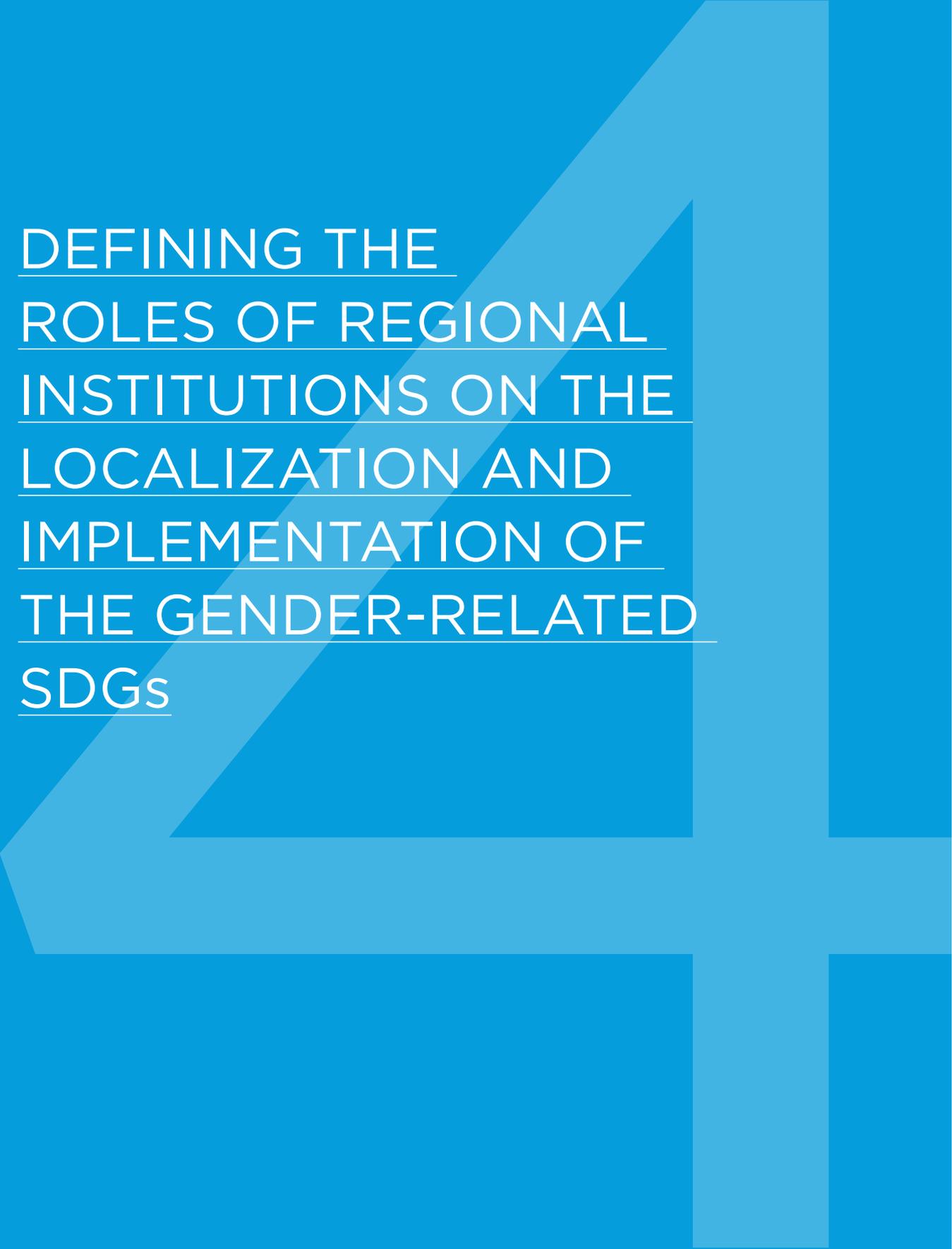
**Tip 3:** *Gender-responsive evaluation is not just about direct outcomes. Evaluation can act as a participatory and empowering process. Try to use empowering techniques, such as Appreciative Inquiry, to engage beneficiaries in the evaluation process and generate conditions to empower those whose voices are routinely silenced.*

**What to watch out for:** Gender-responsive evaluation should not be cast as the sole responsibility of the national machinery and regional institutions on gender equality. This will isolate and marginalize evaluation outcomes and undermine efforts

to mainstream gender equality into the fabric of national and regional gender-related SDG implementation. Regional institutions should advocate for gender-responsive evaluations to become a regular feature jointly commissioned by multiple actors (including key government ministries, local governments, and civil society).

**What to watch out for:** Numerical indicators that lack sex, age, residency, disability, wealth quintile disaggregation is likely to conceal processes affecting disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. To avoid this situation, specific evaluation questions and corresponding targets, baselines, sources, and indicators should be dedicated to reflecting the changes experienced by these groups (as a result of or in association with SDG implementation).

**What to watch out for:** Any responsibly conducted evaluation, apart from intended results, also examines the unintended outcomes of programs and projects. Given the large scale and complexity of SDG implementation, regional institutions and national partners have to be prepared for a considerable load of unintended outcomes (some affecting women and men in different ways). It is important to equip evaluation frameworks with tools capable of measuring the gendered dimension of an unintended impact. The task is challenging politically, since unintended negative impacts on gender equality and women’s rights may result from certain large-scale national priority programmes. The regional institutions should support national partners to be **(a)** prepared to conduct gender-responsive evaluations of such outcomes; and **(b)** use evaluation findings in advocacy efforts to demand the reversal or adjustment of programmes that have detrimental effects on gender equality.



DEFINING THE  
ROLES OF REGIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS ON THE  
LOCALIZATION AND  
IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE GENDER-RELATED  
SDGs

The study reviewed the roles of various regional institutions on the localization and implementation of gender-related SDGs into the following categories which have also been largely informed by the consultative meeting with the regional intergovernmental institutions in 2016 and facilitated by UN Women that built consensus on the roles of the regional institutions;

**i. Fortify coordination with the AU Commission and other key stakeholders such as the United Nations Development System, and most importantly, the UN Women on the implementation of gender-related SDGs;**

- a. Promote the consistency, effectiveness, efficiency, and the enhancing of synergies to improve the GEWE and the achievement of the SDGs.
- b. Create regional interagency groups to work on GEWE to enhance collaborated assistance and to speed up the regional impacts on GEWE.
- c. Citing and effectively influencing key world, regional and sub-regional networking outline and steps to promote the execution of and localization of the gender-related SDGs. This may include and not limited to Africa Forum for Sustainable Development, HLPF, UN Women-led expert group, and other key stakeholders.

**ii. Advancement of policy and programming coherence, for the promotion of GEWE within the framework of the SDGs, through;**

- a. Including the Member States in operationalizing their GEWE commitments under the SDGs within their National Development Plans and SDG Action Plans through tools, guidance, and professional guidance assistance in advocating for a clear commitment to the global and regional standards of gender equality as a baseline for actions and investments.
- b. Encouraging the Member States to incorporate gender concerns in examining and evaluation policies and initiatives using gender-specific and sex-disaggregated data.

- c. Encouraging the Supporting Member States to apply SDGs targets to national perspectives and to promote their implementation. For instance, speeding up the national focus to include the two agendas into laws, policies, strategies, and initiatives of the Member States.

**iii. Encouraging both financing and institutional support for GEWE within the SDGs framework, including;**

- a. Advocating for, and enhancing responsibility towards, higher funding for GEWE, and to hasten the attainment of the SDGs, with a focus on domestic resource utilization, gender-responsive resource apportionment, and encouraging gender-responsive economic procedures.
- b. Supporting increased allocation in National Ministries in charge of Regional Integration and/or coordination, and of Gender (respectively) to allow them to be effectively implemented initiatives through strengthening regional coordination and action on the SDGs.
- c. Through networking with National Ministries of Gender, supporting the strengthening of gender focal points in Ministries, Departments and Agencies in terms of positioning and resourcing as well as operational to improve their joint aptitude to achieve GEWE and related goals.
- d. Capitalizing on the capacities and official replies of the parliaments, to stimulate the improvement of gender-receptive policies and gender-accessible public fiscal laws or tools to expand GEWE.

**iv. Generation and management of knowledge products through innovation to help in accelerating the implementation of the gender-responsive SDGs through;**

- a. Promoting the quality assurance, gathering, and writing of key sex-oriented and gender-specific information to support evidence-based interventions, knowledge, and responsibility on strategic GEWE programme.
- b. Supporting South-South and triangular collaboration and learning, group-learning, and the sharing of accepted practices in the execution of the SDGs.
- c. Encouraging the technological and innovative models of incorporating GEWE in the implementation of the SDGs.
- d. Supporting the existing use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) as a tool for spreading the information, and a platform for debates on social norms, practice and information supportive of GEWE.

**v. Actively participate in strategic partnerships and networks to support the acceleration of GEWE under the Agenda 2030 through advocacy particularly by;**

- a. Initiating multi-stakeholder co-operation with prudent with important members on the continent to promote the harmonization of growth intervention and the SDGs and also to influence the complementary processes, programmes and existing resources and to support coordination.
- b. Promoting proactive outreach and activism to society associations, particularly women's rights organizations, to support efficient interventions to advance GEWE and increase Member State responsibility in the internalization and execution of SDGs.
- c. Strategizing the interventions and supporting activism campaigns, including UN Women's HeForShe campaign to engage males at national, regional, and continental levels as strategic partners and allies in

discouraging prejudice values and practices but encourage social justice, equity and gender equality.

**vi. Monitoring, evaluation, and measurements on gender responsive SDGs;**

- a. Creating regional networking, and synchronize the monitoring, evaluation and reporting plans on GEWE obligations within the context of the SDGs.
- b. Through networking with other stakeholders, maintaining the capacity development of national data foundations, and the collection, analyses, collection and passage of this data with the Member States and that aim at enhancing the implementation of the SDGs.
- c. Strengthening of Member States on SDG 5 on GEWE and other gender-oriented and indicator frameworks, and the development of tools and guidance to enable the improved outcome evaluation.
- d. Supporting, advocacy and campaigning to ensure financial distributions to evaluate the progress of implementation and localization of the SDGs, particularly SDG 5, and other gender-related targets within Africa to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of operational initiatives.

**vii. Awareness creation and advocacy;**

- a. Own the SDGs among the Member States in collaboration with stakeholders, including influencing intergovernmental processes to create awareness targeting all stakeholders to engage them in the objectives and targets, including state and local governments, parliaments, the public, civil society and the private sector.
- b. Encourage the dissemination of information to enhance advocacy for gender equality in the localization and execution of the SDGs at the local level.
- c. Encourage collaborations with diverse stakeholders such as interreligious groups, CSOs, the UN, media, and the Member States to highlight the allocation of resources in public responsiveness to the SDGs.

