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Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
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Item 2 of the provisional agenda*
High-level panel 1: Stepping up ambition and innovative solutions to eradicate poverty and reinforce the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union

Summary of the report on African progress towards achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union

I. Introduction

1. In Africa, progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union has been hampered by numerous crises. If the two agendas are to be rescued in Africa, fundamental changes in the structure of regional economies and a redesigned global financing architecture are critical. In line with this objective, the theme of the 2024 high-level political forum on sustainable development will be “Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions”.

2. In the present report, the performance of Africa in respect of Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 13, 16 and 17 – all of which will be reviewed in depth during the 2024 high-level political forum – and the associated goals of Agenda 2063 is assessed. While data limitations make it impossible to provide information on all the targets and indicators, pictures are painted in the present report of the performance of the African subregions, in comparison with one another, and of the continent as a whole, in comparison with other regions. The Sustainable Development Goals under review and the targets and indicators of particular relevance, along with the associated goals of Agenda 2063, are set out in the annex.

II. No poverty

3. The goals under the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 that pertain to the eradication of poverty are all set out in table 1.

* ECA/RFS/2024/1/Rev.1.



Table 1

Sustainable Development Goal 1 and associated Agenda 2063 goals

Agenda	2030	2063
Goal	1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere	1 – A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens 7 – Environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities 17 – Full gender equality in all spheres of life

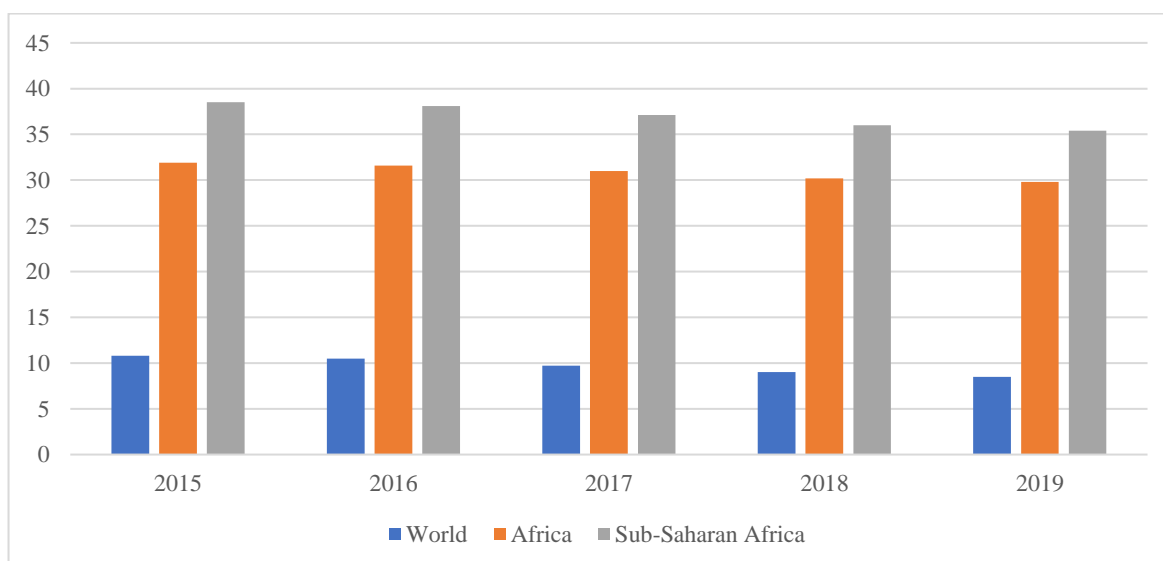
A. Sustainable Development Goals target 1.1 and indicator 1.1.1

4. Poverty is multidimensional and caused by underlying structural challenges. The chief drivers of poverty in Africa include a lack of access to clean water, sanitation, electricity, health and education services; inequality; infrastructure gaps; climate change; ethnic conflict; and limited employment opportunities. Since the mid-2010s, Africa has made modest progress in reducing the proportion of the population living below the international poverty line of \$2.15 per day. As figure 1 shows, poverty levels in sub-Saharan Africa fell from 38.5 per cent in 2015 to 35.4 per cent in 2019. Nevertheless, in 2022, Africa accounted for more than half (54.8 per cent) of people living in poverty worldwide. As shown in the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) issues paper on fostering recovery and transformation in Africa to reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities (E/ECA/COE/41/4–E/ECA/CM/55/4), levels of absolute poverty have increased by 74 per cent since 1990, with East and West Africa accounting for about 73 per cent of the impoverished people on the continent.

Figure 1

Proportion of population below the international poverty line, 2015–2019

(Percentage)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.¹

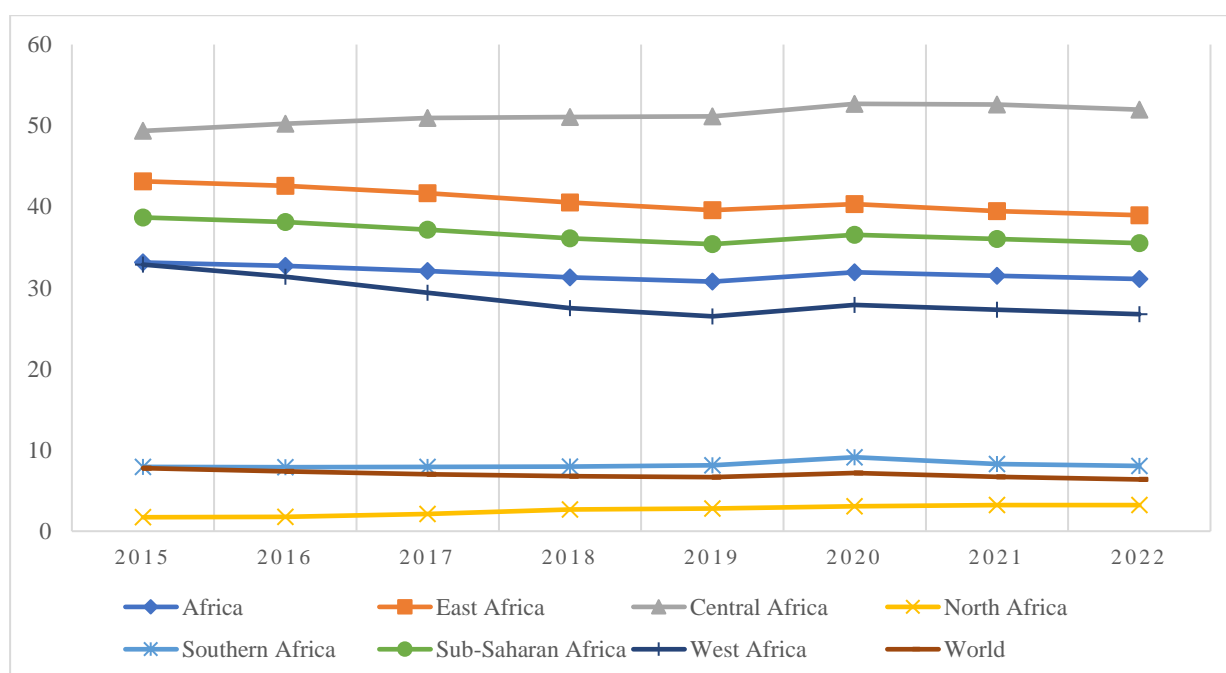
¹ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, SDG Indicators Database. Available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/dataportal> (accessed on 5 October 2023).

5. Gainful employment is a pathway to improving living standards.² As figure 2 shows, however, the proportion of the employed population of Africa that falls below the international poverty line is higher than the proportion for the world as a whole. North and Southern Africa have the lowest proportions among African subregions.

Figure 2

Employed population falling below the international poverty line, 2015–2022

(Percentage)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.³

B. Sustainable Development Goals target 1.4 and indicator 1.4.1

6. Access to safe drinking water and sanitation services is a human right and is fundamental to dignity, health, prosperity,⁴ food security and prospects of making a living.⁵ As figure 3 shows, the proportion of the population of sub-Saharan Africa using basic drinking water services increased from 58.95 per cent in 2015 to 65.03 per cent in 2019, but was below the corresponding proportions of the overall global population, which were 88.36 per cent and 91.18 per cent, respectively.

