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Progress by West Africa towards attainment of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals with a deadline of 2020 and 2025 and assessment of the capacity of national statistics systems
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The present report on the progress made by West Africa towards achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals with a deadline of 2020 and 2025 and the assessment of the capacity of national statistics systems has been prepared by the Subregional Office for West Africa of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), under the overall leadership of the Director of the Subregional Office, Mr. Dimitri Sanga. The report assesses the progress made by the countries of the subregion in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals with a deadline of 2020 and 2025 and, through a survey of national statistics offices in the subregion, reviews the capacity of the national statistics systems in West Africa to respond effectively to the demands and needs for follow-up and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals over the next 15 years.

The report was prepared by a team of economists of the ECA Subregional Office for West Africa, under the supervision of the Chief of the Subregional Initiatives Section, Ahonado Ochozias Kleber Gbaguidi. The team comprised the economists Mamoudou Sébégo (principal author), Dosso Bakary, Amadou Diouf, Simon Neumueller, Florent Melesse and Jérôme Ouédraogo. The process of finalizing the report also benefited from its perusal by Habsatou Abdou Oumarou, intern at the ECA Subregional Office for West Africa.

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Foreword

For several years now, world leaders have been taking stock at the highest level of the plight suffered by populations as a result of globalization. This comes on the heels of the hardship caused by climate change. In a spirit of solidarity, they decided to tackle the challenges of sustainable development with a view to transforming the planet into a haven of peace and solidarity in which no one is left behind. This new global framework for the guidance and management of sustainable development came into effect upon the conclusion of the Millennium Development Goals in December 2015.

Notwithstanding the gains made from the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in terms of reducing extreme poverty, promoting universal education, ensuring access to drinking water and countering HIV/AIDS, the majority of the targets were not attained and large numbers of people continue to live in extremely precarious conditions. The review of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 identified certain shortcomings which it should be possible to remedy over the next 15 years through the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. It might be recalled in this context that the Sustainable Development Goals, which are designed to consolidate the gains of the Millennium Development Goals and to correct its flaws, are defined as new targets to be achieved by 2030 in order to ensure peace and prosperity for the peoples of the world.

The present report of ECA, the first of its kind in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, assesses the progress made in West Africa towards attainment of the targets set for 2020 and 2025. It also assesses the capacity of the national statistics systems in the subregion to respond effectively to the need for the follow-up to and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators through the production of statistical data.

The report focuses specifically on indicators related to targets of the Sustainable Development Goals with deadlines of 2020 and 2025. These indicators relate to the targets of Goals 3, 4, 8, 9 and 15. The availability of statistical data will make it possible to assess the progress made by countries. In terms of their progress, the performance by the countries of West Africa is mixed. On the other hand, some satisfactory signs of progress have been observed in relation to some of the Goals relating to quality education and industry, innovation and infrastructure. At the same time, West Africa must accelerate and scale up its activities in the area of gender equality, decent work and economic growth and in the preservation and restoration of terrestrial ecosystems.

Furthermore, on the basis of its analysis of survey data from the national statistics systems in West Africa, the report reveals a substantial gap in the statistical data needed to monitor and evaluate all 230 indicators. In fact, only 25 per cent of the 230 indicators can be evaluated without carrying out new data-gathering exercises (both administrative and investigative).
In conclusion, the report draws the attention of West African countries to certain major challenges that they face in improving their development planning cycles to ensure the more effective incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 of the African Union into their national development frameworks. These challenges also relate to the strengthening of their domestic resource mobilization strategies and the efficiency of public expenditure, in a context where official development assistance to the continent in general, and to the subregion in particular, is shrinking.

Dimitri Sanga

Director of the ECA Subregional Office
for West Africa
Executive summary

- Progress by West Africa towards attainment of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals with deadlines of 2020 or 2025

With regard to the progress made by countries in West Africa, two trends may be observed: Sustainable Development Goals in respect of which the countries of the subregion have performed satisfactorily and those where much remains to be done.

With regard to the subregion's performance in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, it appears that the countries concerned have achieved satisfactory results in the areas of quality education and industry, innovation and infrastructure. In fact, where quality education is concerned, thanks to the Dakar Plan of Action, the flow of official development assistance to the education sector has focused on primary education because of its link to poverty reduction. This applies to the education-related goal of the Millennium Development Goals. Disbursements to higher education still tend, however, to be aligned with the strategic interests of donors, since this is seen as a means of forging links with future leaders of the countries concerned. Thus, in 2012, 72 per cent of aid channelled directly to post-secondary education consisted of scholarships, as compared to 59 per cent for the decade as a whole (Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development). Indeed, for some donors, scholarships are the keystone in strengthening higher education systems in partner countries. Accordingly, in West Africa, many countries have seen an upswing in the amount of official development assistance allocated to scholarships. Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal have more than quadrupled their volume of official development assistance. This assistance, totalling more than $5.4 million in 2014, is earmarked for the financing of scholarships. Guinea-Bissau and the Niger, on the other hand, record declines in the amount of scholarships funded by official development assistance, of 40 and 23 per cent respectively.

Where industry, innovation and infrastructure are concerned, progress towards achievement of the target may be seen in the proportion of the population served by a mobile network (2G). With regard to mobile telephony coverage, five countries in the subregion (Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana and Mali) reached 100 per cent coverage in 2015. That said, however, Guinea-Bissau, the Niger and Togo are still lagging behind the overall trend in the subregion. As for the number of Internet users, the best results were obtained in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia and Mali, where the rate increased by over 50 per cent in 2014. In terms of Internet access, West Africa is well below the 50 per cent target, even though Nigeria, Cabo Verde and Ghana had rates above 25 per cent. In terms of progress, however, Mali has been the subregion's driving force in 2016, with an increase of 18.6 per cent in the access rate.