The study, however, notes that the SDG framework has defined the roles of UN Economic Commissions as follows;

- Encouraging policy consistency, and organization by giving nations with “one stop shops” for policy guidance to simplify the inclusion of the three dimensions of sustainable development, providing technical collaboration to execute the SDGs and operationalizing their means of implementation at the regional, sub-regional and country levels;
- Assisting the Member States to interpret global SDG obligations into local transformative approaches and programmes by propelling the incorporation of sustainability and inclusivity concerns in national policies, plans and initiatives as well as appropriations, and by trying the implementation of better integrated governance and delivery models;
- Augmentation of gender records and statistical capacities of the Member States for the realization of Agenda 2030 by providing practical assistance to them in advancing statistical data and capacities, as well as to gather, explore, publicize and convey this data for SDG execution. This will also help in influencing the Statistics Committees, regional subsidiary bodies, and training institutes of the regional and inter-parliamentary institutions to make sure that the initiatives developed are responsive to the demand and strongly supported by countries through the domestic statistics offices.
- Providing and encouraging the alternative and inventive sources of funds for growth through

the production of reports, investigations and programme guidance for the Member States on substitute and new sources of financing, and in view of the necessary regional design for development funding;

- Influencing science, technology, and innovation for women and girls to promote the achievement of gender related SDGs;
- Tapping South-South and regional networking through building practical relationships and progressing collaborations for further research, recognition of policy frameworks and motivation plans and strategies, acceptable practice and knowledge sharing, as well as gearing regional institutes to further reinforce the work of the Commissions;
- Converting regional models into global public goods through producing SDG-related outputs. The outputs may be related to legal intergovernmental treaties, standards and values, moral guidelines, gender-responsive transport, trade facilitation, environment, sustainable energy, housing and statistics.

The roles of in terms of the regional and inter-parliamentary institutions have not been clearly defined. Besides, the roles defined for the UN Economic Commissions have not particularly identified any gender related localization and implementation. However, it pushes this through formal structures of the UN Economic Commissions- in the case of Africa-UNECA. The UNECA has a gender directorate that is responsible for implementing any gender-related SDG interventions.



REGIONAL INITIATIVES  
WITHIN THE GENDER-  
RELATED SDGs BY THE  
REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

## 5.1

# COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

UN Women partnered with the African Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) and came up with initiatives towards accelerating rural women's access to agricultural technologies, through hosting regional Sharefair for rural Women's technologies in Eastern and Southern Africa. This initiative was geared towards achieving SDG 2 on ending hunger achieving food security and improved nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture.

The study notes that the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) is not strongly focused on gender and SDGs at the institutional level. It is, however, an important union in implementing and monitoring the gender-related SDGs. To this end, AMU is stepping up its leadership role in regional coordination so as to facilitate the synergy of development partners' interventions at the sub-regional level and improve their impact, through better mutual access to and resource-sharing.

It will have to direct its efforts towards five areas of focus namely: development of a Maghreb-wide sustainable development strategy in support of the efforts made by its member countries in attaining SDGs and implementing Agenda 2063; regular follow-up review of the situation, progress and outlook for sustainable development across the Maghreb; the capacity-building of the institution's staff; the sharing of knowledge, experience outcomes and good practices among its Member States in key sectors such as statistics, research, and technological innovation, skills training, etc.; and the

implementation of sub regional initiatives to support continental initiatives and programs sponsored by the African Union.

Looking forward, the study recommends that additional efforts be made to align national priorities with the gender-related SDGs, increase cross-sectoral partnerships on gender and SDGs across stakeholder groups, and take the gender-related SDGs into account in national budgeting processes. It adds that although regional priorities are reasonably well defined for implementing the gender-related SDGs, few gender-related strategic frameworks are available to steer action by regional institutions in Maghreb countries, and target figures at the Maghreb level are limited. This study calls on the AMU to direct efforts towards gender-related capacity building and knowledge sharing efforts, a Maghreb-wide gender, and sustainable development strategy, and implementation of sub-regional gender and SDGs programs that support African Union-sponsored initiatives.

## 5.2

# STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Within the EAC region, the GEWE initiatives reported included:

- National employment programmes including vocational and technical training targeting girls and women;
- Development of a gender mainstreaming training programme for EAC staff;
- Implementation of a regional project aimed at improving the ability of women entrepreneurs to network and share information and access financial services;
- Development of a simplified guide on women cross-border traders;
- Development of a regional gender strategic plan; and
- Development of gender and social development outcome indicators for the 4th EAC development strategy (2011-2016) (UN Women, SDG report 2017).

Existing opportunities for advancing GEWE within the region include the formulation of the EAC Gender Policy and the Gender Equality and Development Bill. There is also the political good to own and implement the SDGs and some are implementing gender budgeting. In terms of partnerships, the EAC has a Consultative Dialogue Framework for civil society, private sector and other interest groups.

IGAD has also made a lot of steps in terms of GEWE within the SDGs. Some of the initiatives are namely:

- A regional strategy for higher representation of women in decision-making positions (2013);
- In line with the AU Gender Policy, IGAD developed a gender management system (2018);
- Alignment of the IGAD Gender Policy Framework to the AU Gender Policy has been completed (2012);

- Organized a Regional Climate Outlook Forum that highlighted the important linkages between gender equality and weather and climate services (2018);
- Gender Analysis of IGAD's Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative (2016);
- Regional Action Plan for Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 (2013);
- Establishment of the IGAD Women and Peace Forum as a mechanism for stepping up women's engagement in peace-building and conflict resolution in the region (2015);
- Capacity enhancement on peace building and reconciliation for women in conflict-affected states.

In 2014, The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) presented a new *Continent-Wide Initiative on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment* at the Seventh Joint Annual Meeting of the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. This was further presented at the African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance in Abuja, Nigeria, from 25 to 30 March 2014. The ministers highlighted initiatives that were interlinked between transformative socio-economic development, gender equality, and women's empowerment in policy and programming.

In addition, during the third session of Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development in 17-19 May 2017, ECA developed a background paper in the sub-theme "Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls" and assessed the progress of the implementation of SDG 5 and Goal 17 of Agenda 2030. In recognition of the Goal 5 that included 7 targets and 14 indicators, ECA's assessment is useful in helping regional institutions and governments to properly assess the attainment of the targets.

## 5.3

# CAPACITY BUILDING

Within the COMESA region, there have been efforts towards enhancing the technical capacities of COMESA Member States to regularly produce and report on a comprehensive set of Gender Statistics. The initiative is geared towards providing in-country support to statistics developing, compiling, and collecting instruments, including non-conventional data and Metadata on gender Statistics. This initiative is aimed at localizing all gender related SDGs within the COMESA region. The legal framework for this initiative is entrenched in the COMESA treaty article 140 under which COMESA Member States agree to undertake concerted measures to cooperate in Statistical Development.

Based on the recommendations made by the COMESA Sub Committee on Statistical matters in September 2017, gender statistics is one of the key priorities in the new COMESA Statistical Strategy 2017-2022. The initiative has also been aligned to the United Nations Minimum set of Gender Indicators. The Member States are expected to report on progress achieved in the implementation of COMESA programmes and the African Union Agenda 2063 as well as the SDGs 2030 using the COMESA Gender and Social Development reporting guidelines.

However, challenges still persist for Member States to effectively report on these indicators, especially in terms of definitions, data comparability, and even timelines for basic indicators. Towards this end, COMESA has since produced an augural report (Bulletin) on the status of Gender Statistics in the COMESA region. The report elucidates in-country situations on the actual availability of Gender Statistics in various thematic areas in the 19 COMESA Member States.

Besides the SDGs and Agenda 2063, countries do have their own development agendas, which they are expected to achieve. The ECA and other development partners are assisting countries in monitoring and evaluating progress made in achieving these. In order to help Member States effectively track their progress in implementing global and regional agreements, including gender, the ECA provides technical support and resources.

However, the fundamental questions being asked relates to how the progress made by countries in implementing these agendas can effectively be

tracked. What effective monitoring tools are needed, and what technical support do countries need in implementing the gender related SDGs? In line with the above, the ECA plays a critical role in the Harmonization of Global and Regional Development Agendas with National Development Agendas.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) also works towards advancing gender equality within the framework of SDGs. Towards this end, UNECA assists countries in monitoring and evaluating their development progress, design of effective M&E tools, and offers technical support to countries in implementing their development goals. UNECA has also initiated several interventions in collaboration with other organizations to measure progress in promoting GEWE within the context of gender related SDGs. The interventions include:

- First, African Gender Development Index (2004): that was developed by UNECA to support Member States in measuring the gaps in the status of men and women and also assess the progress made by African governments in implementing policies aimed at promoting GEWE. Each country has to compile it's on national data. So far about 35 countries in Africa are either undertaking or are in the process of undertaking the African Gender Development Index;
- Second, Gender Scorecard (2015): which was developed by UNECA upon request by the AU chairperson. Based on the scorecard, the AU chairperson presents awards to countries that have made great strides in achieving GEWE;

- Third, Africa Gender Equality Index (2015). The AfDB launched the Africa Gender Equality Index in 2015, and it makes use of national data, where available, otherwise the information is obtained from international sources. It's an index compiled every two years;
- Lastly, African Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Index (2017). This will be the outcome of an initiative by the AfDB and UNECA of coming up with a joint gender index that harmonizes the Africa Gender and Development Index and the Africa Gender Equality Index (UN Women SDG report, 2017).

Other regional initiatives have been on strengthening resilience by empowering women through the UN Women regional office under the leadership of IGAD and the AUC. This was done through a regional Sharefair on gender and resilience in Africa. A collaboration with several partners, namely: IGAD, AUC, African Development Bank- AfDB), African Women in Agriculture Research and Development (AWARD), FAO, IFAD, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) among others.

The Sharefair was expected to accelerate development and humanitarian response and the overall achievement of the SDGs and facilitate long term collaboration amongst regional stakeholders with the aim of using data, mobilizing support and resources to incubate and scale effective solutions. The Sharefair also provided an opportunity to explore the role of women in building and strengthening resilience and promoted dialogue and sharing of experiences on gender responsive resilience related programmes.

In terms of capacity, the ECOWAS parliament recently launched the first parliamentary networking focusing on gender equality in land, agriculture; investments and food security, with support from FAO, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), and OXFAM.<sup>16</sup>

The initiative aims to ensure that the needed investment in the agriculture sector contributes to, among others, job creation and access to markets. It should also support infrastructure without jeopardizing smallholder farmers and entrenching gender inequality further in West African countries that are highly dependent on agriculture for their development. This would support the realization and localization of SDGs 1, 2, 3, and 5, which largely targets women and girls.

ECOWAS countries have also been tasked to enforce gender-friendly and inclusive agriculture laws to increase production and improve the value chain to achieve Africa's Zero Hunger by 2025. In Africa, agriculture is carried out by the majority of women, thus a timely intervention for the benefit of women and girls.