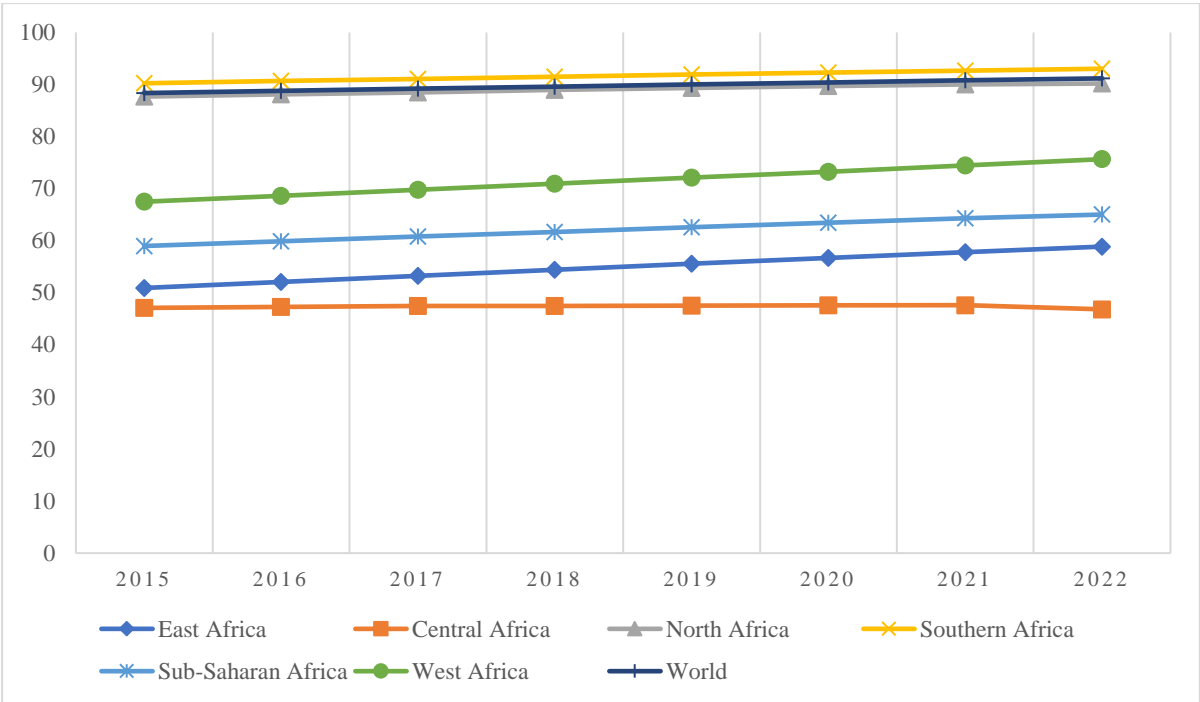
² International Labour Organization, “The working poor or how a job is no guarantee of decent living conditions”, ILOSTAT Spotlight on Work Statistics, No. 6 (Geneva, 2019).

³ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

⁴ United Nations, “Human Rights to Water and Sanitation”.

⁵ Asian Development Bank, Water and poverty (Manila, 2006).

Figure 3
Proportion of population using basic drinking water services, 2015–2022
 (Percentage)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.⁶

7. Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest levels of access to water, sanitation and hygiene services in the world.⁷ As figure 4 shows, less than 35 per cent of the population of sub-Saharan Africa had access to basic sanitation services between 2015 and 2022. The lowest proportions of the population using basic sanitation services were recorded in Central and East Africa.

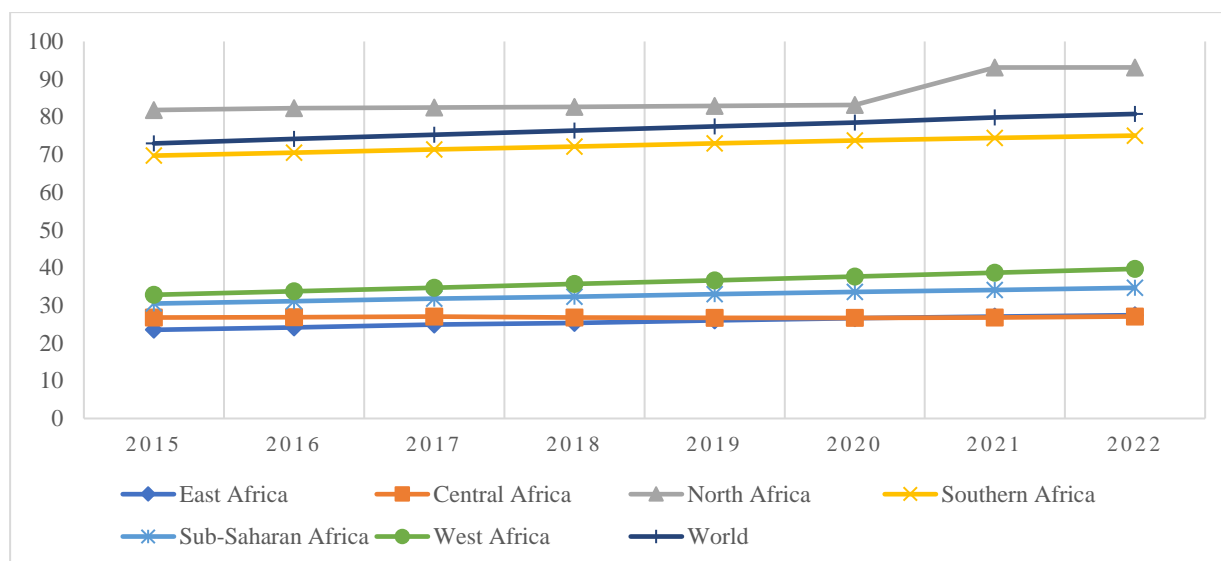
⁶ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

⁷ Asian Development Bank, Water and poverty (Manila, 2006).

Figure 4

Proportion of population using basic sanitation services, 2015–2022

(Percentage)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.⁸

C. Sustainable Development Goals target 1.a and indicator 1.a.1

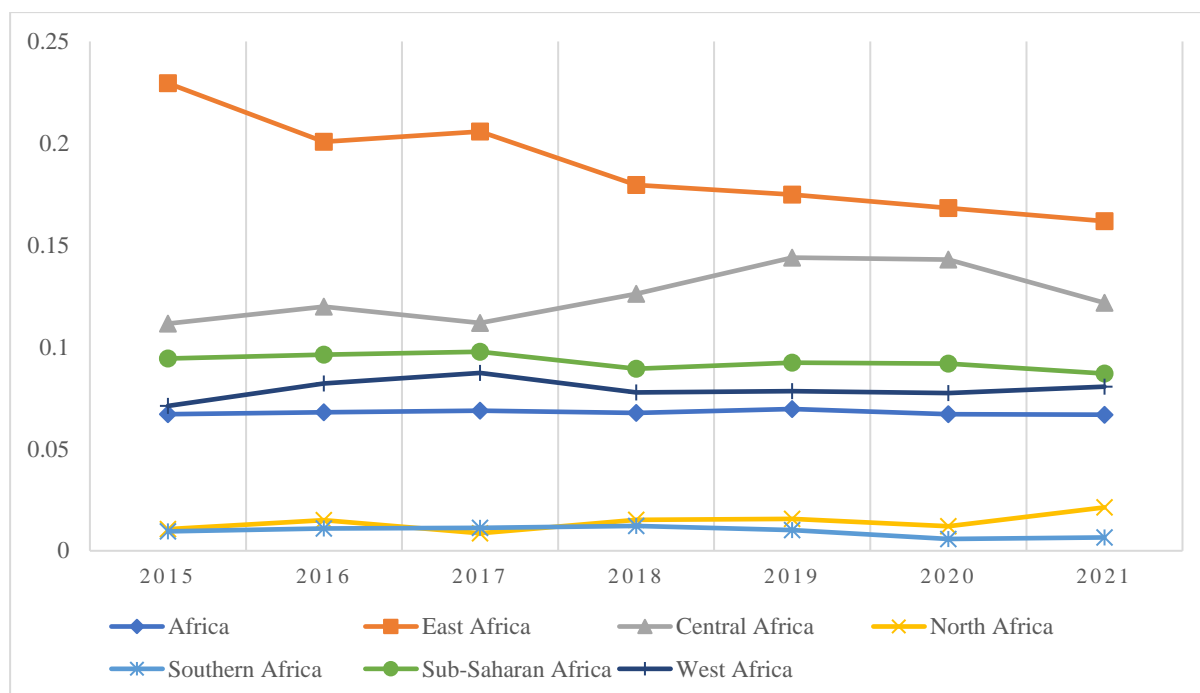
8. As figure 5 shows, official development assistance (ODA) grants specifically for poverty reduction in Africa ranged from about 0.06 to 0.07 per cent of the gross national income of African countries between 2015 and 2021. Of the subregions, East Africa received a higher proportion of ODA grants for poverty reduction, followed by Central Africa and West Africa.

⁸ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

Figure 5

Official development assistance grants for poverty reduction, 2015–2021

(Percentage of gross national income)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.⁹

D. Overall prospects

9. Data from surveys conducted before the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic show that poverty rates in Africa had declined before 2020. Notwithstanding the modest progress achieved, however, the proportion of working poor and the proportion of the population without access to water and sanitation services exceeded the global averages. Investment in equitable access to water and sanitation services and in high-value-added industries, through public-private partnerships, for example, could reduce poverty by increasing productivity and expanding livelihood opportunities.

III. Zero hunger

10. Goals relating to the elimination of poverty have been included in both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063; all of them are set out in table 2.