At the same time, much remains to be done in the areas of health and well-being, and also that of decent work. The number of deaths due to road traffic accidents, for example, has not significantly decreased in the last decade. The death rate per 100,000 inhabitants dropped, on average, from 27.6 in 2000 to 27.3 in 2013. Individually by countries, the number of deaths due to road accidents has risen in 40 per cent of West African countries (Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, the Niger, Senegal and Togo). In terms of the extent of this death rate, based on the most recent data available, Burkina Faso, Liberia and Togo have the highest rate of road deaths in West Africa, at over 30 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2013. By contrast, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria, the two largest economies in the subregion, registered the lowest rates, below 24 per 100,000 inhabitants. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the
main risk factors are speeding, drink driving, failure by motorcyclists to wear helmets, the non-use of safety belts and child safety devices, careless driving, including, among other factors, the use of cellular phones.

Where decent work is concerned, this issue is of particular concern in the subregion, since on average 25.1 per cent of children and young people aged between 5 and 17 years were working in 2012, well above the average for Africa (excluding North Africa) of 10 per cent. This somewhat ignominious ranking of the subregion is mainly attributable to Burkina Faso (39.2 per cent), Guinea-Bissau (38 per cent) and Sierra Leone (37.4 per cent). The countries where concerted action and quick-win measures are needed also include the Niger (30.5 per cent), Guinea (28.3 per cent) and Togo (27.9 per cent). By contrast, Cabo Verde is the only West African country with a proportion significantly below the continental average, at 6.4 per cent in 2012. This state of affairs is a consequence of the economic precariousness and vulnerability of the population (International Labour Office, 2017). If the goal of eradicating child labour is to be achieved in the subregion by 2025, leadership and political will at the highest State level are necessary, together with open collaboration between the private sector and Governments to ensure greater efficiency in monitoring and countering the practice.

Lastly, where the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services are concerned, the deforestation rate in West Africa is worrying and calls for forceful and courageous action by States at the highest level to tackle the problem. Between 1990 and 2015, the forest cover of the subregion declined by about 15 per cent on average, with significant levels of reduction in the Niger (40 per cent), Nigeria (59.3 per cent) and Togo (37 per cent). By contrast, thanks to robust protection and reforestation actions, some countries were able to increase the extent of their forest cover over the period 1990–2015. This is the case of Cabo Verde (55.6 per cent), the Gambia (10.4 per cent) and Ghana (8.2 per cent). It should be stressed that deforestation has enormous long-term adverse consequences on the well-being of the population, including in terms of biodiversity loss, worsening of diseases and natural disasters, the reduction of water resources and the effects of climate change.

Assessment of national statistics systems

In order to respond effectively to the statistical data challenges posed by the need for follow-up to and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the countries of West Africa must strengthen the production capacities of their respective statistics systems. Thus, to gain an overview of the response capacity of West Africa to the statistical data requirements for an evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals, ECA conducted a summary assessment of national statistics systems by gathering, processing and analysing data from an online survey addressed to member States. The analysis showed that 25 per cent of the overall indicators may be assessed by readily available data at the national level. For 27 per cent of the indicators, however, some data are available but they need further processing. On the other hand, for 48 per cent of the indicators, it is essential that new administrative data collection operations or surveys are conducted. This situation has implications in terms of the mobilization of additional human and financial resources to collect, process, analyse and disseminate new statistical data of good quality in order to be able to monitor and regularly assess 48 per cent of the 230 official indicators.
- **Major challenges and potential rapid-result measures**

  During the implementation cycle of the Sustainable Development Goals, States continue to face major challenges in connection with the planning and financing for development which they absolutely must surmount if they are to move things forward significantly.

  If the planning cycle for the Sustainable Development Goals is to be improved, the operational implications of these goals must be fully taken on board at the national and local levels. To that end, an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework is needed for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063. For that purpose, follow-up consultations with ministries and national planning agencies will be essential to ensure a clear understanding of the two initiatives and their synergies.

  Furthermore, in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth, the political commitment of policymakers, guided by national leadership, will be indispensable. This must be supported by absolute consistency between the sectoral priorities of the various activities and the budgetary priorities in the implementation of development projects and programmes.

  Access to data is essential, to ensure better follow-up and evaluation of public development policies. To that end, increased investment and funding to strengthen the national statistics system are of critical importance. The initiatives under way in certain countries to establish a statistics development fund, fed by a statistics development tax to be collected at the community level, are therefore to be encouraged.

  Despite these multiple challenges, however, many countries in the subregion have already taken steps to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, including in terms of prioritization, and also by incorporating them in their national and sectoral development policies and strategies. The pace of taking ownership of planning and statistics systems and adapting them to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals will vary from country to country. This is likely to be much easier and faster for countries whose new planning cycle is aligned with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals.

  In terms of funding, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda was adopted in July 2015 at the third International Conference on Financing for Development, to provide a comprehensive framework for financing. In addition to diversifying the modalities of development financing, new donors have emerged and have deployed their international development agendas, thereby adding to the range of financial instruments, including official development assistance. Accordingly, States must not only build their capacity for domestic resource mobilization in order to ensure the effectiveness of this budgetary tool, but must also be more innovative in their fundraising strategies, by mobilizing public and private funding flows, keeping in mind the need to respect the principle of debt sustainability. In addition, local capacity development is vital to realizing the full potential of different financing options which, among other measures, have been opened up by enhancing the efficiency and transparency of procurement operations, and also those of audits and internal controls. The practice of close and frequent monitoring and evaluation and accountability must become an integral part of the primary rules of conduct of all those active in the field of development.
1. Introduction

In September 2015, the Heads of State and Government of the States Members of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This new sustainable development agenda, of global sweep and based on consensus, has as its specific aim the harmonization of social, economic and environmental sustainability in the form of 17 goals, 169 targets and 230 indicators. The Sustainable Development Goals have been put forward as a deepening of the Millennium Development Goals, which came to an end in December 2015.

The strategy that guided the formulation of the 17 goals and their targets and associated indicators for the period to 2030 aims not only to end poverty, by combating inequality and social injustice, but also to tackle the effects of climate change with a view, ultimately, to correcting the work left unfinished in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals are based on the Millennium Development Goals and incorporate a wide range of economic, environmental and social indicators supported by means of implementation and comprehensive monitoring arrangements (Economic Commission for Africa and others, 2016).