ECOWAS also has a parliamentary network that seeks to provide a platform for parliamentarians in the region to learn from each other, share experiences, challenges, and success on matters of gender, land, and agriculture and food security. This shall be achieved through policy dialogue and formation of alliances with the ECOWAS Commission, international organizations, academia, civil societies, and farmer organizations at regional and country levels.

The SADC region also has several gender-related frameworks namely:

- SADC Treaty (1992) Article 5 (1) (k) "to mainstream gender in the process of community building";
- Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan of 2003 which recognizes gender as a cross-cutting enabler for regional integration;
- 1997 SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and its 1998 Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women;
- 2007 SADC Regional Gender Policy; and
- 2008 Protocol on Gender and Development, which was aligned to the Millennium Development Goals of 2005. It was revised in 2015 to align with the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

SADC appreciates the need to align the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development to the SDGs and the importance of harmonizing national and regional development frameworks with the international development agenda. It is also important to ensure that targets are realistic and to strengthen and harmonize monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

In terms of opportunities, there exists opportunities for partnership through the creation of interlinkages and harmonized monitoring, evaluation and reporting of progress in implementing GEWE commitments within the SDGs. For example, the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development Monitoring Tool was developed for reporting

by the Member States biennially. There are also opportunities for strategic cooperation and collaboration with UN agencies and civil society for lobbying and advocacy on GEWE.

UN Women is in partnership with the Sustainable Development Goals Center for Africa (SDGC/A) on Gender Statistics. Opened in July 2016, the Sustainable Development Goals Center for Africa is an international organization that supports governments, civil society, businesses, and academic institutions in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa. The Center builds upon Africa's existing successes by bringing together people, ideas, and innovation to collectively reach a more sustainable future.

The Sustainable Development Goals Center for Africa is an autonomous non-profit international organization, which became operational on 01 July 2016 after the Board of Directors approved its establishment in mid-April 2016. By agreeing to establish an African own technically trusted Center, African leaders want to ensure that they act together in pursuit of a shared African development vision. They also want to ensure that Africa will have its right position in the global forum with all the other actors responsible for the global conversation and actions related to the SDGs. The purpose of the Center is to provide technical support, neutral advice and expertise as input to national governments, private sector, civil society, academic institutions to accelerate the implementation of the SDG agenda across Africa.

UN Women is partnering with the Sustainable Development Goals Center to initiate dialogue

between data producers and data consumers, particularly on gender statistics. The dialogue focuses on engaging traditional data generating institutions such as National Statistics Offices (NSOs) as well as new data producers, including academics, CSOs, NGOs. The partnership also puts great emphasis on data users such as policymakers, CSOs, decisions makers as well as other stakeholders. This approach aims at identifying emerging modern opportunities for generating aggregated gender statistics that would help in filling the wide data gaps that have continuously complicated the attainment of GEWE, particularly in the context of SDGs. In August 2018, the partnership brought together different regional institutions across Africa, including RECs, CSOs, NGOs, NSOs, and the UN, among other multilateral institutions to consult on various means of promoting and monitoring gender-related statistics.

Through such workshops, regional institutions and other stakeholders have the opportunity to effectively collaborate with both data producers and consumers at different levels. For instance, regional institutions are instrumental in enhancing advocacy with the view of influencing government buy-in. At the same time, Member States encourage administrative support, understanding, and recognition of alternative data in their data production process. Additionally, the collaboration will also showcase emerging good practices on methodologies of complementary sources of data and their administration. The Centre has also developed an SDG Index for Africa, which targets all SDGs and is not specifically focused on gender.

## 5.4

# POLICY DIALOGUE, CONSISTENCY AND COHERENCE

In 2013, the World Bank Group developed the African region gender action plan with the aim of improving women's and men's lives through policy dialogue and operations that are informed by cutting edge knowledge to address gender inequality effectively. From the policy perspective, it aimed to improve attention to gender issues in African country dialogue. In recognition of the fact that gender inequalities persisted in spite of growth and poverty reduction and the heterogeneous nature of remedies across African countries, the Bank sought to promote evidence-based approach to policy making in areas that explicitly and implicitly affect men and women differently.

The Bank sought to harness its convening power to bring together diverse stakeholders and provide them with timely analytics to strengthen policy dialogue around gender issues and assisting countries in achieving their goals. The World Bank outlined four strategic priorities in the 2012 world development report, namely: reducing excess female mortality; closing gaps in productivity and earnings; shrinking differences in voice in the household and society; and investing in youth to break intergenerational cycles of gender inequality.

The identified channels of action included influencing policy and country dialogue; improving gender integration into World Bank operations; building a knowledge base with a gender innovation Lab; and sharing knowledge effectively. These should be harnessed into the SDG framework of action.

The African Union also has a strong GEWE architecture. There are several initiatives at the regional level from the AU perspective.

- First, The Constitutive Act (2000), which is the foundational constitutional framework of the AU. Article 3 and 4 of the Act underscores the AU commitment to the principles of gender equality and to the effective participation of women in decision making, which are key to the SDGs 5, 16, and 17;
- Secondly, the protocol to the African Charter on Human Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003), also known as the Maputo Protocol, constitutes the AU framework on gender equality and women's rights;
- Thirdly, Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004) also reaffirms the continent's commitment to accelerate efforts towards promoting gender equality at all levels, where all African leaders committed to reporting on the progress made in gender mainstreaming;
- Fourthly, the AU gender policy (2009) also guides process of gender mainstreaming and the promotion of women's empowerment;
- Other initiatives were African Women's decade (2010-2020) aimed at advancing gender equality by accelerating the implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for action and the AU Assembly declaration on GEWE;
- Fund for African Women (2010) aimed at mobilizing resources to support development programmes and projects for Women in Africa;
- The African Gender Scorecard (2015) measures national progress towards GEWE in seven sectors (i.e., health, employment, business, access to credit, access to land, women in politics and

decision making and education at tertiary and secondary levels). There is also a Women, Gender and Development Directorate established within the Bureau of the chairperson that promotes gender equality within the AU;

- Finally, the AU also established the Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security to amplify the voices of women on peace and security issues within the region.<sup>17</sup>

Africa Union Gender Strategy 2018-2022 recognizes gender equality as a fundamental human right and an integral part of regional integration, economic growth, and social development. As per the strategy, AU commits to removing all forms of gender inequalities at the regional and national levels through a series of policies, actions, and goals derived from legally binding regional, international and continental instruments.

The AU mapped a framework for gender equality bringing together all the existing commitments and aligning them to Agenda 2063 and SDG Agenda 2030, where the continent's women and girls, boys and men have an equal choice, voice, and control over their lives. This adoption calls for accelerated efforts to end and close gender equality gap in the wake of emerging threats like HIV and Aids, Climate Change, Poverty and Gender Based Violence (GBV). The AU, in particular, has advanced and framed gender aspects of both Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 with advance targets for development objectives in GEWE built on the success of the MDGs. Interestingly, the AU gender strategy framework with a focus on GEWE is more robust, bolder action-driven and inclusive.

In the context of the AU below is the Evidence and Analysis of the mapped SDGs and Gender framework:

- 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere (SDG 1 (1.4)); (SDG 3 (3.2), SDG 4 (4.1-4.3, 4.5-4.6), SDG 8 (8.5, 8.7-8.8); SDG 10 (10.1-10.4));
- 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation (SDG 8 (8.7-8.8), SDG 11 (11.7), SDG 16 (16.1-16.3));
- 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation (SDG 3 (3.3), SDG 4 (4.1-4.3, 4.5), SDG 16 (16.1-16.2));
- 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate (SDG 1 (1.3), SDG 6 (6.1), SDG 7 (SDG 7(7.1), SDG 10 (10.2-10.3));
- 5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life (SDG 10 (10.2), SDG 16 (16.7));
- 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences (SDG 3 (3.1, 3.7), SDG 6 (6.2)).

## 5.5

# INNOVATIVE FINANCING

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AU has made a case for financing gender equality through tapping into all-new financial mechanisms being devised by the AU and its affiliates as well as promote gender audits of budgets at all levels to foster transparent, accountable, gender responsive governance. To mainstream GEWE, Africa Union has joint funding and financial arrangements with the Governments of Australia, Canada, Sweden, and the United States.

Towards framework funding and widespread financial actions, AU fund for African women and World Bank Gender facility has been instrumental in promoting gender related policies and strategies within its framework. Apart from financial support, there are Gender links that AU is leveraging on for technical

support to Gender equality strategy. The Fund for African Women (FAW) devotes at least 0.5 per cent of the AU's operational budget to projects on women's empowerment, which symbolically important even though this is a tiny fraction of what would close the gender gap.

## 5.6

# PEER LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE ON GENDER RELATED SDGs

On December 8th-9th, 2016, the East and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) convened a regional consultation with partners on the domestication and mainstreaming of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union (AU) strategic framework for socio-economic development in Africa, commonly known as Agenda 2063.

The convention was held in Nairobi, Kenya, and brought together representatives from Regional Economic Communities (RECs), governments, civil society organizations, and United Nations agencies. It provided a platform for them to share lessons learned in advancing gender related SDGs, discuss how to collectively operationalize the GEWE agenda within the gender related SDGs and Agenda 2063, and strategize on how to facilitate greater accountability for GEWE within the development frameworks.