Table 2

Sustainable Development Goal 2 and associated Agenda 2063 goals

Agenda	2030	2063
Goal	2 – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	1 – A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens 3 – Healthy and well-nourished citizens

⁹ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

		5 – Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production
		7 – Environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities

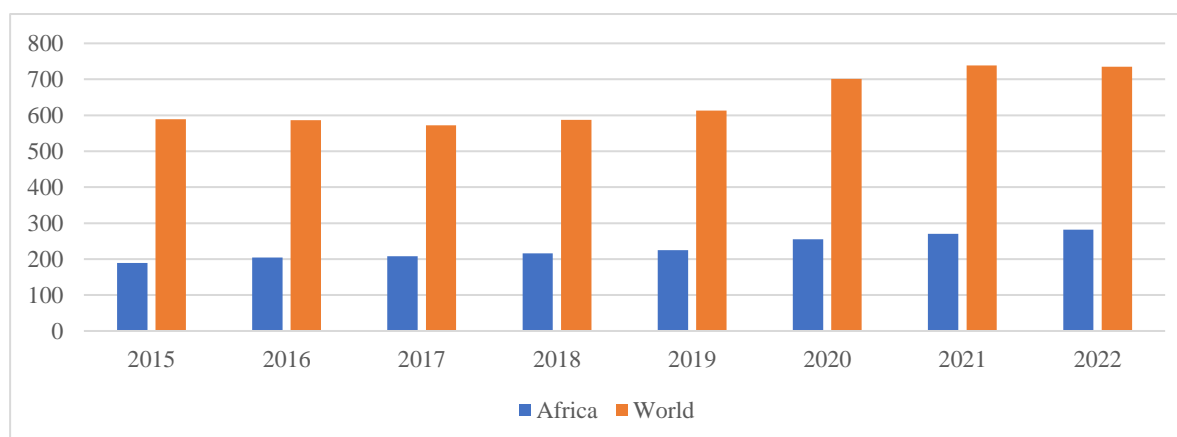
A. Sustainable Development Goals target 2.1 and indicators 2.1.1 and 2.1.2

11. Since 2015, hunger and food insecurity have increased worldwide, with the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict, climate change and deepening inequality contributing to the increase.¹⁰ As figure 6 shows, the number of undernourished people in Africa rose by about 49 per cent from 2015 to 2022, compared with a 25 per cent increase worldwide. The high level of undernourishment in Africa reflects high rates of extreme poverty, in particular in rural areas.¹¹

Figure 6

Number of undernourished people in Africa and worldwide, 2015–2022

(Millions)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.¹²

12. As figure 7 shows, from 2015 to 2022, West Africa suffered the largest increase (66 per cent) in the number of undernourished people, followed by North Africa (59 per cent) and Central Africa (55 per cent). In every one of those years, East Africa had the largest number of undernourished people, peaking at 134.6 million in 2022. With 485 million people, East Africa is the most populous subregion,¹³ a fact that combines with conflict and such natural disasters as drought, floods and locust swarms, among other factors, to render it vulnerable to extreme food insecurity and famine.¹⁴

¹⁰ United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals, “Goal 2: Zero Hunger”.

¹¹ Statista, “African countries with the highest share of global population living below the extreme poverty line in 2023”, Demographics database. Available at www.statista.com/statistics/1228553/extreme-poverty-as-share-of-global-population-in-africa-by-country/ (accessed on 4 December 2023).

¹² United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

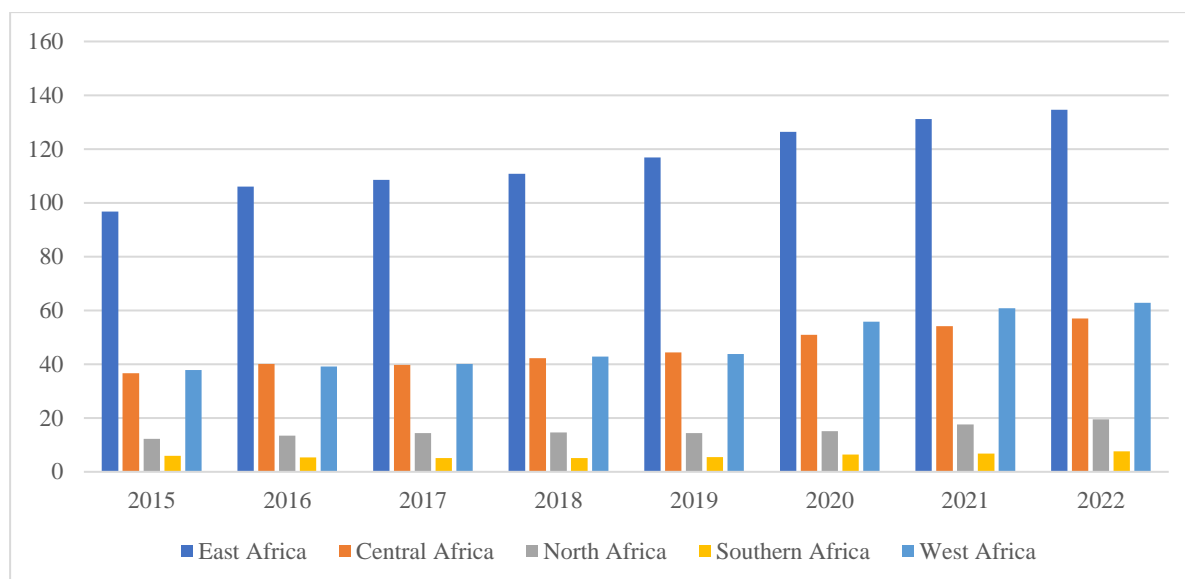
¹³ Worldometer, “Subregions in Africa by population (2023)”, World Population. Available at www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-africa-subregion/ (accessed on 16 October 2023).

¹⁴ Deutsche Welthungerhilfe, “Drought in East Africa”, accessed on 15 October 2023.

Figure 7

Number of undernourished people in Africa by subregion, 2015–2022

(Millions)



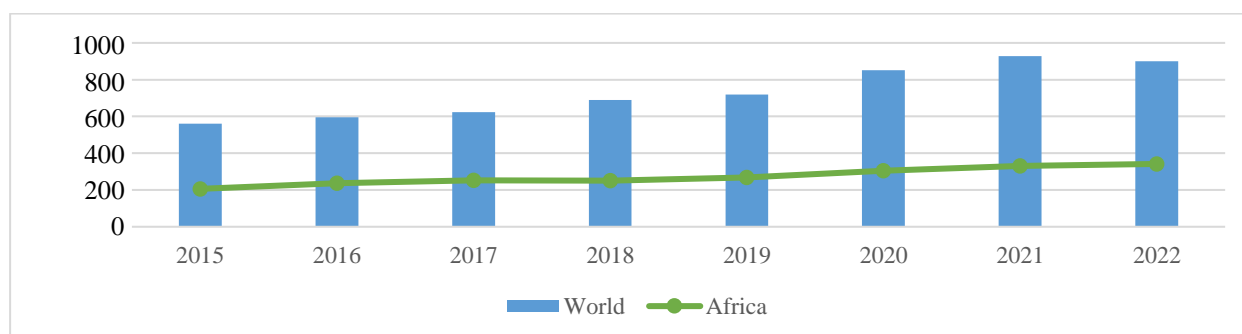
Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.¹⁵

13. As figure 8 shows, food insecurity has increased throughout the world since 2015, with the largest increase observed since 2019. Between 2015 and 2022, the number of food-insecure people in Africa rose by a greater percentage (66 per cent) than the global average (60 per cent). The COVID-19 pandemic, the war between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, and climate change have disrupted the global supply of food and other agricultural inputs to African countries, many of which have relied on imports from the Russian Federation and Ukraine for more than 50 per cent of the grain consumed in their domestic markets.¹⁶

Figure 8

Number of food-insecure people in Africa and worldwide, 2015–2022

(Millions)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.¹⁷

14. As illustrated by figure 9, of all the subregions, East Africa has the largest number of people who are severely food-insecure. Southern Africa has the smallest number, followed by North Africa. Since no data pertaining to

¹⁵ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

¹⁶ Eric Hamilton, “The global supply chain consequences of the Russia-Ukraine war”, University of Florida, 21 February 2023.

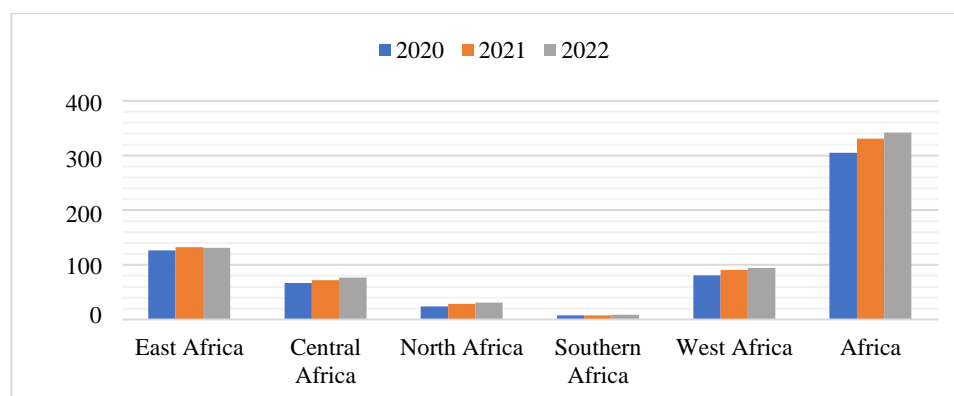
¹⁷ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database.

Central Africa are available for the years 2015 to 2019, only the period 2020–2022 has been considered for subregional comparison.