Drawing lessons from the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, it is clear that implementation by countries over the next 15 years of the Sustainable Development Goals will entail enormous challenges. These challenges will be encountered at the level of actual implementation and at those of financing, monitoring and evaluation.

Where implementation is concerned, development entities should draw lessons from the shortcomings observed in relation to ownership of the Millennium Development Goals. The successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals will depend on the extent of their ownership and incorporation in national development strategies and plans, in particular for countries that embarked on the formulation of a new planning cycle in the period 2015–2017. This process of incorporation will inevitably involve prioritization both in the planning and scheduling of projects and programmes and in their budgeting, with the strengthened mobilization of domestic resources and the deployment of innovative financing strategies.

Where monitoring and evaluation are concerned, enormous challenges will be faced, in particular with regard to the production of statistical data in response to the complexity and evaluation requirements of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. Despite their structural weaknesses in terms of the human and financial resources needed for statistics production, national statistics systems did what they could to meet the monitoring and evaluation requirements of the Millennium Development Goals. Moving now from a framework for the monitoring and evaluation of 8 goals, 21 targets and 60 indicators to one of 17 goals, 169 targets and 230 indicators, it is clear that the monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals will be much more complex and demanding. The complexity of the process and the associated demands are of both an organizational and a funding nature, relating to the production, processing and dissemination of data surveys and administrative sources.

In addition, it should be emphasized that, where monitoring and evaluation are concerned, the 2030 timeline does not apply to all 169 targets, as 14 per cent of the 230 indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals, or 23 targets, have deadlines of 2020 or 2025. This means that the performance by countries in implementation of the goals related to these
targets (in other words, 12 of the 17 Goals) will be assessed in fewer than five years and not in fifteen, as might otherwise have been assumed. Countries must therefore endeavour to complete the formulation of their development plans as swiftly as possible and to step up their resource mobilization efforts for the financing of their development programmes and associated projects.

The present report, which represents the first step in evaluating progress in West Africa towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, focuses exclusively on indicators related to targets with deadlines of 2020 or 2025. The report analyses those indicators for which data are available. In addition, an endeavour is also made to identify and assess difficulties arising in the process of following up and evaluating the Sustainable Development Goal indicators for member States. Thus, by analysing survey data on the assessment of the capacity of national statistics systems, a quantitative picture can be built up of the extent to which countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are able effectively to meet the needs for monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The list of indicators used in the present report is that agreed upon by the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2016.

Specifically, the report aims:

- To identify the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals whose deadlines have been set at 2020 or 2025 and, in turn, their associated indicators;
- To assess the qualitative and quantitative progress by the 15 States of the subregion on the relevant Sustainable Development Goals, on the basis of indicators related to these targets;
- To measure progress by countries towards achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals in question set for 2020 or 2025, and then to identify major challenges and constraints faced by them in this area;
- To determine whether or not data are available for the monitoring and assessment of progress across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their 169 targets and 230 indicators, with a view to assessing the complexity and demanding nature of the exercise of monitoring and evaluating the Goals in West Africa;
- To put forward recommendations for the improved implementation and effective monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals in West Africa;
- To be submitted, as a preliminary study, for consideration by subregional experts at the twentieth meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for West Africa.

The present report has been prepared by the ECA Subregional Office for West Africa, based on an analysis of data from the Sustainable Development Goals monitoring database of the United Nations Statistics Division. The United Nations 2016 comprehensive report on the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2016 joint report of ECA, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank Group and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 were used to fill gaps in the available qualitative information. Use

1 Available on the website of the Division at: unstats.un.org/sdgs.
was also made of certain international databases, such as those of the African Development Bank, the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and others. The preference for international sources was principally motivated by the fact that they gather and make available comparable data on the Sustainable Development Goal indicators.

Below, the report provides an analysis of the progress made by West Africa in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals with target dates of 2020, together with the gaps and bottlenecks identified. The report also assesses the capacity of national statistics systems in West Africa to respond effectively to the demands and needs for follow-up and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals over the next 15 years. Lastly, the report closes with a conclusion and a number of recommendations to ensure better ownership, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.

2. Assessment of progress

The assessment of progress is based on a selection of indicators for targets with deadlines of 2020 or 2025 (annex 1) and for which data are available. The analysis in this section focuses on selected indicators related to five of the Sustainable Development Goals (Goals 3, 4, 8, 9 and 15).

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Goal 3 aims to ensure health and well-being for all at all stages of life. It also seeks to improve reproductive, maternal and child health, to end the epidemics of HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and neglected tropical diseases, to reduce non-communicable and environmental diseases, to achieve universal health coverage and to ensure access to safe, affordable and effective medicines and vaccines for all. In order to achieve this, the world's leaders committed themselves to promoting research and development, to increasing funding for health promotion and to developing the capacity of all countries to reduce and manage health risks (United Nations, 2016).

Target 3.6: By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents

Progress towards the attainment of target 3.6 is measured by assessing the death rate from road accidents in the subregion. Tens of millions of people are injured or disabled every year as a result of road accidents. Among the victims, those who are most vulnerable are children, pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists, and older persons (United Nations, 2016). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 90 per cent of road deaths occur in low and middle-income countries, while only 54 per cent of the world's vehicles operate in those countries, constituting only about half of the global fleet. In addition, road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death among young people aged 15–29. This death rate from traffic accidents is the highest in the world and the percentage of pedestrians and cyclists among those victims in 2013 was also the highest in the world, at 43 per cent (World Health Organization, 2015).
According to WHO, the main risk factors are speeding, drink driving, failure by motorcyclists to wear helmets, the non-use of safety belts and child safety devices and careless driving, including, among other factors, the use while driving of cellular phones. This situation is attributable in part to the insufficient level of security measures in place to protect road users and the prevailing forms of mobility linked to strong demographic growth (World Health Organization, 2015).