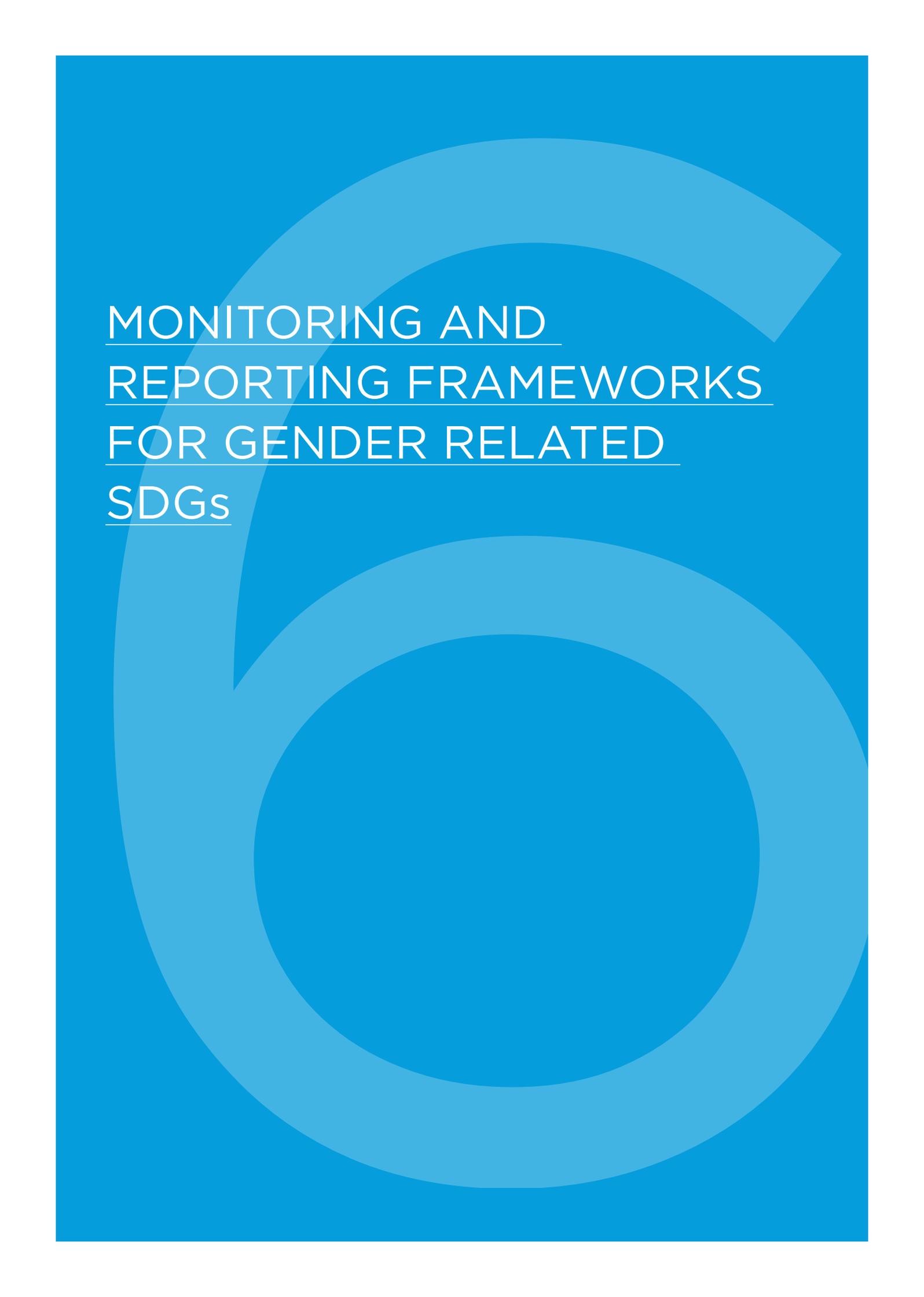
In 2018, UN Women, in collaboration with key stakeholders and UN agencies, held an SDG Consultative meeting in Nairobi- Kenya. The Regional Consultations on the Progress on the Localization of the SDGs focused on how Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in East and Southern Africa have made progress on gender equality and women's empowerment related SDGs. It also discussed the Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) as a mechanism of reporting and SDG monitoring at national and regional levels, the role of research, data, and statistics in accelerating progress towards localization of SDGs and building stronger accountability mechanisms.

The consultation brought together participants from 11 Member States, including Botswana, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa,

Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. These included representatives from Ministries of Gender; Directors of National Statistical Offices; Regional Economic Communities and Bodies- RECs; regional institutions; Select Civil Society Organizations and International NGOs; and UN Officials from United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Women Multi and Country Offices.

It contributed towards building momentum for the 2018 High-Level Political Forum besides motivating the Member States for Voluntary National Reviews beyond 2018. It also encouraged the Member States to prioritize gender statistics and ensure that no one is left behind in the localization and implementation of SDGs while ensuring that research and data remain critical for generating evidence for monitoring and reporting on the progress of the implementation of the SDGs.

From the consultations, a research agenda was developed based on the SDGs Gap Analysis replicating UNDP finalized SDG Gap Analysis in Kenya and a possible study on the Role of Community and Citizen-Generated Data as a tool of accelerating localization and implementation of Gender Related SDGs in Africa.



MONITORING AND  
REPORTING FRAMEWORKS  
FOR GENDER RELATED  
SDGs

# TOOLS FOR MONITORING AND REPORTING OF GENDER RELATED SDGs IN AFRICA

The study noted that efforts towards monitoring and reporting of gender related SDGs have increased with key regional institutions developing indices for measuring gender equality. Such indices include the African Gender Development Index by UNECA, the African Gender Equality Index (AGEI) by the African Development Bank, African Union Commission's Gender Score Card, the Gender Status Index (GSI) by UNECA and AfDB. In addition, the Gender Asset Gap and Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) initiatives were implemented in Africa by the UN Statistics Division (UNSD) in conjunction with UN Women to support the measurement of entrepreneurship and asset ownership from a gender perspective while to contribute to the International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics.

Other initiatives include the development of a handbook on engendering statistical processes and an African glossary of terms and concepts relating to gender statistics by UNECA in partnership with

UNFPA, the preparation of gender modules for integration into household surveys by AfDB in partnership with UN Women, as well as an online tool kit on gender statistics developed by UNECA.

## 6.1

# THE AFRICAN GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT INDEX

The African Gender and Development Index (AGDI)<sup>18</sup> is a tool that UNECA developed and introduced in 2004 to fast-track gender equality in Africa. The tool, while focusing on various major African Charters, uses African countries' national statistics to identify different gender gaps within particular power blocks and then enables the expedition of an evaluation of fundamental gender relations across the continent. Succinctly, the tool operates in the understanding that the successful empowerment of both men and women depends on the revelation of the unjust power of existing gender relations, critically challenging them and innovatively developing different social relations that are acceptable to all.

AGDI works in two components: Gender Status Index (GSI) and the African Women's Progress Scoreboard (AWPS). While GSI explores quantitative gender perspectives, the AWPS evaluates the qualitative performance of different gender policies of African states. However, both components explore capabilities, opportunities, and the political power to influence and contribute to gender equality within the women's human rights.

AGDI not only boasts of its ability to evaluate both qualitative and quantitative data but also to the fact that it brings data to gender desks, CSOs and NGOs where it can be most utilized in assessing best practices and lessons learned in advancing gender equality in at least 48 countries across the continent. Similarly, regional institutions can see this tool as an opportunity for informing SDG interventions across the continent.

## 6.2

# THE GENDER SCORECARD

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In 2015, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in conjunction with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the African Union Commission (AUC), developed a Gender Scorecard<sup>19</sup> to enable its Member States to monitor and evaluate their progress continually in achieving gender equality. The scorecard is a user-friendly, fast, and simple tool that helps Member States to establish their progress in implementing major ratified gender equality commitments across Africa and beyond.

The scorecard synchronizes on the significant spheres of the economy that have an elaborately positive and intergenerational impact on women and girls. Such spheres include such as education, health, political leadership and decision making, access to factors of production, as well as employment. Besides being complementary sectors, they are the main generators of positive externalities that resonate with the entire African economy.

Regional institutions can leverage on using this scorecard as an eye-opener to identify critical barriers to the implementation of the gender-related SDGs by the African Member States and further provide comprehensive interventions and mitigations towards the realization the Agenda 2030. Accordingly, the regional institutions will engage effectively in evaluating the impact of Member States on the implementation of the gender-related SDGs.

## 6.3

# AFRICA GENDER EQUALITY INDEX (AGEI)

The Africa Gender Equality Index was developed and launched by Africa Development Bank in 2015 as a measure of gender related disparities across the continent. The tool's departure is that women and men usually face conditions, opportunities, and privileges within the economic, legal, and human development spheres. For instance, the tool focuses on how men and women earn differently despite having the same qualifications and expertise. Further, the tool recognizes that they do not have equal access to education, health care, and property, as well as that legal frameworks are gender skewed across many countries in Africa. In doing so, the tool rates countries based on these indicators on a scale of 0 to 100, with the latter representing perfect gender equality while 0 is an indication of the highest gender inequality. Presently, the tool has evaluated and ranked at least 52 countries across the continent on a biennial basis.

As a ranking tool, regional institutions can adopt its usage to map best practices, benchmark on various country challenges and opportunities as well as

lessons learned towards the advancement of gender equality in line with the implementation of gender related SDGs.

## 6.4

# AFRICA SDG INDEX AND DASHBOARDS

The Africa SDG Index and Dashboards<sup>20</sup> comprise a tool to track the progress of the implementation of the SDGs. It is designed and managed by the SDG Center for Africa (SDGC/A) to help identify major SDG implementation bottlenecks and to support African countries in sharing experiences in actualizing the SDGs. Despite having ranked only 51 states, the tool has individual country dashboards for all the 54 African countries through which they monitor their progress. Unfortunately, the tool does not give gender related data of this progress. According to the 2018 ranking, Morocco led the continent in the first edition of the report having registered a score of 66.1, which implied that Morocco is 66.1 per cent of all the elements of the SDGs.

Since the Africa SDG Index and Dashboards does not explicitly focus on gender related SDGs but are on SDGs in general, UN Women and the regional institutions can lobby different stakeholders

to ensure that gender dimensions of the implementation of SDGs in Africa are captured and clearly showcased in a comparative manner within this tool.

## 6.5

# SADC GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT MONITOR

The SADC Gender and Development Monitor<sup>21</sup> monitors the progress made by the SADC Member States towards achieving the targets and goals of the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which is aligned to fulfilling the aspirations of the gender related SDG targets. It provides an update on progress made by the Member States at national and regional levels in meeting these targets. The SADC Gender and Development Monitor builds on previous monitors published in 2006, 2009, 2013, and 2016.

The SADC Gender Monitor provides information on the progress the region is making to meet its commitments to achieve gender equality and equity. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPFA), the SADC Gender and Development Declaration and its Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and national gender frameworks are among the instruments used to monitor progress. This issue of the SADC Gender Monitor should serve as a useful reference to the Member States and other stakeholders as they work towards accelerating the post-Beijing+10 gender agenda, and the implementation of activities related to gender specific SDGs towards achieving gender equality in the region. The publication aims to serve as a tool for monitoring progress in implementing gender commitments;

- Highlight progress and challenges for the SADC region;
- Accelerate progress on implementing the BDPFA, the SADC Gender and Development Declaration and its Addendum on the Prevention and Eradication of Violence Against Women and Children, and other international and regional instruments on gender, including gender related SDGs.

Gender machinery at the regional level and in most SADC Member States play a vital role in coordinating, advising, and monitoring developments on gender in the region. National structures are required to compile national reports to monitor the implementation of the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development and its Addendum on an annual basis and submit to the SADC Secretariat.

This issue of the SADC Gender Monitor should serve as a useful reference to the Member States and other stakeholders as they work towards accelerating the post-Beijing+10 gender agenda, and the implementation of activities related to gender specific SDGs towards achieving gender equality in the region.

## 6.6

# GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX (GII)

The GII<sup>22</sup> is an inequality index. It measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development-reproductive health (measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates); empowerment (measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education) and economic status, expressed as labour market participation and (measured by labour force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older).