Figure 9

Number of severely food-insecure people in Africa, disaggregated by subregion, 2020–2022

(Millions)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.¹⁸

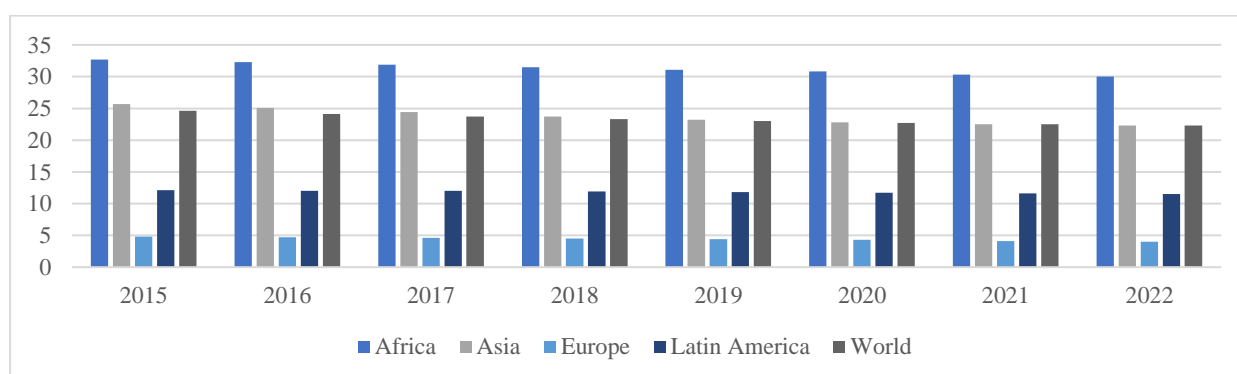
B. Sustainable Development Goals target 2.2 and indicator 2.2.1

15. As figure 10 shows, levels of stunting among children under 5 years of age have fallen in Africa and the rest of the world. As at 2022, however, the prevalence of stunting among children under 5 years of age was much higher in Africa (30.0 per cent) than in other regions, such as Europe (4.0 per cent), Latin America (11.5 per cent) and Asia (22.0 per cent). Such trends weaken future African human capital and productive capacity, undermining the potential for a regional economic transformation.¹⁹

Figure 10

Proportion of children moderately or severely stunted, by region, 2015–2022

(Percentage)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.²⁰

¹⁸ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

¹⁹ World Bank, *The Human Capital Index 2020 Update: Human Capital in the Time of COVID-19* (Washington, D.C., 2021).

²⁰ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database.

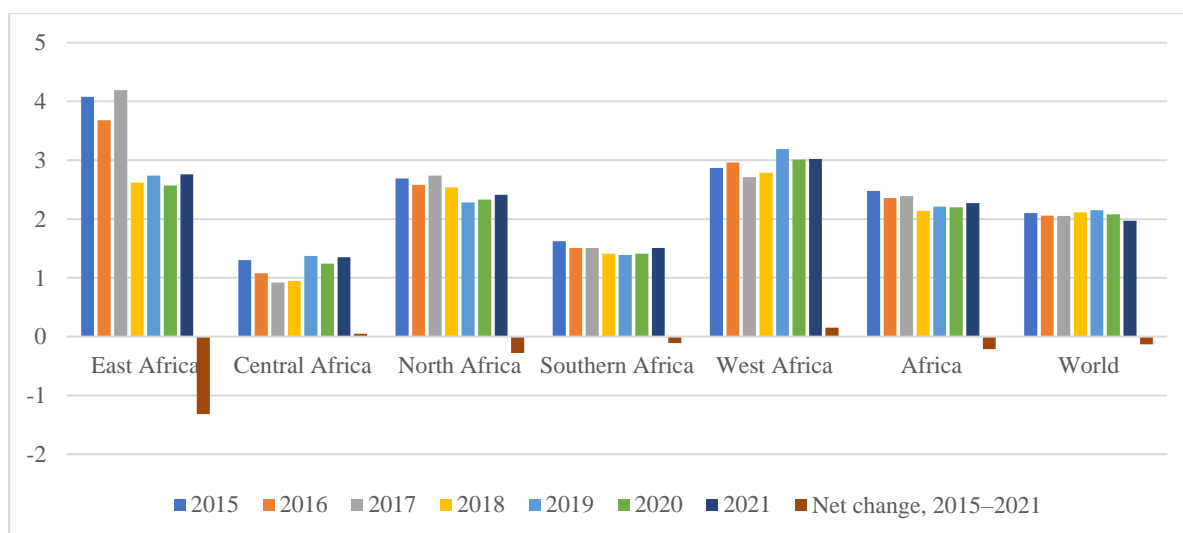
C. Sustainable Development Goals target 2.a and indicators 2.a.1 and 2.a.2

16. Agriculture is the backbone of many African economies, and public spending is a vital means of fostering the growth and transformation of the agricultural sector on the continent. Worldwide, the average share of government expenditure allocated to agriculture declined by about 0.13 percentage points between 2015 and 2021. Africa experienced a larger decline (0.21 percentage points) during the same period. As demonstrated by figure 11, East Africa saw a 1.32 percentage point reduction – the largest in the region – during the reference period, while West Africa saw an increase of 0.15 percentage points.

Figure 11

Share of government expenditure allocated to agriculture, Africa and worldwide, 2015–2021

(Percentage)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.²¹

17. Total official flows to the agricultural sector vary across the continent: East Africa receives the most, followed by West Africa. Across the region, on average, total official flows to the agricultural sector increased by about 8 per cent from 2015 to 2021.

D. Overall prospects

18. Coupled with the declining share of government expenditure allocated to agriculture across the region, the high rates of food insecurity, stunting and undernourishment in Africa are troubling. If hunger is to be ended, it is critical to strengthen partnerships to improve agricultural productivity and increase investment to transform agriculture on the continent. In order to sustain livelihoods and improve nutritional outcomes, States also need to recognize and protect small-scale farmers, while providing equal access to land, technology, sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices.

²¹ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

IV. Climate action

19. The 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 each include one goal related to combating climate change, both of which are shown in table 3.

Table 3

Sustainable Development Goal 13 and associated Agenda 2063 goal

<i>Agenda</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>2063</i>
Goal	13 – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	7 – Environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities

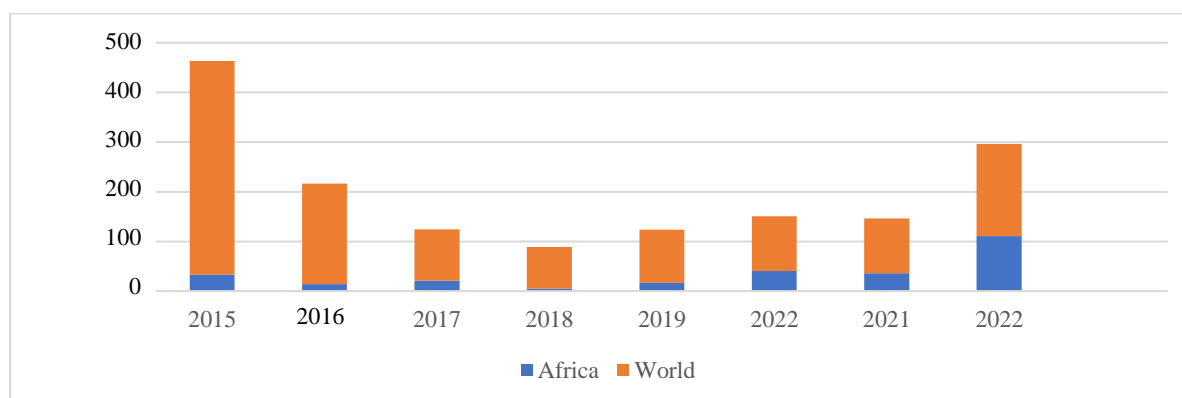
A. Sustainable Development Goals target 13.1 and indicators 13.1.1 and 13.1.2

20. One critical aspect of tackling climate change is understanding the resulting impact on human lives. According to the World Bank,²² even though the number of disasters worldwide has increased, the number of deaths from such events has been falling, owing to better early warning systems and disaster-risk preparedness. As figure 12 shows, however, the number of people affected by disasters has risen, both in Africa and throughout the world.

Figure 12

Number of people affected by disasters, 2015–2022

(Millions)



Source: Our World in Data.²³

21. Disaster preparedness and responsiveness are critical for tackling the climate crisis. All African States have adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Some 53 per cent of States in sub-Saharan Africa are implementing national disaster-risk-reduction strategies, in line with the Sendai Framework. As figure 13 demonstrates, however, Africa is lagging behind in this regard, since 65 per cent of States worldwide are implementing such strategies.