The situation obtaining in West Africa may be seen across the continent. It should also be noted that the overall number of deaths due to road traffic accidents has not significantly decreased over the last decade. The death rate per 100,000 inhabitants dropped, on average, from 27.6 in 2000 to 27.3 in 2013. Individually by countries, the number of deaths due to road accidents has risen in 40 per cent of West African countries (Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, the Niger, Senegal and Togo). In terms of the extent of this death rate, and based on the most recent data available, Burkina Faso, Liberia and Togo have the highest rate of road deaths in West Africa, at over 30 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2013. By contrast, two of the largest economies in the subregion (Côte d’Ivoire and Nigeria) have the lowest rates with fewer than 24 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants. This raises questions about the relationship between national wealth and the number of deaths due to road accidents. In Africa, there is a positive correlation between per capita income and the level of motorization and an inverse relationship between motorization rates and road deaths. In other words, the risk of accidents declines as the rate of motorization rises (African Development Bank, 2013). Accordingly, the relatively low mortality rate due to road accidents in Nigeria and Côte d’Ivoire might be attributable in part to the relatively high motorization rate in those two countries.

Figure 1
**Trends in the road-death rate, per 100,000 inhabitants**

From the economic standpoint, road accidents entail considerable economic losses for victims, their families and the country as a whole. These accidents involve costly treatment and investigations. Moreover, they cause a loss of productivity for victims and for family members who have to take time off work (or be absent from school) to take care of them. According to the African Development Bank, road accidents involve heavy costs for economies: Ethiopia – 0.5 per cent of GDP in 2010; Ghana – 1.6 per cent of GDP in 2009; Morocco – 2.5 per cent of GDP in 2009; Nigeria – 3 per cent of GDP in 2010; Uganda – 2.7 per cent of GDP in 2009; and Tunisia – 0.5 per cent of GDP in 2010 (African Development Bank, 2013).

This situation calls for policymakers to make vehicles and roads safer. In addition, the rapid increase in the number of motor vehicles in low and middle-income countries (where the risk of traffic accidents is highest), combined with the production of an increasing number of vehicles in these emerging economies, means that there is an urgent need to set minimum standards for vehicles in these countries. For example, according to a 2015 WHO report, in recent years the vehicles sold in 80 per cent of the countries of the world do not meet basic safety standards.

Halving the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2020 is an ambitious goal, given the dramatic increase in the number of vehicles, which nearly doubled between 2000 and 2013. To achieve this, action must be taken in particular in such areas as:

- Establishing strong laws on the key risk factors;
- Making roads safer, taking into account the needs of the most vulnerable road users of the road in all aspects of road safety;
- Ensuring that vehicles are upgraded and made safer, to make our roads safer, in the knowledge that 80 per cent of the world's countries (in particular low and middle-income countries) are still not complying with the most basic international vehicle safety standards.

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

The goal is to ensure that all citizens have access to quality education and learning opportunities throughout their lives. The goal focuses on the acquisition of foundational skills and attainment of a higher level at all stages of education and development, and also on broader and more equitable access to quality education at all levels. It gives special prominence to technical and vocational schooling and training, and to the knowledge, skills and values required for a productive life in society (United Nations, 2016). Assessment of progress towards this Goal is based on target 4.B.
**Target 4.B: By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries**

Progress towards the attainment of target 4.B may be measured from trends in the indicator for the volume of official development assistance allocated to scholarships.

Since the adoption of the Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments in April 2000, urging donors to make aid more effective, donors have made a commitment to improve the provision and governance of international assistance. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, adopted in 2005, marked a turning point with regard to the provision of assistance, with a programme that promotes national ownership, the alignment of donor priorities with national plans and coordination of donor efforts, focusing on results and the sharing of responsibility for those results between donors and recipients.

Despite the appeal made under the Dakar Framework to funding agencies to allocate a greater share of their resources to primary education and other forms of basic education, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, and also in developing countries in post-conflict situations, the total volume of aid allocated to education fell by 10 per cent between 2010 and 2012 (OECD Development Assistance Committee, 2014). In addition, the flow of official development assistance to the education sector has focused on primary education because primary education is directly linked with poverty reduction, and thus with the education goal included in the Millennium Development Goals. Disbursements to higher education still tend, however, to be aligned with the strategic interests of donors, since this is seen as a means of forging links with future leaders of the countries concerned.

Official development assistance for post-secondary education in the form of scholarships is viewed by donors as a means of enabling students from developing countries to study in donor countries, rather than one of strengthening tertiary education systems in those countries. Thus, in 2012, nearly 72 per cent of aid channelled directly to post-secondary education consisted of scholarships, as compared to 59 per cent for the decade as a whole (OECD Development Assistance Committee).

Over the last decade, of the 15 largest donors to education, 7 have actually increased the share of education aid that they allocate to higher education and reduced the share allocated to basic education. In addition, some donors are increasing the amount of aid for higher education in the form of scholarships. Thus, Austria, Germany, Portugal and Spain consider scholarships as part of their broader efforts to strengthen higher education systems in partner countries (Mercer, 2014).

In West Africa, many countries have seen an upswing in the amount of official development assistance allocated to scholarships. Over the period 2006–2014, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal have seen the level of official development assistance allocated to the funding of scholarships increase more than fourfold, to over $4 million in 2014. This increase was partly due to the determination of their political leaders to build human capital as part of their ambitious development programmes and policies, with a view to surmounting the lack of specialized high-level training and leadership institutions in the countries concerned. The formulation by those countries of positive and forward-looking strategies for bilateral and multilateral cooperation with their development partners was also of
key importance in attracting scholarships. The increase is also attributable to the growing number of students. By contrast, Guinea-Bissau and the Niger have experienced declines of 40 and 43 per cent respectively in the volume of official development assistance allocated for scholarships.

Figure 2
Trends in official development assistance for the funding of scholarships in West Africa (in millions of United States dollars)


Despite the existence in West Africa of more and more universities and higher educational establishments of good quality, it is still vital to forge strategic partnerships between African universities in general and those in West Africa in particular and international development partners as a means of developing the human capital equipped to carry forward the process of structural transformation and sustainable development in the subregion.