The GII is built on the same framework as the IHDI to better expose differences in the distribution of achievements between women and men. It measures the human development costs of gender inequality. Thus, the higher the GII, value the more disparities between females and males and the more loss to human development. The GII sheds new light on

the position of women in 160 countries; it yields insights into gender gaps in major areas of human development. The component indicators highlight areas in need of critical policy intervention, and it stimulates proactive thinking and public policy to overcome the systematic disadvantages of women.



MAPPING OF  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
THE IMPLEMENTATION  
AND LOCALIZATION OF  
THE GENDER RELATED  
SDGs IN REGIONAL  
INSTITUTIONS

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND LOCALIZATION OF THE GENDER RELATED SDGs IN REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

From the review of literature, the following have been identified as the challenges, opportunities and lessons learned in the localization of the SDGs. Based on this, the chapter has further identified the key recommendations and way forward of the study findings.

The analysis of the challenges, opportunities, and lessons learned will assist in dealing with some of the identified gaps in the gender related SDG localization

process and also propose some mitigation factors in terms of challenges, as well as leveraging factors in terms of opportunities.

## 7.1

# AFRICA REGIONAL FORUM FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In March 2015, UN Economic Commission for Africa was tasked through the adoption of an African Ministers of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development resolution to convene, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, a biennial African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD). The resolution also prevailed upon the ministers to collaborate with the various national governments to ensure that the convention ARFSD is well supported while also encouraging the Member States to fast-track their commitment to the convention.

Apart from the two regional institutions, some key partners joined in the preparation of the Forum. They included UNDP, African Development Bank, UN Environment (UNEP), and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). The first ARFSD convention held in 2016 regionally informed the High-Level Political Forum. Prior to this first convention, ministers requested the UNECA, the AUC, and the AfDB to develop a cohesive monitoring and evaluation framework for the realization of agenda 2030 on SDGs. The framework would ensure that there is a coherent set of goals, indicators as well as targets to assess the realization of the agenda.

The forum is a useful platform through which various stakeholders review the progress of the implementation of the SDGs while also sharing their experiences and best practices, including lessons learned. This further helps in building a concrete consensus on what recommendations can be used as key messages, which also become the African regional significant inputs to the HLPF on Sustainable Development, in accelerating the realization of the Agenda 2030.

The 2017 ARFSD took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 17-19 May and it focused on “Ensuring inclusive and sustainable growth and prosperity for all,” a theme that was well aligned with that of the 2017 HLPF: “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world.” The fact that economic growth cannot independently eradicate poverty in Africa informed the meticulousness in the discussion on ‘inclusive and sustainable growth’ in the continent. On the same note, greater inequality has persisted even in the face of remarkable economic growth among some African countries. Hence, 70 per cent of most unequal countries across the globe are from the African continent.<sup>23</sup>

In 2018, the fourth convening of ARFSD took place in Dakar, Senegal, under the theme: “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies” helped in setting the tone for the 2018 HLPF that was held in New York just two months later on the same theme. It thus prepared African countries to elucidate their urgent concerns at the 2018 HLPF that was then held under the patronages of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in July 2018.

While building upon the 2018 HLPF’s theme, singled out and delved deeply into reviewing SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, and 15 as well as SDG 17.” The ARFSD is thus an integrated platform that brings together high-level policy and decision makers as well as experts from both government and inter-governmental institutions, the CSOs, and the private sector, including international development partners. Accordingly, it is essential that all regional institutions in Africa form part of the forum in order to have an equally significant effect on not only how Member States focus on gender related SDGs but also on the quality of reporting on gender across the continent.

## 7.2

# VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

National Voluntary Review (VNRs) is both a national and global voluntary reporting and monitoring mechanism on the status of the implementation of the SDGs. The voluntary reviews are thus a platform for sharing good practices, experiences as well as lessons that volunteering Member States have learned during their localization and implementation of the Agenda 2030. Consultations with Member States have clearly indicated that localization and implementation of the SDGs experiences coordination challenge.

Concisely, Member States have confirmed that there are serious coordination challenges among various stakeholders, including government agencies and departments, unstable relationships with CSOs, and other similar actors, the private sector and development agencies, as well as government departments with semi-autonomous agencies such as National Statistical Offices (NSOs). To mitigate the managerial challenges, a harmonized stakeholder engagement approach with clearly defined terms of engagement with other government agencies and stakeholders is inevitable.

The consultation positions gender equality as an accelerator of the VNRs because it both informs SDG achievement is also a key element of promoting the attainment of other gender related SDGs. The consultations further agreed that the success of the reviews requires that Member States allocate adequate resources to their processes and make it a continuous process just like Togo, which has never missed the reviews since 2016. Additionally, Member States must accord adequate consideration and budgetary allocations to the legal frameworks and policy that support the implementation of the priority goals with a particular focus to advancing the rights of the marginalized members of the society, which includes women and girls.

Some significant observations included;

- VNRs form part of the processes that enhances monitoring and reporting on SDGs at the national level and are usually aligned to the HLPF annual thematic pillars and, thus, Member States must view them in the same way;

- The role of regional institutions in ensuring the realization of SDGs must be emphasized;
- All stakeholders promoting gender matters should have an impeccable appreciation of the gender-related SDGs continuum as well as their interlinkages. Accordingly, partners should avoid contradiction among themselves by adopting an operational communication strategy;
- Inadequate gender data and poor analysis not only misinforms Member States on the real status but also impedes adequate budget allocations to and recommendations for interventions on gender-related SDGs;
- VNRs provide a perfect platform for monitoring, reporting, and coordination among different stakeholders working on SDGs, and thus there is an urgent need to develop a checklist the will ensure that stakeholders meaningfully engage while operationalizing SDGs;
- VNRs should be aligned to the country's monitoring and evaluation system with an annual implementation tracking framework for different SDGs.

During the 2018 ministerial segment of the HLPF, 46 countries presented their Voluntary National Reviews. They included Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Bahamas, Bahrain, Benin, Bhutan, Cabo Verde, Canada, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Greece, Guinea, Hungary, Ireland, Jamaica, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Namibia, Niger, Paraguay, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia,

Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, State of Palestine, Sudan, Switzerland, Togo, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, and Viet Nam. The list shows that Africa was represented at approximately 19.6 per cent, and thus having her regional institutions support the process would both boost the quality of the VNR reports and enhance the focus on major principles, including that of leaving no one behind.

The 2018 presentations delved into the progress of the national implementation of the Agenda 2030, predominantly the goals that were under review in 2018. Succinctly, these areas included safe drinking water access and good sanitation services; waste management and restrictions on plastics; green growth strategies in urban areas; renewable energy and electricity services; as well as land and forest management and biodiversity conservation.

Accordingly, the participating countries outlined the latest investments and initiatives that they had rolled out, including the challenges that they had so far met in their implementation and monitoring processes. The speakers particularly emphasized the efforts that their respective governments had put towards their incorporation of the priority SDGs and their indicators into the countries' national development strategies.

They also shared further challenges experienced in promoting policy coherence and institutional harmonization of the SDGs. Interestingly, most countries presented their comprehensive institutional arrangements around SDGs, including how their respective governments have formed inter-ministerial councils or committees, multi-stakeholder working groups, focal points, among others, which are specifically committed to the local and national realization of the 2030 Agenda.

Linking SDGs implementation strategies with climate change mitigating Agenda was conspicuous in

the 2018 VNRs. Speakers elaborated on promoting sustainable production and consumption and stressed that efforts to achieving sustainable development and eradicating extreme poverty should concentrate on, among other aspects, education, healthcare, and employment.

In addition, communication and awareness-creating campaigns on the knowledge and adequate understanding of the SDGs was highlighted and a common challenge in the implementation of the Agenda. Limited organizational and statistical capacities, including inadequate funding, also incapacitated implementation processes in many countries; thus, a call for enhanced resource allocation and mobilization, including through multi-stakeholder partnerships, was echoed at the 2018 forum.

Owing to the fact that SDG 5 was not under review in the 2018 forum, there were no gender equality references in the presentations. Nonetheless, many speakers recognized that gender equality is a cross-cutting phenomenon across all the SDGs. Many CSOs and some Member States frequently raised questions on the interventions regarding gender perspectives, particularly pointing out at the obstacles to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

They also requested that speakers share further information on how their various countries and mitigating these barriers. Women's participation in the political spheres, gender-based violence also took center stage in the discussions which clear focus on the leaving no one behind and a strong call for always including people from the minority groups, youth and children, people living with disabilities and the vulnerable/indigenous people in all multi-stakeholder partnership approaches.

# ANNUAL HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

High-Level Political Forum<sup>24</sup> is an annual convening that oversees the implementation of agenda 2030. The first forum following the adoption of the Agenda was held in 2016. Succinctly, HLPF performs an oversight role to a network of review and follow-up to the implementation of the Agenda, thus facilitating the continuous sharing of successes, experiences, challenges, and lessons learned. Additionally, the forum globally provides articulate political guidance, leadership, and recommendations to the effective realization of the Agenda 2030.

The Economic and Social Council convenes the HLPF on Sustainable Development, which takes eight days, including a three-day ministerial session. To beef up the annual discussions, the General Assembly convenes Heads of State and Government every four years. HLPF attracts active participation from a wide range of stakeholders, including Member States, observers, CSOs and UN agencies, and entails lots of exhibitions on artworks, innovation, and other relevant displays based on every forum's theme. Additionally, there are special events that target partnerships, local governments and administrations, businesses, and academic institutions such as universities.

The 2018 version of the HLPF on Sustainable Development was anchored on the theme "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies"<sup>25</sup> and convened from 9 to 18 July in New York. The 2018 session focused on the review of six SDGs:

- SDG 6. Ensure both availability sustainability and efficient management of water and sanitation for all;
- SDG 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all;
- SDG 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;
- SDG 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns;

- SDG 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss;
- SDG 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development (considered each year).

As expected of the forum, the discussion around the 2018 theme generated several experiences, challenges as well as lessons learned by different stakeholders while implementing the Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development.

- Regarding the VNRs, it was observed that the production of a comprehensive VNR requires sufficient lead time and within an extensive scope of consultations;
- The UN Mission in New York should maintain an effective, accessible, and succinct communication with the Country volunteering to provide proper guiding preparations;
- In the spirit of leaving no one behind, there should be adequate funding to support extensive consultations to both urban and local areas and with all stakeholders;
- Despite Member States reporting progress data, having a comprehensive baseline data as well as data for monitoring the progress of SDGs implementation remains a major challenge.

- Persistence of coordination challenges, particularly among diverse stakeholders at regional and national levels, calls for Coordinating for inclusion approach to ensure that volunteering countries produce comprehensive reviews.

The experiences shared during the 2018 forum, as well as the previous sessions, clearly show that RECs should intervene and provide targeted support to all Member States towards the successful realization of Agenda 2030.