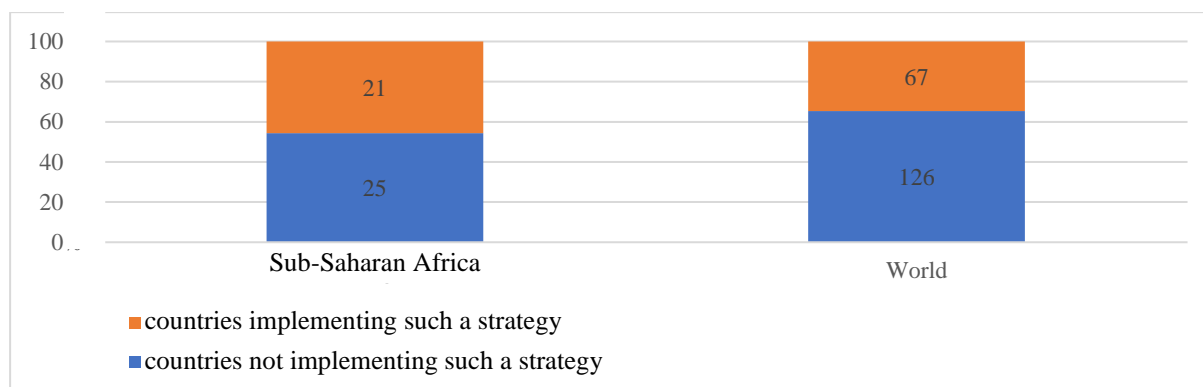
²² World Bank, “13 Climate Action”, Atlas of the Sustainable Development Goals 2023. Available at: <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/sdgoalatlas/goal-13-climate-action/?lang=en> (accessed on 27 November 2023).

²³ Our World in Data, “People affected by natural disasters”, Natural Disasters database. Available at <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/total-affected-by-natural-disasters> (accessed on 27 November 2023).

Figure 13

Countries that have reported that they are implementing a national disaster-risk-reduction strategy in line with the Sendai Framework

(Percentage)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.²⁴

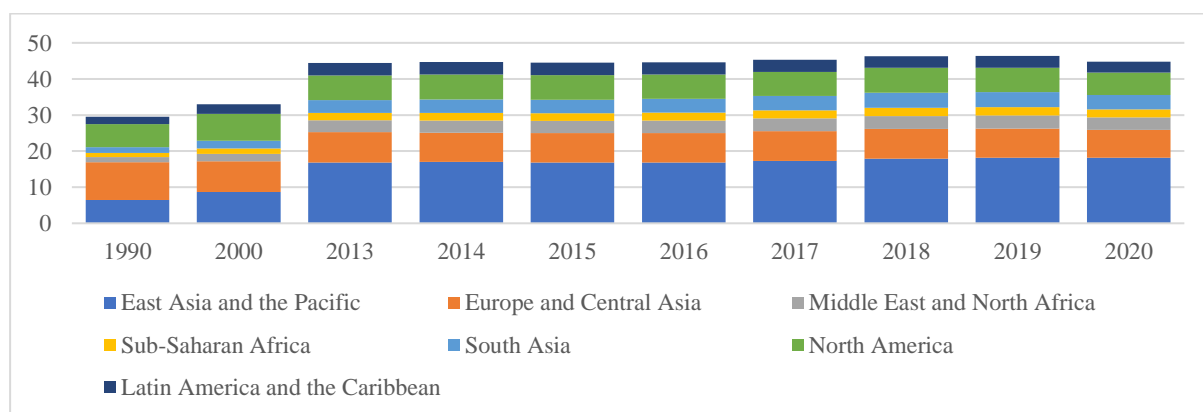
B. Sustainable Development Goals target 13.2 and indicator 13.2.2

22. As demonstrated by figure 14, although Africa accounts for some 17 per cent of the global population, it contributes only 4 per cent of global carbon emissions, the smallest share of all the regions.²⁵ Nevertheless, regardless of their small share of the global total, African States – in particular the largest polluters on the continent (i.e. Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Nigeria and South Africa)²⁶ – must take steps to reduce their CO₂ emissions.

Figure 14

Total greenhouse gas emissions, 1990–2020

(Megatons of CO₂ equivalent)



Source: World Bank.²⁷

²⁴ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).
²⁵ Statista, “Africa’s share in global carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from 2000 to 2021”, Energy & Environment database. Available at www.statista.com/statistics/1287508/africa-share-in-global-co2-emissions/ (accessed on 31 October 2023).
²⁶ Statista, “Production-based carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in Africa in 2021, by country (in metric tons)”, Energy & Environment database. Available at www.statista.com/statistics/1268395/production-based-co2-emissions-in-africa-by-country/ (accessed on 31 October 2023).
²⁷ World Bank, “Total greenhouse gas emissions (kt of CO₂ equivalent)”, World Bank Open Data. Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.ATM.GHGT.KT.CE> (accessed on 27 November 2023).

C. Sustainable Development Goals target 13.a

23. In 2009, at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, developed countries committed to mobilizing \$100 billion per year for climate action by 2020. That pledge was incorporated into the Sustainable Development Goals and, at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties, it was reaffirmed. In 2020, developed countries mobilized \$83.3 billion, which fell short of the target, although the date for achieving it had been extended until 2025. Furthermore, the United Nations Environment Programme estimates that, by 2030, the costs of adaptation could reach \$330 billion per year.²⁸ The twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties saw the adoption of a landmark agreement to establish a loss and damage fund, which is intended to provide financial assistance to vulnerable countries that are already having to cope with the impact of climate change.

D. Overall prospects

24. Buffeted by debt and other shocks, African Governments have limited ability to respond to the climate crisis and, in particular, to support the people most affected by disasters and other aspects of climate change. Although all African States have adopted the Sendai Framework, implementation efforts need to be accelerated. As such, domestic resource mobilization, debt relief, increased liquidity and greater investment in climate change adaptation will play critical roles in combating climate change. In this regard, such initiatives as the Africa Climate Resilient Investment Facility – intended to incorporate climate resilience into investment in climate-sensitive sectors – are essential, as are efforts to reform the global financial architecture, support national debt management strategies and enhance tax administration.

V. Peace, justice and strong institutions

25. With regard to peace, justice and strong institutions, the relevant goals of the 2030 Agenda and of Agenda 2063 are laid out in table 4.

Table 4

Sustainable Development Goal 16 and associated Agenda 2063 goals

<i>Agenda</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>2063</i>
Goal	16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	11 – Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched 12 – Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place 13 – Peace, security and stability are preserved 14 – A stable and peaceful Africa 17 – Full gender equality in all spheres of life 18 – Engaged and empowered youth and children

²⁸ *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023, Special Edition: Towards a Rescue Plan for People and Planet* (United Nations publication, 2023).

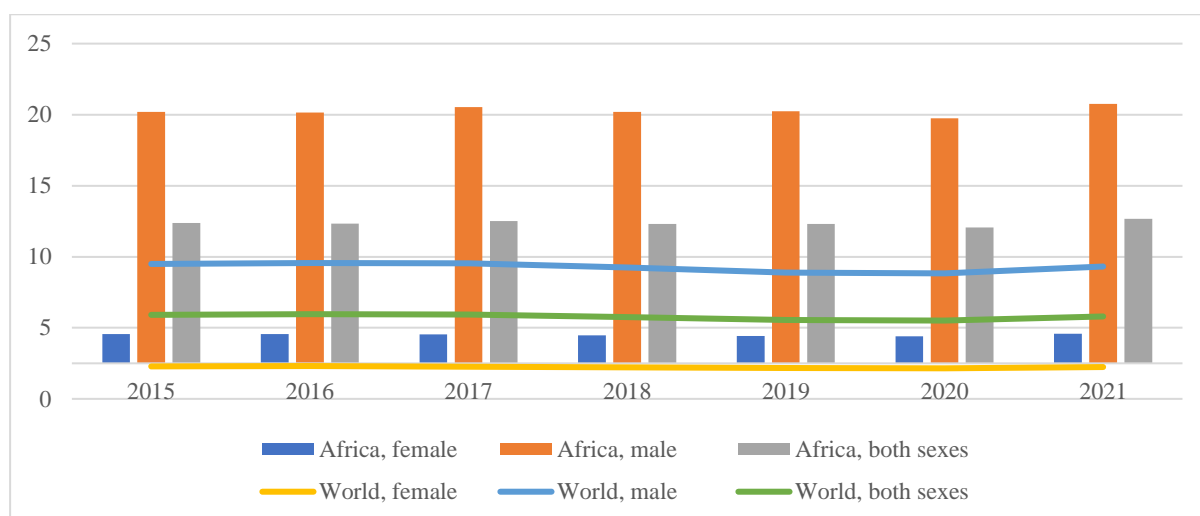
A. Sustainable Development Goals target 16.1 and indicator 16.1.1

26. As shown in figure 15, males are five times more likely than females to be victims of homicide worldwide. For both males and females, however, the number of homicide victims in Africa is more than double the number for the world as a whole and continues to rise. Poverty, economic inequality, ethnic fragmentation, the availability of guns and alcohol,²⁹ rapid urbanization, high unemployment and the availability of narcotics³⁰ are all factors that increase the likelihood of intentional homicides being committed.

Figure 15

Victims of intentional homicides, by sex, 2015–2021

(Number per 100,000 people)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.³¹

B. Sustainable Development Goals target 16.2 and indicator 16.2.1

27. Most African children 1–17 years of age experience violence, which can be harmful to their physical and psychological well-being and place them at higher risk, once they have reached adulthood, of such health problems as anxiety and depression.³² As figure 16 shows, almost 80 per cent of children 1–14 years of age worldwide have experienced some sort of violence at the hands of their caregivers; the corresponding figure for sub-Saharan Africa (87 per cent) is nearly 8 percentage points higher than the global average.