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Sustained and inclusive economic growth is a prerequisite for sustainable development and can contribute to improving the livelihoods of people. Economic growth can create new and better employment opportunities and provide greater economic security for all. In addition, rapid growth, in particular for the least developed and other developing countries, can help to reduce the wage gap between them and the developed countries, thereby narrowing the glaring inequalities between the rich and the poor (United Nations, 2016). Assessment of progress towards this goal is based on target 8.7.
Target 8.7: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms

Progress towards the attainment of target 8.7 may be measured from trends in the indicator on the proportion and number of children and young people between the ages of 5 and 17 in the subregion who are in work.

According to 2012 global estimates of child labour by ILO, Africa (excluding North Africa) has the highest number of working children;² 59 million children and young people between the ages of 5 and 17 are employed in hazardous work. More than one in five children in Africa (excluding North Africa) are employed against their will in quarries, farms and mines.

In West Africa, this issue is of particular concern, since on average 25.1 per cent of children and young people aged between 5 and 17 years were working in 2012, well above the average for Africa (excluding North Africa) of 10 per cent. This somewhat ignominious ranking of the subregion is mainly attributable to Burkina Faso (39.2 per cent), Guinea-Bissau (38 per cent) and Sierra Leone (37.4 per cent). This group of countries, where concerted action and quick-win measures are needed, can be augmented with the Niger (30.5 per cent), Guinea (28.3 per cent) and Togo (27.9 per cent). By contrast, Cabo Verde is the only West African country with a proportion significantly below the continental average, at 6.4 per cent in 2012.

Figure 3
Proportion of children and young people aged 5-17 years in West Africa in 2012 who are in work (percentage)

* 2014
** 2010

Although the main causes of child labour are economic precariousness and vulnerability, the fact that this practice persists and is growing worse in our countries is linked

to the lack of enforcement and the failure to take corrective action or to apply the available judicial remedies (ILO, 2017).

Accordingly, in order by 2025 to eradicate the practice of child labour in the subregion, leadership and political will at the highest level of the State are needed more than ever. To this end, open collaboration is required between the private sector and Governments to ensure greater efficiency both in monitoring and punishing the practice. This requires:

- The formulation and effective implementation of specific policies and strategies for the elimination of child labour, in particular its worst forms;
- The scaling up and launching of greater numbers of pilot projects;
- Awareness-raising and incorporation of the issue of child labour into national development programmes;
- Strengthening the corporate social responsibility of the private sector, with a view to combating child labour through education.

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

This Goal addresses three important aspects of sustainable development: infrastructure, industrialization and innovation. Infrastructure provides businesses and society with essential basic means; industrialization spurs economic growth and job creation, thereby reducing income inequality; and innovation improves the technological capacity of industrial sectors and allows for the acquisition of new skills (United Nations, 2016). Assessment of progress towards this Goal is confined to target 9.c.

Target 9.C: Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020

The review of progress towards target 9.C will focus on change in the indicator relating to the proportion of the population covered by a second generation (2G) mobile telephone network. For the present analysis, this official indicator is evaluated in terms of the mobile telephone subscription rate in order to bridge the lack of reliable data on the subject.

The dynamics of technology in the communications sector, including the expansion of networks and falling prices, have accelerated the dissemination of mobile cellular services around the world. People living in areas that were previously not connected have joined the global information society and, in 2015, 95 per cent of those living in least developed countries were covered by a mobile cellular signal. Access to broadband Internet through third generation (3G) technologies remains limited, however, as approximately 84 per cent of Africans do not
have access to a worldwide network of content and applications, even though more than half of the world's population is connected to the Internet (Economic Commission for Africa and others, 2016). This means that African peoples do not benefit from technological innovations, partly because of the infrastructural challenges linked to the continent's traditional dependence on satellites and VSAT Earth stations for most of their connectivity. Furthermore, access to the Internet has gradually become an essential factor in the competitiveness of producers and entrepreneurs. Given that the cost of 100 kilobytes per second in Africa remains the highest in the world, additional efforts must be made to extend such coverage to poorer rural areas in Africa, which are largely cut off from the rest of the world (Economic Commission for Africa and others, 2014).

In West Africa, the same trends may be observed in the expansion of access to new communications technologies as in that at the regional and global levels, although the quality of those technologies and access to them for all segments of the population remain causes for concern. In terms of subscription rates, five countries (Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana and Mali) crossed the threshold of 100 per cent in 2015. Guinea-Bissau, the Niger and Togo, however, still lag behind the overall dynamic in the subregion. In addition to investments in putting the required infrastructure in place, these countries should take measures to quickly put the prices of cell phones and communications within the reach of the majority of their populations.

Figure 4
Change in mobile telephone subscription rates (per 100 persons)


With regard to the number of Internet users, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia and Mali have the highest numbers in West Africa. In those countries, the rate increased by over 50 per cent in 2014. In terms of the rate of access to the Internet, West Africa is well below 50 per cent, although Cabo Verde, Ghana and Nigeria had rates above 25 per cent. Where speed of progress is concerned, however, Mali was the subregion’s driving force in 2016, with an increase of 18.6 per cent in the rate of access.
Table 1
Dynamics of Internet access rates in West Africa in 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank in Africa</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Access rate (%)</th>
<th>Increase in 2016 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Cabo Verde</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Côte d'Ivoire</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Togo</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Africa Technology, "Internet access and development by country". Available from www.afriquetecnologie.com/acces-internet-developpement-pays/.*

Furthermore, it should be noted that Africa in general and West Africa in particular have made exemplary progress with regard to the continent’s role in the establishment of a global centre of new technologies. The African digital market has great economic potential, in particular when it comes to digitization, metadata, telecommunications, social networks, media, drones, etc.

According to the World Bank Group (2016), the Internet, mobile phones and other digital technologies are spreading rapidly in Africa, but the anticipated digital dividends, namely, stronger growth, the creation of more jobs and better public services, have not yet met expectations. In addition, the quality of Internet connectivity between countries is primarily determined by two factors: the quality of infrastructure and the content and applications to which the public has access (Internet Society, 2015).

In order to reduce the digital divide in the region, it is necessary to:

- Strengthen the quality and quantity of connectivity infrastructure;
- Promote inclusiveness, efficiency and technological innovation (Internet, mobile phones and all the other tools used to collect, store, analyse and share information) as sources of structural transformation;
Carry out reforms that take into account those who may have the financial means necessary for Internet access, but choose not to do so, and those who do not have access or who do not have the financial means to do so.