## 7.4

# RESEARCH AND DATA

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The Agenda 2030 calls on all the Member States to explore and utilize new data collection and integration techniques that not only guarantee high-quality, timely, reliable but also disaggregated data. The agenda also demands of the Member States that they collate geospatial information as well as earth observations to effectively aid various tools in tracking and influencing the progress of the implementation of the SDGs. In this pursuit, it is overwhelmingly evident that the biggest challenge that Africa faces is a lack of adequate, accurate, readily accessible, and reliable data.

Regional institutions can participate in both data acquisition, collation, and disaggregation to ensure that various interventions on gender related SDGs are well informed and appropriate. For instance, RECs can help in breaking down Big Data into various gender perspectives and issues within the set targets without compromising their impartiality. Additionally,

RECs can leverage on integrating pieces of data such as citizen generated complementary data into the national statistics using common denominators such as geographical location, age, and education levels to generate a deeper understanding of the intricacies and needs inherent in the SDGs.

## POLICY SUPPORT

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The realization of the Agenda 2030 highly hinges on national policies that every member state develops and uses in steering all spheres of its economy. Accordingly, it is beyond doubt that the Member States need to streamline their various policies with the Agenda 2030 in order to experience a flawless and productive implementation. Such policies should not only be restricted to the implementation phase but also at monitoring and evaluation and reporting perspectives of the goals, their targets, and their indicators.

In this regard, regional institutions have a more prominent role to play in, first of all, influencing public awareness and participation in the integration of the principles of the SDGs not only into their respective national policy frameworks but also at the sub-national and local levels. Additionally, the RECs have a bigger opportunity to inform, based on credible research, various policymakers and experts of the different drivers of sustainable development, including some of the perennial bottlenecks that hamper the realization of the Agenda 2030 in Africa. The approach would further be very critical in contributing to the designing of different policy interventions, including their planning and budgetary processes hence effectively steering the intervention to the realization of the SDGs by 2030.

In terms of opportunities, there exists opportunities for partnership through the creation of interlinkages and harmonized monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of progress in implementing GEWE commitments. For example, the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development Monitoring Tool was developed for reporting by the Member States biennially. There are also opportunities for strategic cooperation and collaboration with UN agencies and civil society for lobbying and advocacy on GEWE.

## 7.6

# KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND PEER LEARNING

The consultation with the regional institutions recommends establishing knowledge partnerships with a number of UN agencies and academic institutions and UN Women, particularly on gender related SDGs. The purpose of these alliances is to generate, disseminate, and utilize good practices and lessons learned and to promote South-South cooperation and peer learning by facilitating the exchange of experiences among regional institutions while mitigating challenges thereof.

The study recommends expanding knowledge efforts, including documentation of successes, innovations, and publications through increased partnerships

with regional institutions and ensuring a stronger focus on the implementation of the gender related Sustainable Development Goals.

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR MONITORING THE GENDER RELATED SDGs IMPLEMENTATION

## At the global level;

- The regional institutions should join global groups, including the Women Major Groups, to keep up-to-date on the global SDG monitoring and reporting;
- The regional institution should possibly prioritize to attend the annual HLPF sessions in New York and actively participate and or speak in Expert Panels led Thematic reviews, including the VNR Caucuses as platforms for interaction with UN Agencies and governments on the implementation, monitoring and reporting on the SDGs;
- The RECs should organize side events at the HLPF and use them as platforms for presenting various spotlight reports as well as shadow reports to respond to the VNRs;
- The RECs should take advantage of the available global monitoring tools and frameworks, which can help in ensuring the accuracy and sustainability of their models of reporting, particularly on the progress on the localization and implementation of SDGs;
- RECs should leverage using the SDG Index as a source of data to determine the regional rating in relation to the gender related targets and indicators on Sustainable Development Goals;
- The regional institutions should exploit the SDGs in Action App to both create and join various global actions on the implementation of SDG 5 as well as other gender related targets in the other SDGs. The app, which has been developed by GSMA and Project Everyone, and highlights the SDGs in the context of the world's to-do list to end poverty, reduce inequalities, including tackling climate change. GSMA collates the interests of approximately 800 mobile operators across the globe, while Project Everyone is a non-profit global campaign to popularize the SDGs and various interventions towards their realization. The SDGs in Action app features:
  - » Comprehensive information on each of the 17 goals and their targets through explanatory videos, key facts and figures, as well as suggestions on ways and means through which one can help achieve them and take action;
  - » Up to date news on sustainable development from around the world. It also showcases how innovation is accelerating the achievement of the goals while also helping global citizens interact globally;
  - » Room for prioritization of notifications based on the user's most preferable goals;
  - » Quick access to the World's Largest Lesson describing each of the SDGs;
  - » Allows user to create Actions he/she is planning in their area and also invite others to participate;
  - » Links to events and actions near the user, which he or she participate in to support the implementation of the respective goals.
- The regional institutions should leverage on their effective participation at the UN World Data

Forum in advocating for not only quality and accessible data but also disaggregated statistics as a pathway to effective monitoring and reporting on gender related SDGs.

- Monitor and support the commitment as well as recommendations on gender-related SDGs as proposed by the Inaugural Report by the Inter-Agency Task force on Financing for Development by first conducting a comprehensive review of the report.

### **At the regional level;**

The 80<sup>th</sup> and 81<sup>st</sup> paragraphs of the Preamble address the reviews at the regional level. Stakeholders are advised to decide the best body at which to convene. However, the UN regional commissions have been for long considered as the most inclusive among the commissions. Additionally, regional and sub-regional organizations are encouraged to co-operate with a view to ensuring that the reviews succeed. The regional reviews are also voluntary and are based on the reports from the national level, just like the global process. The national reviews aim at preparing prior to the reviews at the HLPF and to provide a forum for group learning and review agenda 2030. The following opportunities are available at the regional level for influencing the execution and monitoring for the gender-related SDGs;

- Creating collaborations and partnerships with regional offices convening the ARFD such as UNECA, AUC, among others.
- Contributing and advocating policymakers attending the Africa Regional Forum on

Sustainable Development hosted by the AUC and UNECA yearly prior to the HLPF;

- Promote networking among RECs in Africa and with UN Women to work as a team to achieve common goals;
- Partake in the analysis of the SDGs with an emphasis on gender equality related targets and indicators;
- The regional commissions should create advocacy messages that show the relationship between Maputo Protocol and the targets under SDG 5;
- Analysis of the yearly Implementation Framework on the SDGs to identify targets on GEWE.

### **At the national level;**

- Sustain voluntary national review initiatives to ensure that gender is strongly included in national review reports;
- Create capacities of the Member States on statistical and data administration by making sure that there is generational accessibility and use of gender statistics;
- During the first Eastern African Sub-Regional Women's Colloquium on SDGs, it was agreed that the East African Community's Gender and Development Barometer would be reviewed to add SDG targets, particularly the gender-linked targets and indicators but the review failed. The study thus recommends that connections be established with The Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative for the advancement of Women (EASSI).

## SDG REPORTING PROCESSES

The expectations are rising on the ability of regional institutions to report on actions and measures to advance implementation, three years into the third year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development since its adoption in 2015. There is the need to share the good practices on gender-related SDGs, cite gaps, and experiences gained during implementation and to promote partnership and networking to achieve notable progress.

The study indicates that a majority of the RECs partake of SDG reporting processes globally and regionally. Reporting on gender-related SDGs is not deliberate except when it is reported by such existing instruments such as the SADC Gender Monitor.

The study identified the following reporting processes, which will be instrumental to the UN Women and ought to be prioritized too, by other RECs to see to it that they are affiliated to the SDG reporting processes and that they provide enough support to the Member States in reporting for gender-related SDGs.

- UN Women SDG monitoring report- UN Women's new flagship report, provides a comprehensive and authoritative assessment of progress, gaps, and challenges in the implementation of the SDGs from a gender perspective. The report monitors global and regional trends in achieving the SDGs for women and girls based on available data and provides practical guidance for the implementation of gender-responsive policies and accountability processes. As a source of high-quality data and policy analysis, the report is a key reference and accountability tool for policymakers, women's organizations, the UN system, and other stakeholders;<sup>26</sup>
- An annual SDG Progress feedback prepared by the Secretary-General and based on the global SDG indicators, national statistics, and regional information;
- The Global Sustainable Development Report, prepared by the UN system every four years, concentrating on technology and program framework and supporting the existing evaluations;
- An annual Inter-Agency Task Force Report on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development and Means of Implementation. The 2016 Report flagged sources of data that can be used to monitor the commitments on gender equality, as indicated in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, that may not be incorporated under SDG 5;
- Reports for the UN Statistical Commission by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs);
- and the High-Level Group for Partnership, Coordination, and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG-PCCB), including the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data approved at the UN World Data Forum (WDF) in Cape Town in January 2017;
- Annual Africa Forum for Sustainable Development Report based on the SDGs under examination and led by the AUC, UNECA, and the Africa Development Bank.

# LEVERAGE GENDER STATISTICS

It is doubtless that gender equality and women, and girl empowerment are prudent for the achievement of the set goals and targets of SDGs. Gender statistics revolve around identifying, preparing, and sharing information under the essence of gender in terms of how they affect women and girls in society. It is prudent to track the progress and guide the implementation of the Agenda 2030 in a way that it enables generation and administration of data using data statistics as the entry point.

This study has also noted the significance of gender statistics in filling the critical gaps. The 14th of the African Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, held in Dakar between 2nd and 4th May 2018, stressed strengthening the means of implementation, thus regenerating the collaboration for sustainable development in its message. Similarly, Decision number 71 accentuated: National statistics offices, in conjunction with stakeholders such as regional institutions, ought to consolidate their statistics development systems, data collection and management strategies to enhance the monitoring and reporting goals of 2030 Agenda in a consistent and integrated manner through;

- Augmenting national statistics systems like the national statistics bureaus as well as sectoral statistics;
- Facilitation and consolidating National Statistical Systems for frequent collection and reviews of sex disaggregated data and gender statistics to produce reports on SDGs GEWE indicators;
- Create knowledge materials, studies, case studies, and success stories and policy briefs that touch on gender statistics and gender related SDGs partnering with relevant stakeholders, the Member States, and actors;
- Heightening the competence of statistical data user;
- Promoting Member States to acclimate and familiarize national statistics development plans to monitor data related to the monitoring of the gender-related SDGs. This can be achieved

through the full disaggregation of data on target population groups such as women, girls, children, persons with disabilities and young people so as to leave no woman and girl behind;

- Encouraging innovative financing assistance and access to funds to acquire the technologies that are necessary for the production of high-quality data.