²⁹ World Health Organization, “Homicide: WHO global health estimates (2019 update)”, 2022.

³⁰ Walegn Mitiku Foye, “Exploring causes of intentional homicide: selected cases investigated in Addis Ababa Police Commission”, master’s degree thesis, Addis Ababa University, 2017.

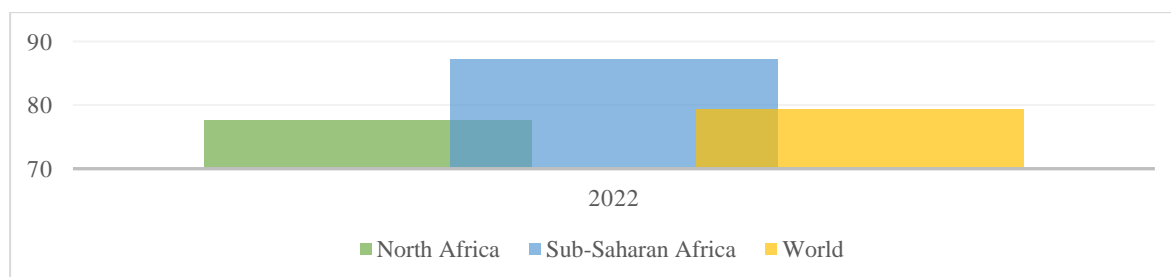
³¹ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

³² Ilana Seff, Deidi Olaya Rodriguez, Melissa Meinhart, Jonathan Colarelli, Luissa Vahedi and Lindsay Stark, “Age at first exposure to violence and later mental health outcomes: a sex-disaggregated, multi-country analysis in sub-Saharan Africa”, *Child Abuse & Neglect*, vol. 125 (March 2022).

Figure 16

Proportion of children 1–14 years of age who experienced physical punishment and/or psychological aggression from caregivers in 2022

(Percentage)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.³³

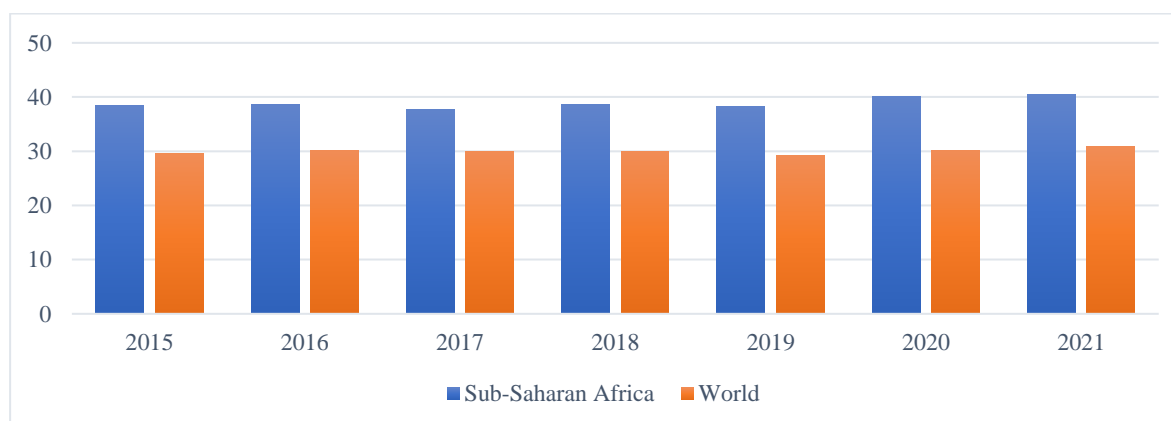
C. Sustainable Development Goals target 16.3 and indicator 16.3.2

28. As figure 17 illustrates, across the world, the number of unsentenced detainees as a proportion of the prison population increased from 2015 to 2021, with sub-Saharan Africa having a higher proportion than the world as a whole. Factors contributing to the high proportion of unsentenced detainees in Africa include poor administration of the justice system, which is attributed to weak governance, to a lack of institutional capacity and to a large number of court cases relative to the number of judges. The rise in the number of unsentenced detainees contributes to prison overcrowding, which compromises privacy, worsens mental health³⁴ and increases rates of violence and self-harm.³⁵

Figure 17

Unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population, 2015–2021

(Percentage)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.³⁶

³³ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

³⁴ World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, *Prisons and Health* (Copenhagen, World Health Organization, 2014).

³⁵ Morag MacDonald, “Overcrowding and its impact on prison conditions and health”, *International Journal of Prisoner Health*, vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 65–68.

³⁶ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

D. Overall prospects

29. The large numbers of homicide victims, of children experiencing violence from caregivers and of unsentenced detainees in Africa are alarming. If sustainable and inclusive economic development are to be achieved, concerted efforts are required to tackle the root causes of such problems, which include poverty and economic inequality. In order to accelerate progress towards Goal 16, stakeholders must ensure that sufficient statistical data on the indicators are available, with a view to enabling the tracking of such progress.

VI. Partnerships for the Goals

30. The goals under the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 that pertain to global partnerships for sustainable development are all set out in table 5.

Table 5

Sustainable Development Goal 17 and associated Agenda 2063 goals

<i>Agenda</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>2063</i>
Goal	17 – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	1 – A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens 4 – Transformed economies 10 – World-class infrastructure criss-crosses Africa 19 – Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful coexistence 20 – Africa takes full responsibility for financing her development

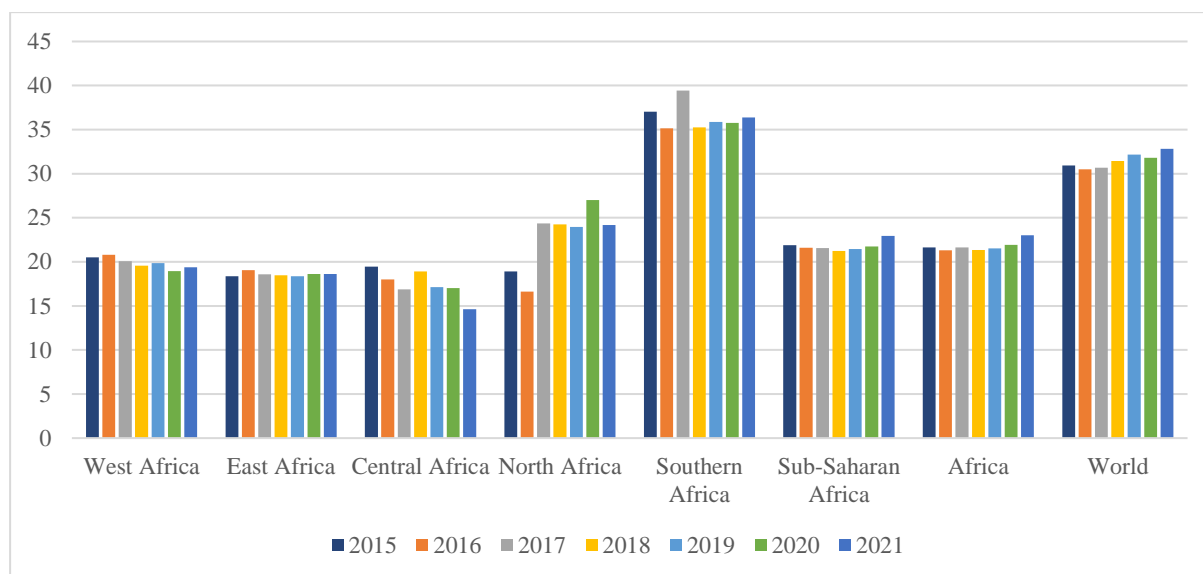
A. Sustainable Development Goals target 17.1 and indicators 17.1.1 and 17.1.2

31. As figure 18 shows, total government revenue as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) in Africa, excluding the Southern African subregion, has consistently been lower than the global average, which was 32.8 per cent in 2021, compared with 23.0 per cent for Africa as a whole and 36.4 per cent for Southern Africa.