Goal 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

The preservation of various forms of life on Earth requires targeted efforts to protect, restore and promote the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial and other ecosystems. This Goal set particular store by sustainable forest management, halting and reversing the degradation of land and natural habitats, winning the fight against desertification and stopping biodiversity loss. All these efforts combined, which are aimed at preserving the benefits of terrestrial ecosystems, including sustainable livelihoods, will be appreciated by future generations (United Nations, 2017). Assessment of progress towards this Goal is based on target 15.1.

Target 15.1: By 2020, ensure conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements

The review of progress towards target 15.1 will focus on the change in the proportion of land area covered by forest as a percentage of total land area.

In contrast to the decline in the overall annual loss of forest area worldwide (from 7.3 million hectares per year in the 1990s to 3.3 million hectares annually during the period 2010–2015), the pace of deforestation in Africa (excluding North Africa) continues to accelerate (United Nations, 2017). On the other hand, other areas have been reforested thanks to forest plantations, forest landscape restoration and natural growth.

The rate of deforestation in West Africa is worrying, and States should take decisive and courageous measures at a highest level to address it. Between 1990 and 2015, forest cover in the subregion decreased by an average of 15 per cent, with marked levels of decrease in Togo (-37 per cent), Nigeria (-59.3 per cent) and the Niger (-40 per cent). In contrast, some other countries in the subregion, through strong protective and reforestation measures, were able to increase their forest coverage during the period 1990–2015. This was the case of Cabo Verde (55.6 per cent), the Gambia (10.4 per cent) and Ghana (8.2 per cent).
Figure 5
Change in forest coverage as a proportion of total land area, 1990–2015 (in percentage points)


It should be emphasized that the long-term adverse consequences of deforestation on the well-being of populations are enormous, including in terms of biodiversity loss, worsening of diseases and natural disasters, reduction of water resources and climate change.

3. Assessment of the capacity of national statistics systems to respond effectively to the need for follow-up and evaluation in respect of the Sustainable Development Goals

According to the 2015 report of ECA on the assessment of Africa's progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, one of the major challenges was the weakness of national statistics systems in producing in a timely and consistent manner the high-quality data necessary to measure progress. That is seen in the limitations that States face in evaluating Millennium Development Goal indicators in order to assess their performance in respect of implementation.

Hoping to draw lessons from the strengths and weaknesses of the Millennium Development Goal process and to respond effectively to the significant challenges relating to statistical data for the monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals over the next 15 years, States must strengthen the production capacities of their respective statistics systems. To that end, it would be wise for States, with the support of their technical and financial partners, to strengthen their national statistics systems. In order to assess the capacity of West Africa to respond to requirements for statistical data for the evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals, ECA conducted a summary assessment of national statistics systems through the collection, processing and analysis of data from an online survey addressed to member States. The following section presents the main results of the analysis of the survey data.
3.1 Methodology

Given that nearly all the statistics systems in West African countries are of the centralized type, with national statistics institutes playing a coordination role, ECA statistics focal points in those countries, namely those from national statistics institutes and ministries of planning, were identified to complete the online survey and to seek support if need from those in the relevant sectors. For all 15 countries, the questionnaire involved the selection, for each of the 230 indicators, of one of the three modalities that best corresponded to the country's situation:

- **Data are available**

  Reflecting the current state of statistics production by a country's statistics system, this choice of modality would mean that the indicator could possibly be evaluated effectively at the present time.

- **Some data are available but require further processing**

  This choice of this modality means that the indicator could be assessed provided that the data (administrative data and survey data) undergo additional processing. Such processing would involve existing data or collection operations that are under way.

- **No data are available**

  This third modality is valid if and only if the first two are not. In other words, the data are not currently available nor will they become available through the processing of reliable existing data or databases. The only way to evaluate the indicator is to proceed with data collection, with the prior definition, in line with international standards, of a commonly accepted methodology for the collection of data and metadata. The new collection operation could be included in the annual or multi-year programme of activities of national statistics institutes or entities in charge of sector-level statistics in the country.

The main findings of the analysis of the survey data are discussed in the next section. The survey was initially intended to cover all 15 countries of the subregion, but only 5 countries (Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Guinea, Nigeria and Togo) were able to complete the questionnaire, representing a response rate of 33.3 per cent. With a view to obtaining a comprehensive understanding at the subregional level, the analysis is based on the data of the five countries. In addition, a country-by-country analysis allowed for the assessment of the individual capacity of each of the five countries.

3.2 Main findings

At the subregional level, 25 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goals indicators can be assessed using the data that are readily available at the national level. For 27 per cent of the indicators, however, some data are available but need to undergo further processing. On the other hand, for 48 per cent of the indicators, new administrative data collection operations or surveys must be undertaken. These results reflect the magnitude of the efforts to be undertaken by countries to achieve the effective and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals. This situation has implications in terms of the mobilization of additional human and financial resources to collect, process, analyse and disseminate new statistical data in a timely manner in order to be able to monitor and regularly assess 48 per cent of the 230
official indicators. That figure would increase to 75 per cent of the indicators if one were to include the additional processing of existing databases and databases arising from future collection operations.

Figure 6
State of overall availability of data for the monitoring and evaluation of the 230 Sustainable Development Goals indicators in West Africa

Source: Data from the survey of the Economic Commission for Africa, February 2017.

The analysis carried out for each Sustainable Develop Goal shows that the 48 per cent of indicators for which the collection of data is essential are associated with approximately 65 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goals (i.e., 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16). A comparative analysis with the structure of the Millennium Development Goals shows that almost all the indicators associated with the Sustainable Development Goals were not part of the Millennium Development Goals. Moreover, they cannot be understood through the prism of the 60 Millennium Development Goal indicators. This is indicative of the new and complex nature of most of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators. In contrast, it would require less effort for countries to monitor and evaluate goals resulting from a reformulation of the Millennium Development Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals in question are 1, 3, 4, 8, 9 and 17. This is explained by the fact that countries have made efforts to adapt their statistics production systems over the past 15 years in order to meet the need for monitoring and evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals. To that end, strong and specific measures by countries and their technical and financial partners will be required in order to shorten the period of adaptation of national statistics systems in respect of the Sustainable Development Goals.
Figure 7
State of the availability of data for the monitoring and evaluation of the 230 indicators in West Africa, by Goal (February 2017, percentage)

Source: Data from the survey of the Economic Commission for Africa, February 2017.