The necessities for supervising the SDGs from a gender perception calls for a significant improvement of production, availability, and consumption of gender statistics to meet the standards of Member States to meet the ambition set out in Agenda 2030. Additionally, joining the current drive and support for operative monitoring of the SDGs and reporting themes needs a current deeper level of generation and utilization of data and statistics, including by regional institutions. Traditional sources of data may will not sufficiently and effectively monitor and report on the gender dimensions of the SDGs that will ensure that no woman and girl is left behind because they are often not fully disaggregated nor analyzed.

The regional institutions are embracing the institutionalization of a system to generate timely, and quality disaggregated data. All the regional institutions studied showed remarkable efforts to intensify their research units through the incorporation of specialists in research and/or data. Meeting the principle of “leaving no one behind,” particularly women and girls as dictated by Agenda 2030, calls for more emphasis on disaggregation of data, the analysis of data, the design of data

instruments and tools, the data gathering strategies and the interconnect between sex dis-aggregation among other types of disaggregation.

The study further notes that regional institutions should steady steps to mitigate existing data gaps to back up the implementation and monitoring of national and international gender equality targets.

The study notes that National data generating agencies have the ability and obligation to generate quality data. However, insufficient systematic approach and capacity on methodology development, quality assurance, and communication with data users require increased engagement with the regional institutions to mitigate this challenge.

It is important to note that gender statistics are not prioritized enough in data collection and the resources allocated to them, nationally and internationally, remain relatively insufficient. This further raises the need to collaborate with regional institutions in capacity building and advocacy support for the Member States to commit to equipping this critical area towards monitoring and reporting for gender-related SDGs According to the

recent evaluation, over \$400 million is allocated yearly in joint and multilateral assistance for building statistical capacity. However, the resources that are channeled towards improving gender statistics is relatively lower. For example, only 2 of the total amount of \$131 million that committed to statistical capacity-building in 2013 by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) was utilized. This is approximately the cost of two standalone surveys on violence against women-was allocated to an undertaking in which gender was the principal objective.

Presently, only 11 of the 17 SDGs have indicators that can adequately monitor and report on the progress of women and girls. By December 2017, the Global SDG database indicated that only 24 of back to 2010. Besides, approximately 17 per cent of the indicators have data for different times, thus allowing for temporal analysis. However, thirteen of the fourteen indicators that help in monitoring the implementation of SDG 5 on 'Eliminating Gender Inequality and Empowering Women Everywhere' have globally accepted standards for measurement.

7.10

# LEVERAGE ON THE UN WOMEN LED GLOBAL ANNUAL EXPERTS GROUP MEETING

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) has joined hands with United Nations Environment (UN Environment) and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to co-convene an experts' group on the implementation of the SDGs. As a build up to the July 2018 HLPF, the expert group from three agencies met and consulted and deliberated on the theme "Building sustainable and resilient societies through the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."

The meeting which took place in June 2018 provided a platform for UN agencies, Member States, CSOs and academic institutions including other stakeholders to explore good practices, challenges experienced during the implementation of the SDGs as well as lessons learned particularly in the gender responsive implementation of the agenda.

The meeting focused on the SDGs that were being reviewed by the world in 2018.<sup>27</sup> The 2-day meeting provided the experts with an ample time to explore

comprehensive integration of gender issues in the SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12 and 15. Through short expert presentations into the goals, the participants got the opportunity to interactively unpack and highlight the gender spectrum of the goals under review. From the same perspective, regional institutions should join such platforms and fortify the discussions at the global level while also helping various stakeholders with mapping progress in thematic reviews of all the gender related SDGs.

The background is a solid blue color with two large, overlapping circles in a lighter shade of blue. The circles are centered horizontally and vertically, creating a layered effect.

CHALLENGES, LESSONS  
LEARNED AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR ENGAGEMENT WITH  
REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN  
THE GENDER RELATED SDG  
IMPLEMENTATION

## 8.1

# CHALLENGES FACED BY REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER RELATED SDGs

The study confirms that all regional institutions continue to be confronted with a number of capacity challenges that affected the effective functioning and timely implementation and localization of gender related SDGs. These included inadequate funding/financing mechanisms, absent or weak monitoring, reporting and data collection systems for gender related SDGs, weak coordination mechanisms amongst the institutions, limited awareness of gender-related SDGs as most of the regional institutions consider only SDG 5 as the main gender related SDG, limited understanding and application of gender related SDG concepts and standards for the localization and the implementation.

Other weaknesses cited included limited ability of regional institutions to identify priorities of gender related SDG and to produce localization and implementation plans in a harmonized manner, inadequate human resources specifically in the context of gender related SDG implementation and localization and lack of technical capacity in SDG implementation and localization strategies and methodologies, indicator and data management, analysis, and reporting for gender-related SDG implementation, and weak capacity for quality assurance on achievements and projects for gender related SDGs.

Despite the reported positive impacts of gender related SDGs, the efforts have not achieved the expected results in terms of meeting the demands of gender related indicators and targets under the SDGs. This can only be met if they are accurately linked to the target that the development frameworks have set. The major impediments identified in the implementation and localization of gender related SDGs include;

- 1. Financial challenges.** All the regional institutions studied have experienced serious financial constraints in the implementation and localization of gender related SDGs, which leads to persistence in gender gaps. For instance, some regional institutions have encountered challenges in performing timely surveys that require huge financial investments.
- 2. Technical challenges.** Many regional institutions have recorded problems related to the insufficient technical capacity to produce the required quality data, particularly of data related to gender statistic which is critical for SDG monitoring and reporting.<sup>28</sup>
- 3. Low dissemination and lack of adequate analysis.** Some of the regional institutions experience low dissemination and lack of adequate analysis for gender related SDGs data and information.<sup>29</sup>
- 4. Inadequate disaggregation of data.** All institutions studied faced insufficient disaggregation of data which affects targeting for the marginalized populations and specifically women and girls and also hamper informed investment decisions on gender related SDGs. This makes it even hard to reach the underprivileged, lead to an inability to achieve the principle of leaving no woman behind in the implementation of the SDGs.
- 5. Lack of effective coordination.** Regional institutions have disjointed and poor coordination mechanisms with the AUC and amongst themselves that has led to a deficiency in emerging areas such as gender, improvement in research and development and methodology, as well as management of the implementation of

gender related SDGs. The Coordination between Regional Inter-Governmental and Economic Communities and the African Union Commission in supporting the implementation of the gender-related SDGs also remains a challenge. The challenges include the lack of tools to facilitate coordinated strategic planning, peer learning, and support between regional institutions and the African Union Commission.

6. The study notes that all the regional institutions face **financial and human capacity constraints** in their abilities to effectively lead and coordinate gender related SDGs initiatives and interventions in regional policies, plans, and institutional processes at both the regional and national levels.
7. **The lack of and/ or weak or gender-unresponsive monitoring evaluation and reporting frameworks and systems-** partly due to the limited availability of full sex-disaggregated and gender-specific data, and poor coordination among regional institutions have, in turn, limited accountability to the gender related SDG achievements.
8. The AU Member States have made **significant progress in the adoption, and ratification** of policy and legislative frameworks to advance global and regional GEWE commitments e.g., the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA)(2004), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (i.e., the Maputo Protocol (2003)), UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) and other GEWE and human rights instruments, but implementation efforts remain uneven, poorly resourced and uncoordinated, due to inadequate political will, ownership and accountability to the GEWE agenda.

The study further affirms that regional institutions are important for the implementation of gender related SDGs. They require effective coordination among all stakeholders in the process of SDG implementation. Additionally, the legal and institutional capability is key. In most cases, inconsistency in the work among various stakeholders, poor coordination, and collaboration system among themselves was evident and need to be mitigated, lack of human capital and resource capability of the institutions are some of the problems that have been experienced in Africa.

Despite the aforementioned challenges, regional institutions have a relatively better capacity to successfully implement the gender related SDGs from their experience in the convening power of the Member States and their previous experience from the implementation of millennium development goals. However, the study notes that they all have a limited ability to successfully implement gender-related SDGs. UN Women has an opportunity to partner with them in realizing the targets and indicators of all gender related SDGs.

The study concluded that due to the challenges discussed above, barriers were reported to hinder the implementation and localization of gender related SDGs. These were, among others, delayed or irregular approach to SDG implementation; the incompleteness of data and poor data quality, inadequate disaggregation of data with most basic forms of disaggregation limited to gender, age and nationality and in some cases education level and marital status. The barriers also entailed a difficulty in understanding the importance and need for gender related SDGs and lack of sufficient knowledge of the Gender Equality Indicators and targets across the 11 gender-related SDGs, limited statistical literacy among regional institutions and lack of coordination and harmonization of the gender-related SDG implementation and localization process. These barriers have prompted the regional institutions in some regions to put in place strategies to ensure the quality of interventions implemented targeting gender related SDGs.

## 8.2

# LESSONS LEARNED

From the analysis, the following were identified as lessons learned by the different economic communities in their efforts for localization and implementation of SDGs;

- SDGs should be approached from the perspective of smart economics, just like committing resources to the advancement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, which has provided a very effective approach to human development. The regional institutions should work with all Member States to ensure they have sustainable models of financing, including domestic resourcing;
- The successful implementation of the Agenda 2030 considerably hinges on the buy-in and ownership by various regional institutions, CSOs, CBOs, and other crucial stakeholders;
- Accelerated progress in the implementation of Agenda 2030 requires effective coordination and harmonization of strategies among the different regional institutions;
- Aggregated gender statistics are particularly critical for both accelerated progress and accountability towards the realization of the Agenda 2030 by all regional institutions;
- Fast-tracked implementation of the SDGs requires that regional institutions and the Member States should roll out multi-sectoral gender-responsive budgeting;
- The regional institutions should embrace coordination, collaboration, experience sharing as well as peer learning and which should be guided by the African Union Commission to strongly enhance the institutions' contributions to regional and global GEWE and SDGs frameworks;
- Regional institutions should actively participate in global and regional GEWE platforms including but not limited to CSW consultations, SDG and Beijing review processes, monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanism, intergovernmental consultations such as High-Level Political Forums, Voluntary National Reviews, and Forum for Africa Sustainable Development;
- Regional institutions should avoid working in silos and inclusively engage all stakeholders positively, including CSOs for effective advocacy and accountability initiatives on GEWE obligations within the SDGs;
- Regional institutions should intensify sensitization and awareness creation should be documented to promote effective citizen and member state participation as well as mutual accountability for the actualization of GEWE commitments within the SDGs;
- Regional institutions should harness the continent's demographic dividend by increasing young African women's participation in political, economic, social-cultural aspects of transformation while also embracing inclusive regional and national initiatives and policies directed by the SDGs;
- National ownership/ leadership is key in driving change towards gender related SDG localization and implementation. This is not limited to strong political will on the part of the continent's leaders, which is a critical accelerator of the implementation of women's rights instruments;
- Regional institutions should explore intergovernmental forums to leverage on traditional systems to enhance and sustain gender equality and the realization of women's and girl's rights, particularly at the community level for accelerated attainment of the SDGs;
- Intergovernmental bodies such as SADC-PF offers valuable lessons on engaging parliamentarians to achieve development agendas;
- Annual reports and peer-to-peer learning among the Member States are a strong mechanism for improving the implementation of the SDGs in the region. This should include targeted follow-up consultations with the Member States and planning commissions to ensure a

better understanding both Agendas 2030 on sustainable development and agenda 2063 on their relationship and synergies as they relate to women and girls;

- The establishment of mechanisms for seamless interactions and institutionalization of joint planning & reviewing to strengthen collaboration, avoid siloed approach, and ensure a proper coordination mechanism;
- Unless gender is mainstreamed into national plans, statistical strategies, and also given priority in data collection, gender data, scarcity, and gaps will continue being a problem that constrains proper investment, monitoring and reporting for the gender related SDGs;
- Investment in national statistical capacity is key to improving the coverage, quality, and data timelines for monitoring gender equality and related SDGs. This should be a priority of not only UN Women but also regional institutions;
- For an inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development, investing in gender equality and women's empowerment policies and programmes are pre-requisite even for the effective realization of the SDGs.