Figure 18

Total central government revenue as a proportion of gross domestic product, 2015–2021

(Percentage)



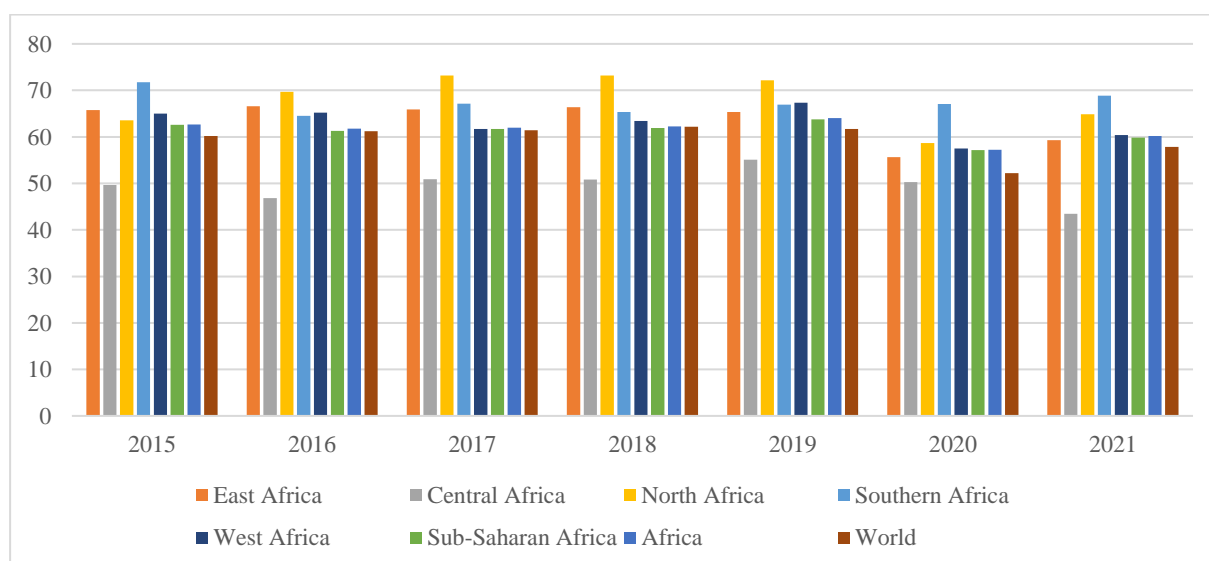
Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.³⁷

32. Indeed, as demonstrated by figure 19, the average proportion of African State budgets funded from domestic taxation is higher than the global average: in 2021, 60.1 per cent of the average African State budget was funded by domestic taxes, compared with a global average of 57.9 per cent. Southern and North African States stand out in this respect, financing 68.0 and 64.0 per cent, respectively, of their budgets through domestic taxation.

Figure 19

Proportion of domestic budget funded from domestic taxation, 2015–2021

(Percentage of gross domestic product)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.³⁸

³⁷ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

³⁸ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database.

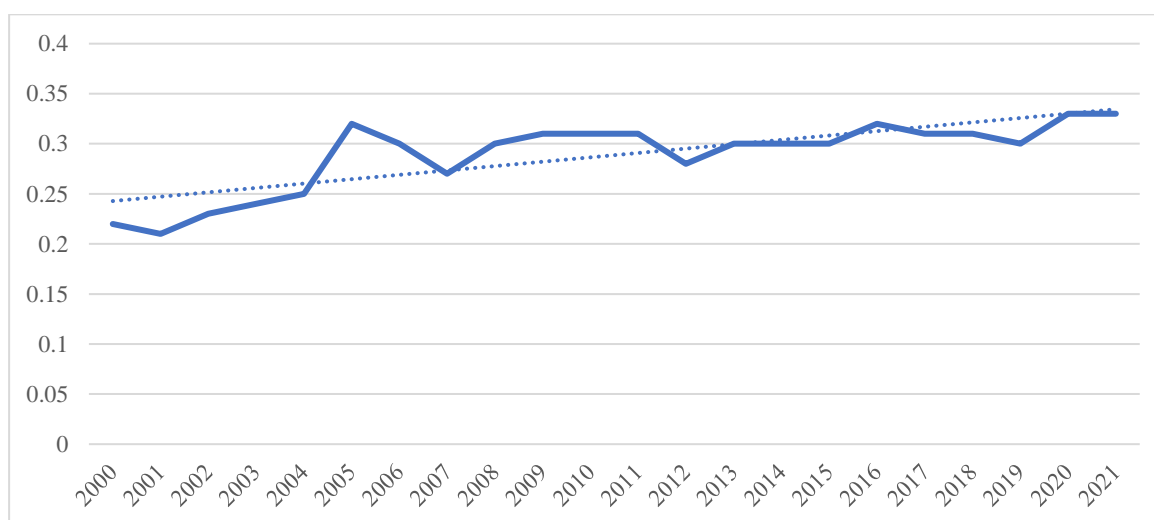
B. Sustainable Development Goals target 17.2 and indicator 17.2.1

33. Figure 20 shows that, on average, members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) allocated 0.3 per cent of their gross national income to ODA in 2021, up from 0.2 per cent in 2000. However, this is less than half of the target of 0.7 per cent. In 2021, only Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway and Sweden achieved the 0.7 per cent target. In addition, as the OECD has pointed out, preliminary data for 2022 showed that net bilateral ODA flows from Development Assistance Committee members to Africa that year amounted to \$34 billion, representing a 7.4 per cent decrease in real terms since 2021; the equivalent figure for sub-Saharan Africa was 7.8 per cent.³⁹

Figure 20

Average allocation to official development assistance by members of the Development Assistance Committee, 2000–2021

(Percentage of gross national income)



Source: OECD.⁴⁰

C. Sustainable Development Goals target 17.3 and indicators 17.3.1 and 17.3.2

34. For Africa, remittances are an important source of development financing and one that increasingly accounts for a larger share of such financing than is the case in other parts of the world. As illustrated by figure 21, remittances accounted for 3.55 per cent of African GDP in 2020, up from 3.50 per cent in 2019, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. The subregion with the largest share of its GDP comprising remittances was North Africa, followed by West Africa. Foreign direct investment (FDI), on the other hand, contributed less than half as much to African GDP, declining from 1.6 per cent of GDP in 2019 to 1.35 per cent in 2020, although FDI did rebound to 3.0 per cent in 2021. Those trends highlight the relative volatility of FDI in comparison with remittances.

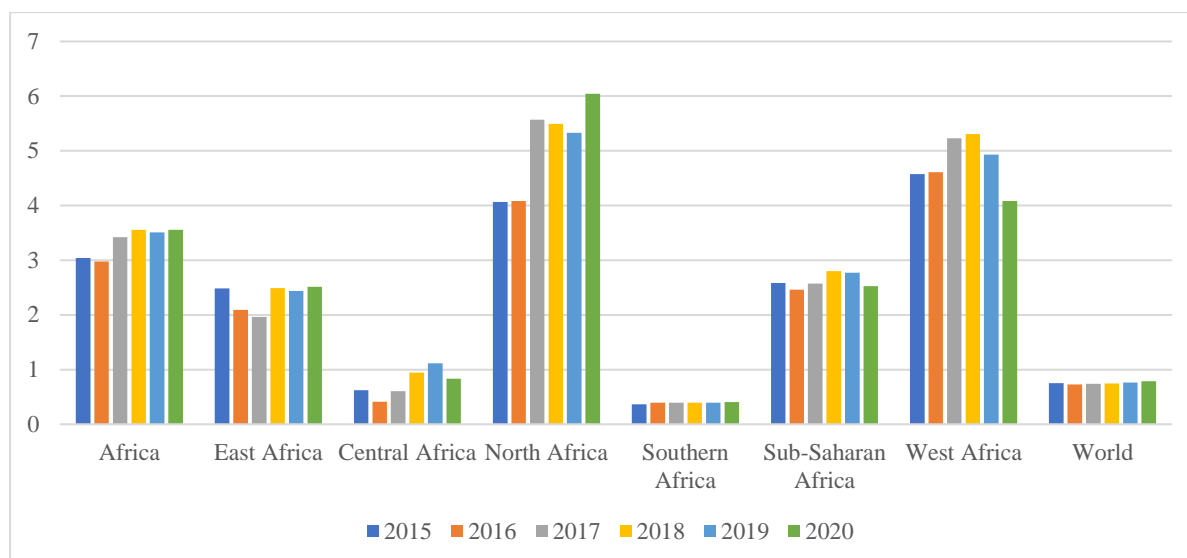
³⁹ OECD, ODA Levels in 2022 – preliminary data: detailed summary note (Paris, 2023).

⁴⁰ OECD, “Detailed aid statistics: Official and private flows”, OECD International Development Statistics database. Available at www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/data/oecd-international-development-statistics/official-and-private-flows_data-00072-en (accessed on 25 January 2024).

Figure 21

Volume of remittances in United States dollars as a proportion of total GDP, 2015–2020

(Percentage)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.⁴¹

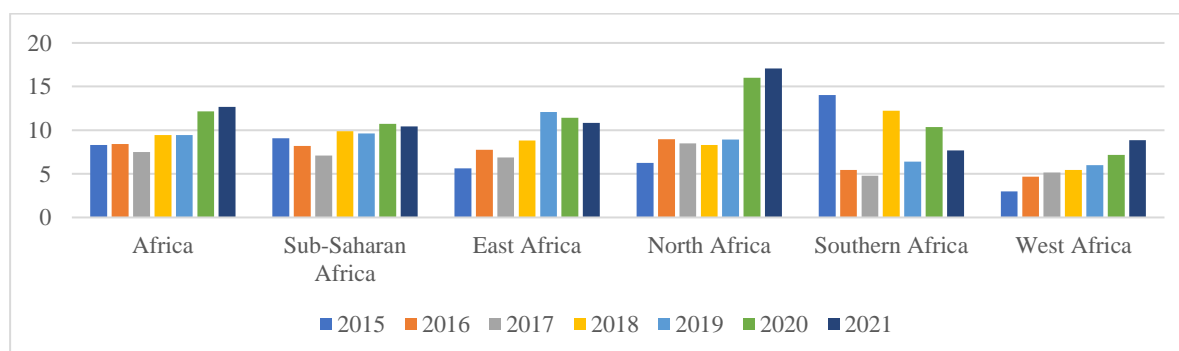
D. Sustainable Development Goals target 17.4 and indicator 17.4.1

35. Figure 22 shows that, as a proportion of exports of goods and services, debt service obligations for Africa as a whole rose from 8.29 per cent in 2015 to 12.60 per cent in 2021. Debt service obligations experienced a nearly threefold increase in both North Africa and West Africa, albeit from a lower base in the latter (2.99 per cent). In contrast, the debt service obligations of East and Southern African States declined over the same period.