A case study involving the five countries that completed the survey, namely, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Guinea, Nigeria and Togo, reveals that the capacity of statistics systems to produce statistics to meet the need for monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals is not uniform. The lack of uniformity in the capacity of national statistics systems could be explained by the size, regularity and frequency of production, against the backdrop of human and financial resources as key factors. In that regard, the Gambia and Nigeria and, to a lesser extent, Burkina Faso must make additional efforts to define and produce data in order to meet the demand for the evaluation of more than 59 per cent of the indicators. By contrast, Togo appears to be in a good position to ensure the availability of data for the monitoring and evaluation of all the indicators, given that it will need to undertake new operations to collect statistical data for only 22 per cent of the indicators.
Figure 8
State of the availability of data for the monitoring and evaluation of the 230 indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals in Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Guinea, Nigeria and Togo (February 2017, percentage)

Source: Data from the survey of the Economic Commission for Africa, February 2017.

In spite of its brevity, this assessment exercise provides a comprehensive picture of the capacities of West Africa to meet the needs for monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals in respect of the availability of statistical data. These results will no doubt allow the countries and technical and financial partners more effectively to target their sectoral support and interventions to strengthen the data production capacities of national statistics systems to ensure better monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals over the next 15 years.

4. Major challenges and potential rapid-result measures

Drawing on the lessons of the achievements and shortcomings identified during the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals over the past 15 years and the analysis provided above, a number of major challenges must be addressed by the countries of West Africa if they are substantially to improve their position in respect of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. These challenges relate to both the development planning cycle and financing.

4.1 Improving the development planning cycle in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will serve as the framework for the sustainable structural transformation of national economies. Notwithstanding the large number of consultations undertaken thus far, however, ownership of the operational implications of the Sustainable Development Goals must be taken the national and local levels. Mobilization efforts will necessitate the sending of clear messages regarding ownership, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, including in respect of the relationship and synergies between the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063.
Furthermore, in order to ensure the effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, it will be essential to establish an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework for the two Agendas. In this context, targeted follow-up consultations with ministries and national planning structures will be essential to ensuring a clear understanding of both initiatives and their synergies (Economic Commission for Africa and others, 2016), which will prevent countries from having to navigate two monitoring and evaluation frameworks for targets and indicators that are virtually identical.

A strong commitment at the highest level is crucial to providing the direction needed to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth. As a result, strong political commitment by national policymakers will be absolutely necessary. To this, one must add the synergy between setting priorities for interventions by sector and setting budgetary priorities in the implementation of development projects and programmes. In addition, more investment in strengthening national statistics systems is crucial to ensuring the conduct of evidence-based planning and the objective implementation and evaluation of development projects and programmes.

Moreover, strong institutional frameworks for the coordination of development planning are necessary to bring together all relevant State and non-State actors on issues of inclusive and sustainable development (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2008, 2012).

In the area of statistics, data availability is crucial to improved monitoring and evaluation of development-related public policies. The analysis of survey data has made it possible to assess the capacity of national statistics systems in West Africa to address data needs relating to the monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Analyses show that the adoption of a step-by-step approach is called for in order to allow member States with statistics systems that differ in terms of capacity to be able to adapt and monitor the dynamics of adaptation as a whole. To that end, national statistics institutions will require support in the design of new methodologies, the establishment of baseline estimates and data compilation, given that new data collection operations and investigations will require the countries of the subregion to monitor and evaluate 48 per cent of the 230 indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Notwithstanding these multiple challenges, however, many countries in the subregion have already taken steps to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular in terms of prioritizing the Goals and their associated indicators and incorporating them into their national and sectoral development policies and strategies. The pace of taking ownership of planning and statistics systems and adapting them in order to implement the Sustainable Development Goals will vary from country to country. Naturally, this will be easier and faster for countries that have new planning cycles that coincide with the adoption of the Goals.

4.2 Increasing the level of financing and the effectiveness of public spending

The successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a challenge that all countries face, but is particularly daunting for countries with multiple vulnerabilities and weak economies that are sorely lacking in investment. The challenge is therefore to find ways effectively to mobilize and allocate financial and technological resources in order to achieve sustainable development in the subregion in particular and in Africa in general.
During the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals over the past 15 years, the majority of African countries have been able to achieve strong economic growth, substantially improve access to basic social services and reduce the number of people living in extreme poverty. Although insufficient, such remarkable achievements were possible thanks to high commodity prices and increased flows of official development assistance. Domestic resources have also increased, foreign direct investment has proliferated and several countries have gained access to the international capital market for the first time (United Nations Development Programme and others, 2016). However, worsening downward pressure on commodity prices, natural disasters, conflicts, violence and disease outbreaks across the continent could presage a difficult future for poor and vulnerable countries in general and West Africa in particular with regard to the mobilization of resources for financing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Furthermore, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted in July 2015 at the third International Conference on Financing for Development, presents a comprehensive financing framework to promote sustainable development and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda calls for not only the mobilization of additional resources but also for the creation of new incentives and the channelling of private and public resources towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

It should be noted that, at the same time as the development finance landscape has diversified, new donors, both public and private, have emerged and have initiated international development programmes. Because of this, there has been a proliferation of financial instruments, in particular those that are official development assistance, including blended finance (financing that combines philanthropic funds or assistance with public or private loans), green bonds, guarantees, local currency finance, socially responsible investments, diaspora financing mechanisms and debt swaps or repurchases, to name only a few (United Nations Development Programme and others, 2016). Other financial tools that assist countries in the effective management of risks and reducing vulnerability to exogenous shocks have also emerged: GDP-indexed bonds, countercyclical loans and insurance against weather-related and other disasters, not to mention the public-private partnerships that are becoming increasingly common in countries such as Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal.