## 8.3

# RECOMMENDATIONS

### 8.3.1

## General Recommendations for regional support based on country analysis

Regional institutions should:

- Establish and/or strengthen mechanisms to hold governments accountable for gender budgeting for the SDGs through a Common Accountability Framework;
- Enhance statistical capacity to generate, make accessible and utilize gender statistics and capture all SDG indicators and put in place a harmonized monitoring mechanism for gender related SDGs;
- Consolidate gender related resources to maximize efficiency and seek donor commitment to support the implementation of the gender related SDGs;
- Advocate for the gender related SDG domestication and also share best practices among regional institutions, government, private sector, CSOs and other stakeholders for mutual learning;
- Harmonize reporting formats for regional institutions and develop a robust coordination framework to integrate alignment of the SDGs and Agenda 2063;
- Strengthen current engagement and synchronize regional efforts towards the implementation of the gender related SDGs;
- Leverage the Africa Sustainable Development Forum to ensure the Africa common position reflects the aspirations of all gender related SDGs in line with the annual High-Level Political Forum themes and SDGs of focus;
- All regional institutions should increase efforts towards gender responsive budgeting and programming on GEWE.

### 8.3.2

## Recommendations for accelerated progress in implementing commitments for the gender related SDGs

From the mapping exercise, a number of recommendations came up, namely:

- Resource allocation for the implementation of gender sensitive development response strategies with regional institutions, UN Commissions and Member States;
- Continuous efforts of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) to ensure branding and strong advocacy of the gender related SDGs within the regional institutions;
- Increasing the scale for resources required to achieve the gender related goals while increasingly involving the Member States to mobilize domestic funds;
- Creating robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks capable of identifying financial resources allocated against the set priorities for all gender related SDGs by providing multi-stakeholder reviews and common analytical frameworks across all regional institutions to strengthen the statistical capacity of the institutions responsible for data gathering and analysis;
- Need for strong regional networks of regional institutions to amplify resilience solutions and localization of gender related SDGs;
- UN Women should work with the regional institutions to strengthen women's individual resilience and empower women to claim

their rights in development planning and programming regionally while also focusing on strengthening capacities of governments and partners in enhancing community resilience in affected countries;

- Regionally and globally, the UN system should encourage and support regional institutions to report on gender equality commitments through technical cooperation and sharing of good practice;
- Need to promote accountability and citizen engagement on the implementation of gender-related SDGs;
- The role of regional institutions in holding Member States accountable to their commitments in the achievement of gender related SDGs should be strengthened. The SADC gender barometer is a good practice that should be replicated by other regional institutions and the AU. Regional parliaments such as the East African Legislative Assembly should hold national parliaments accountable to provide oversight for the localization of the gender related SDGs;
- Some regional institutions do not have gender units. The AUC, UNECA, and UN Women should collaborate with them to establish these units where they are lacking or to strengthen the gender units of the regional institutions where they exist, as in the case of the AUC, ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC PF, and SADC;
- Strengthen cooperation among regional institutions and coordination at the continental level with the AUC to share experiences and strategies on gender related SDGs;
- Enhance and streamline monitoring, evaluation, and reporting on the implementation of gender related SDG commitments;
- Accountability mechanisms need to be developed for the implementation of gender-related SDG activities at different levels among the regional institutions;
- Development of a collaborative framework on implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation between the AUC and regional institutions;
- Organizing regular forums among regional institutions to share experience and explore opportunities for collaboration, such as those already led by UN Women East and Southern Africa;
- Establish a regional interagency working group on gender related SDGs with regional institutions to fast track the implementation of gender related SDGs;
- Strengthen the relationship between national gender machinery and regional and continental bodies to complement the work on gender related SDGs;
- Harmonization of the multiple frameworks and tools will enhance implementation and reporting on gender related SDGs. The AUC and other stakeholders are encouraged to harmonize existing frameworks and tools and minimize the launch of new ones;
- Strengthening the relationship between national gender machinery, such as commission on gender equality with regional and continental bodies;
- Continue monitoring the implementation of existing institutional commitments on the gender related SDGs.

At the regional bodies' level, regional bodies can contribute to implementation, follow-up, review, and localization of gender related SDGs through:

- Utilizing the convening power of regional institutions to foster regional dialogue and peer learning for policy innovation;
- Conduct capacity needs assessment through both technical analysis and multi-stakeholder consultative processes to ensure prioritization and alignment of the SDGs into national development plans. This will ensure GEWE related SDGs are reflected in the allocation of budgets and institutional resources, and realize synergies with other national strategies and processes;
- Localizing the SDGs into national strategies and processes also requires an assessment of lessons learned from implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs; UN 2017). This would be critical for strengthening institutional frameworks to ensure coherence and coordination in the implementation, review and localization of SDGs;

- There is A need to translate the global targets into actionable, measurable and achievable regional and country targets;
- There is A need for an integrated approach and enhanced collaboration among the various regional institutions that are mutually reinforcing and minimize trade-offs. This is in line with the observation that regional institutions work in silos;
- There is a need to develop regional and national level indicators that best reflects national challenges and priorities;
- Providing regional platforms to support follow up and review. The lessons can be shared at the regional and global level e.g., through High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;
- Coordinating regional efforts to strengthen the data and statistical capacities of the Member States, including considering the potential of advocacy for adoption and use of administrative and project data by the Member States for accelerated implementation and localization of SDGs by regional institutions. This is also critical in identifying institutional arrangements necessary to foster synergies and limit trade-offs.

## 8.4

# WAY FORWARD

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- Provide technical assistance to the Member States on collecting Gender Disaggregated statistics by member countries support, based on the new United Nations Framework as well as integrating existing national data statistics collection mechanisms;
- Review national data collection instruments, analysis mechanisms, and processes to ensure availability and use of sex and age disaggregated and analytical data in core economic sectors where gender disaggregated data is not readily available;
- Ensure the prioritization of gender statistics in sectors in line with the SDGs and the Agenda 2063, and work towards the improvement of gender analytical capacity of professionals at all levels;
- Monitor and evaluate the institutionalization of gender statistics in regional institutions by the Member States;
- Publish an annual report on Gender Statistics in different sectors within each and every REC;
- Compile thematic publication on various economic sectors in line with the published Gender Statistics;
- Prepare a model for Gender Disaggregated statistics, based on the new UN Framework, to assist the Member States in implementing this program;
- Coordinated efforts (backward and forward linkages) with like-minded institutions on the focus area for capacity building.



ANNEXES

# ANNEX A:

## List of the 54 gender-related SDGs indicators

No.	SDG Goal	Gender-related Indicators	
1.	1	1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)	
2.		1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age	
3.		1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	
4.		1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, new-borns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable	
5.		1.4.2 Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure	
6.		1.1.1 Proportion of government recurrent and capital spending to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor and vulnerable groups	
7.	2	2.3.2 Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status	
8.	3	3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio	
9.		3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	
10.		3.2.1 Under-five mortality rate	
11.		3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations	
12.		3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods	
13.		3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10-14 years; aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group	
14.		3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services (defined as the average coverage of essential services based on tracer interventions that include reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health, infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases and service capacity and access among the general and the most disadvantaged population)	
15.		4	4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3, (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex
16.			4.2.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial wellbeing, by sex
17.			4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex
18.	4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex		
19.	4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status indigenous peoples and conflict –affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated		
20.	4.6.1 Percentage of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex		
21.	4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment		
22.	4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)		

No.	SDG Goal	Gender-related Indicators	
23.	5	5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex	
24.		5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age	
25.		5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence	
26.		5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18	
27.		5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age	
28.		5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location	
29.		5.5.1 (a) Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and (b) local governments	
30.		5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions	
31.		5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care	
32.		5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee women aged 15-49 years access to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education	
33.		5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure	
34.		5.a.2 Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women equal rights to land ownership and/or control	
35.		5.b.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex	
36.		5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment	
37.		8	8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex
38.			8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities
39.	8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities		
40.	8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age		
41.	8.8.1 Frequency rates of fatal and nonfatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status		
42.	8.8.2 Increase in national compliance of labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status		
43.	8.9.2 Number of jobs in tourism industries as a proportion of total jobs and growth rate of jobs, by sex		
44.	10	10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by age, sex and persons with disabilities	
45.	11	11.2.1 Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	
46.		11.7.1 Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	
47.		11.7.2 Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months	
48.	13	13.b.1 Number of least developed countries and small island developing States that are receiving specialized support, and amount of support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, for mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities	
49.	16	16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age	
50.		16.1.2 Conflict –related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause	
51.		16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation	
52.		16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18	
53.		16.7.1 Proportion of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions	
54.		16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group	

# ANNEX B:

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# ENDNOTES

1. See <http://africa.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/03/women-and-sustainable-development-goals>
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19. See details- <https://www.sadc.int/issues/gender/sadc-gender-and-development-monitor-2016/>
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22. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>
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**1** NO POVERTY

**2** ZERO HUNGER

**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**7** AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

**8** DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

**9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

**13** CLIMATE ACTION

**14** LIFE BELOW WATER

**15** LIFE ON LAND



**4** QUALITY  
EDUCATION

**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY

**6** CLEAN WATER  
AND SANITATION

**10** REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES

**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES

**12** RESPONSIBLE  
CONSUMPTION  
AND PRODUCTION

**16** PEACE, JUSTICE  
AND STRONG  
INSTITUTIONS

**17** PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS



**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS**



**UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION  
DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY  
AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. A  
GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND  
GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED  
TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON  
MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.**

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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