Figure 22

Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services, 2015–2021

(Percentage)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.⁴²

⁴¹ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

⁴² United Nations, SDG Indicators Database.

E. Sustainable Development Goals targets 17.6 and 17.8 and indicators 17.6.1 and 17.8.1

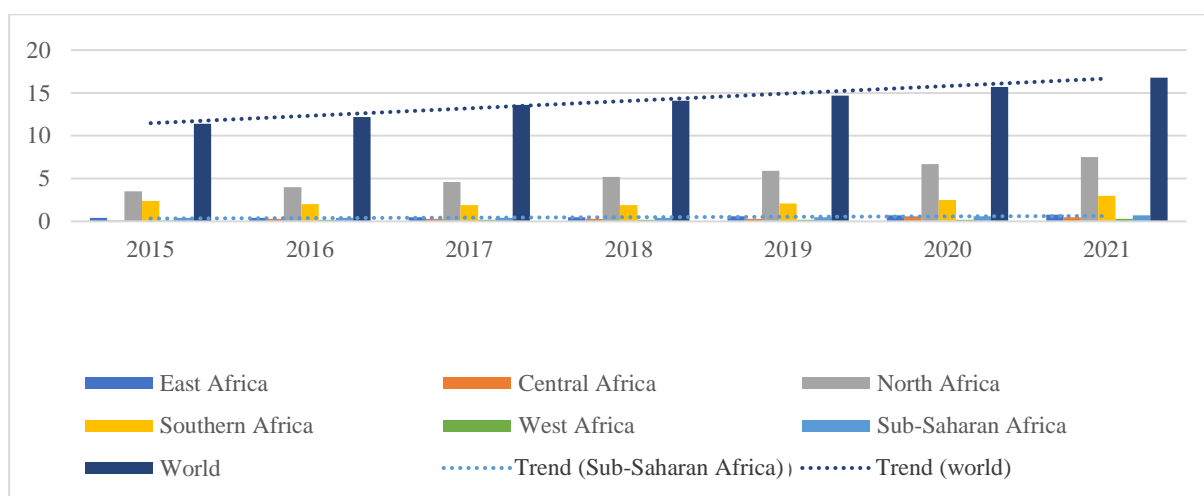
36. Consistent with global trends, the proportion of individuals using the Internet has been on the rise in Africa. The rise is especially evident in Southern and North Africa, where the increase in the number of Internet users has equalled or exceeded the global average since 2015.⁴³

37. As demonstrated by figure 23, however, the average number of fixed broadband subscriptions in African countries, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa, is substantially lower than the global average and remains stagnant. In 2021, 16.8 per 100 people worldwide subscribed to fixed broadband services, compared with 0.7 subscriptions per 100 people in sub-Saharan Africa.

Figure 23

Fixed broadband subscriptions, 2015–2021

(Number per 100 people)



Source: Department of Economic and Social Affairs.⁴⁴

F. Overall prospects

38. With regard to global partnership trends, the picture is mixed. On the one hand, the landscape is characterized by rising debt service obligations, limited access to fixed broadband technology and the failure of members of the Development Assistance Committee to achieve the target of allocating 0.7 per cent of their gross national income to ODA, despite the upward trend since 2000. On the other hand, however, remittances to African countries are on the rise and FDI flows as a proportion of GDP rebounded in 2021, following a decline in 2020. Nevertheless, concessional financing needs to be scaled up if the continent is to regain its momentum with regard to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, and if it is to weather the socioeconomic storm caused by climate change.

⁴³ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database (see footnote 1).

⁴⁴ United Nations, SDG Indicators Database.

VII. Key messages and policy recommendations

39. Rescuing the Sustainable Development Goals and successfully pursuing the second 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 will require investment in interventions that empower the poor through the creation of decent employment and livelihood opportunities; enhance the human capital of vulnerable groups through improved access to health, to education and to water and sanitation services; and cushion households from shocks through fiscally sustainable social protection systems. Such investment must be climate-resilient, conflict-sensitive and underpinned by good governance, sound macroeconomic fundamentals and the deployment of appropriate technology to enhance productivity and ensure sustainability. In particular, the vast market provided by the African Continental Free Trade Area, coupled with the global decarbonization agenda, present Africa with an opportunity to leverage its green assets, develop regional industrial value chains and revitalize the agricultural sector.

40. Africa is a major carbon sink: its forests remove 1.1 gigatons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere per year, which is more than that removed by the Amazon rainforest. Africa can monetize its green assets by developing carbon markets and markets for biodiversity credits to incentivize public and private investment in programmes and projects that reduce climate risk and the vulnerability of local communities; increase employment levels among women and young people; spur the growth of local green industries; and accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.

41. With an abundance of labour, land and untapped water resources, Africa has the resources necessary to undertake a massive expansion of agricultural production and a significant increase in agricultural productivity, while enhancing food security and nutritional outcomes. Initiatives that have been shown to improve food security and nutritional outcomes in Africa include: investing in climate-resilient seeds and agricultural practices; implementing national agriculture investment plans in which irrigation, rural infrastructure, research and development, and farmer support programmes are prioritized; implementing community-level education and awareness-raising programmes about nutrition; and establishing school feeding programmes that provide nutritious meals to schoolchildren and also support local farmers by sourcing food from local markets, thus boosting local agricultural production and income.

Annex

Sustainable Development Goals to be reviewed at the 2024 high-level political forum on sustainable development, the targets and indicators of particular relevance, and the associated goals of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union

Sustainable Development Goals	Targets	Indicators	Associated goals of Agenda 2063
1 – End poverty in all its forms everywhere	<p>1.1 – By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day</p> <p>1.4 – By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance</p> <p>1.a – Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions</p>	<p>1.1.1 – Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)</p> <p>1.4.1 – Proportion of population living in households with access to basic services</p> <p>1.a.1 – Proportion of domestically generated resources allocated by the government directly to poverty reduction programmes</p>	<p>1 – A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens</p> <p>7 – Environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities</p> <p>17 – Full gender equality in all spheres of life</p>
2 – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	<p>2.1 – By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round</p> <p>2.2 – By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition,</p>	<p>2.1.1 – Prevalence of undernourishment</p> <p>2.1.2 – Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)</p>	<p>1 – A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens</p> <p>3 – Healthy and well-nourished citizens</p> <p>5 – Modern agriculture for increased</p>

	<p>including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons</p> <p>2.a. – Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries</p>	<p>2.2.1 – Prevalence of stunting (height for age <-2 standard deviation from the median of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age</p> <p>2.a.1 – The agriculture orientation index for government expenditures</p> <p>2.a.2 – Total official flows (official development assistance plus other official flows) to the agriculture sector</p>	<p>productivity and production</p> <p>7 – Environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities</p>
13 – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	<p>13.1 – Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries</p> <p>13.2 – Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning</p> <p>13.a – Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible</p>	<p>13.1.1 – Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population</p> <p>13.1.2 – Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030</p> <p>13.2.2 – Total greenhouse gas emissions per year</p>	7 – Environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities
16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective,	<p>16.1 – Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere</p> <p>16.2 – End abuse, exploitation, trafficking</p>	16.1.1 – Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age	11 – Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched

<p>accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p>	<p>and all forms of violence against and torture of children</p> <p>16.3 – Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all</p>	<p>16.2.1 – Proportion of children aged 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month</p> <p>16.3.2 – Unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population</p>	<p>12 – Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place</p> <p>13 – Peace, security and stability are preserved</p> <p>14 – A stable and peaceful Africa</p> <p>17 – Full gender equality in all spheres of life</p> <p>18 – Engaged and empowered youth and children</p>
<p>17 – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</p>	<p>17.1 – Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection</p> <p>17.2 – Developed countries to implement fully their official development assistance commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA/GNI) to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries; ODA providers are encouraged to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries</p> <p>17.3 – Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources</p> <p>17.4 – Assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and address</p>	<p>17.1.1 – Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP, by source</p> <p>17.1.2 – Proportion of domestic budget funded by domestic taxes</p> <p>17.2.1 – Net official development assistance, total and to least developed countries, as a proportion of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Development Assistance Committee donors’ gross national income (GNI)</p> <p>17.3.1 – Foreign direct investment (FDI), official development assistance and South-South cooperation as a proportion of total domestic budget</p> <p>17.3.2 – Volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of total GDP</p> <p>17.4.1 – Debt service as a proportion of</p>	<p>1 – A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens</p> <p>4 – Transformed economies</p> <p>10 – World-class infrastructure criss-crosses Africa</p> <p>19 – Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful coexistence</p> <p>20 – Africa takes full responsibility for financing her development</p>

	<p>the external debt of highly indebted poor countries to reduce debt distress</p> <p>17.6 – Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge-sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism</p> <p>17.8 – Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology</p>	<p>exports of goods and services</p> <p>17.6.1 – Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by speed</p> <p>17.8.1 – Proportion of individuals using the Internet</p>	
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