In the light of the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals in the area of infrastructure financing, member States are undoubtedly aware that, to meet the requirements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the area of investment, official development assistance alone will be insufficient. States should make greater use of their capacities to mobilize resources domestically through making effectively use of their budgetary tools. States should also be more innovative in their strategies for seeking funding by mobilizing public and private flows, in particular in the form of equity or debt (including concessional debt), all while bearing in mind the principle of debt sustainability.

In addition, development partners should play their part at various stages of the project cycle, in particular to mitigate risks, manage revenues and to draw attention to the existence of viable and creditworthy markets (United Nations Development Programme and others, 2016). This should allow public and private funding to play complementary roles in order to improve the expected return on capital in member States. In addition, local capacity-building is crucial to realizing the full potential of various financing options. It would be difficult, if not impossible, for any financing instrument to reach its full potential if it were not part of efforts to build local capacity, including through increasing the efficiency and transparency of public
procurement operations, along with those of audits and internal controls. Close and frequent monitoring and evaluation and accountability must become an integral part of the main rules of conduct for all those who are active in the field of development.

**Box 1**

**New financing instruments**

Blended finance (funding that combines philanthropic funds or assistance with public or private loans) can have a significant leverage effect on financing for development, in particular with regard to infrastructure. Such blended finance can be used in several sectors at the same time. Complications sometimes arise, however, in arranging such financing to serve public interest purposes. The identification and implementation of profitable investment projects can also be challenging. In order to succeed, the role of local capacity is decisive.

Financing using local currency (for the benefit of States, local governments or the local private sector) has proliferated in recent years and can reduce exchange risks, broaden access to financing and support the development of domestic capital markets. Local currency financing poses risks for funding entities, however, and it is unlikely that smaller countries would be able to use such financing. Like other instruments, local currency financing is most effective when it is accompanied by a process of local capacity-building.

Green financing is growing rapidly, in particular green bonds, which have flourished in recent years. Several national and multilateral development banks are among the major issuers of green bonds. Emerging economies have also set up domestic markets dedicated to green bonds. The funds raised through those markets have made it possible for development banks to finance or co-finance projects in poorer and more vulnerable countries.

Considered to be risk management instruments, GDP-indexed bonds and countercyclical loans have been discussed at length, but have been implemented only in rare cases. However, there are arguments in favour of greater use of such tools, taking into account their countercyclical nature and the transfer of certain risks from the borrower to the funding entity. Given that poor and vulnerable countries are indebted mainly to public sector creditors, public donors could develop GDP-indexed bonds or automatic mechanisms to reduce or cancel debt in the event of a major crisis.

**Source:** United Nations Development Programme and the French Development Agency (2016).
5. Conclusion and recommendations

The decision to produce a report on the progress of West Africa with regard to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals is both ambitious and of critical importance, both for ECA and for its member States. Formulated on the basis of the legacy of the Millennium Development Goals in order to ensure their completion by 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals are only in their second year of implementation. This would explain the interlinkage between progress in implementation and the severity of the challenges faced in implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It should be noted that, notwithstanding the multiplicity and complexity of the challenges involved, all countries of the subregion have already undertaken tangible actions to ensure greater ownership and better monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals, including with regard to prioritizing objectives and indicators and to internalizing these within development-related policies and national and sectoral strategies.

The first of its kind, the present report on progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in West Africa, specifically the indicators related to the targets set for 2020 or 2025, is intended as a tool for advocacy and lobbying State and non-State development stakeholders regarding the priority and urgency of the Sustainable Development Goals for the subregion. With more than 48 per cent of indicators requiring new data collection operations (bearing in mind the implications in terms of mobilizing human and financial resources), and with national planning and statistics systems that are highly heterogeneous in terms of institutional, technical and operational capacities, it goes without saying that States must pay attention to the harmonization and alignment of their strategic and operational planning frameworks and tools. Specifically, it involves:

- Placing planning at the heart of development management, seeing that this is essential and of crucial importance for structural transformation in West Africa. This is a necessary step towards sustainable and inclusive development;

- Expediting initiatives and interventions for the alignment and adaptation of national planning and statistics systems to the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 of the African Union;

- Fostering the commitment of leaders at the highest level to the active mobilization of all State and non-State entities, along with technical and financial partners, on issues of inclusive and sustainable development, including the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063;

- Rationalizing institutional structures and frameworks for development planning at the national level while avoiding duplication and vulnerability to institutional shocks;

- Ensuring synergy between budgetary allocations and strategic development planning in setting sectoral priorities;

- Keeping in sight long-term development priorities, regardless of the scope of the cyclical shocks that very often require urgent responses;
Adhering strictly to the three dimensions of development planning, in particular respect for the hierarchy and coherence among a forward-looking vision, national development plans and sectoral plans (including local development plans);

Ensuring that the culture of evaluation, accountability and good governance is effective and binding at all levels and upon all involved;

Strengthening the productive capacities of national statistics systems by providing adequate human and financial resources;

Putting in place technical conditions for the monitoring and evaluation of progress in implementing each Goal by establishing the baseline for indicators through carrying out major surveys in all member States by the end of 2018.
References


Annex

List of Sustainable Development Goal targets with deadlines of 2020 or 2025

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Targets</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</td>
<td>2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Ensuring healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</td>
<td>3.6 By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</td>
<td>4.B By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</td>
<td>6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and</td>
<td>8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>Targets</td>
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<tr>
<td>productive employment and decent work for all</td>
<td>8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.B By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</td>
<td>9.C Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</td>
<td>11.B By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</td>
<td>12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</td>
<td>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</td>
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<td>Goals</td>
<td>Targets</td>
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| 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development | 14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution  
14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans  
14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics  
14.5 By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information  
14.6 By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation |
| 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 | 15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements  
15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally |
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<td>15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of</td>
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<td>15.8 By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and</td>
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<td>15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into</td>
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<td>17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the</td>
<td>17.11 Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries’ share of global exports by 2020</td>
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<td>Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</td>
<td>17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts</td>
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