



United Nations  
Economic Commission for Africa

**Sub-regional meeting on the implementation of  
Sustainable Development Goals  
in North Africa**

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

**Meeting Report**

## **I- Objectives of the meeting**

1. The subregional meeting on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in North Africa was held in Rabat (Morocco) on 26 and 27 June 2018, at the initiative of the ECA Office for North Africa and in partnership with the General Secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU).
2. The overarching objective of the meeting was to offer a forum for discussion and exchange to report on progress, challenges, good practices and lessons identified in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in North Africa.

The main objectives of the meeting were to:

- Introduce and discuss the findings of the report on the implementation of the SDGs in the Maghreb and share information, experiences, good practices and challenges of North African countries in implementing and monitoring SDGs;
- Reflect further and make recommendations on areas requiring further strengthening, and in particular institutional governance of SDGs, mainstreaming of SDGs into public, sectoral and local policies, monitoring of SDGs, and finally, budgetization and resource mobilization mechanisms.

## **II- Attendance**

3. The meeting brought together representatives from national institutions involved in overseeing and monitoring the SDGs (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Ministry of Planning and Finance; Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, National Statistics Institutes, Economic, Social and Environmental Council) as well as the Ministries of Employment and Agriculture. The following countries were represented: Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia and Sudan. The meeting was also attended by the AMU General Secretariat, UNDP, FAO, WFP, ILO and ADB as well as civil society organizations. A list of participants is attached.

## **III- The Opening Session**

4. Three presentations were made at the opening of the meeting, respectively by Mrs. Lilia Hachem Naas, Director of the ECA Office for North Africa; Mr. Abdellah Ben Mellouk, Director of Multilateral Cooperation and International Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco and Mr. Reda El Merini, Director of Economic Affairs at the General Secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU).

5. Mrs. Lilia Naas began by extending a warm welcome to all participants. She then went on to recall that the Agenda 2030 was henceforth the reference framework for all countries whose implementation should allow all forms of poverty and inequality to be eliminated, leaving no one aside, and ensuring the well-being of populations, the protection of our planet and the promotion of peace, prosperity and partnerships.

6. Mrs. Naas has underlined that the breadth of the SDGs and the scale of the challenges to be addressed are forcing States to reconsider their tackling of the issues and to devise more integrated and coherent policies, and adopt new governance modes that foster ownership, partnerships and the shared responsibility of players at all levels, for the implementation of transformative projects that will benefit our societies.

7. She noted that while some progress had been made in many areas, socio-economic inequalities still existed at several levels, from the exclusion of young people and women from the labour market (33% of young people are out of work), to gender inequalities, the marginalization of certain territories and unequal access to basic services such as education, health and social protection. She also stressed the risks to food security, greater water stress and the destruction of some ecosystems as a consequence of climate change.

8. After having recalled the aims of the meeting and outlined the conduct of the meeting, Mrs. Naas indicated that the recommendations of the meeting would be submitted to the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the ECA North Africa Office in October 2018 and to the meeting of the Subregional Coordination Mechanism, due to take place in March 2019

9. Speaking next, Mr. Abdellah Ben Mellouk, welcomed the participants and appreciated ECA's initiative in organizing the meeting. He also stressed the essential role of the United Nations Regional Commissions in the implementation of the SDGs and in the overall monitoring process led by the High-Level Political Forum.

10. Mr. Ben Mellouk recalled that the success of Agenda 2030 will essentially depend on the political resolve and on the efforts of countries to have appropriate development policies in place, an enabling environment for partnerships and an efficient policy to secure the required funding. He praised the efforts made by the Kingdom of Morocco to build awareness around and mainstreaming of SDGs into public strategies and appraise its statistical system. Morocco is preparing to conduct a second consultation (the first one took place in 2016).

11. Mr. Ben Mellouk stressed the particular importance of sub-regional and regional cooperation in the exchange of experiences and good practices between the countries of the region but also in the harnessing of partnerships for the benefit of promising regional initiatives. He stressed the role that the ECA can play in that framework, jointly with other United Nations agencies.

12. Mr. Reda El Merini started by expressing the regrets of the Secretary General of the AMU who was not able to attend and extended his warm greetings. He pointed out that the meeting is also an opportunity to highlight, explain and popularize the sustainable development goals. He stressed the need to devise and implement coherent, readable, integrated and inclusive policies to ensure the realization of the SDGs. Regarding the report on the implementation of the SDGs in the Maghreb, he motivated the choice of the selected themes insofar as they constitute areas of strategic interest for the countries and potential areas of cooperation over the medium and long term.

13. Mr. El Merini emphasized the regional approach and cooperation recognizing the interdependence of countries confronting multiple cross-border challenges, such as desertification, migration, poverty, etc. In order to accompany its Member States, AMU is committed to pursuing and deepening its cooperation with the Economic Commission for Africa and its North Africa Office, with the objective of transforming the SDGs into themes for regional cooperation and integration.

#### **IV- Conduct of proceedings**

##### **Session 1: The progress and challenges in implementing and monitoring the SDGs in North Africa**

14. The session began with a presentation by Mrs. Marieme Bekaye, Economist, in charge of Sustainable Development at the ECA North Africa Office, addressing the integrated approach for the implementation of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063. Following the presentation of the vision and objectives of Agenda 2060, Mrs. Bekaye drew attention to the important degree of convergence between Agenda 2063 and the SDGs and the support provided by ECA to its member States in three key areas: (i) data collection and analysis, (ii) technical support and (iii) monitoring of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. She further informed the participants of the signing of an AU-UN Memorandum of Understanding in January 2018 aimed at strengthening coordination and coherence in the implementation and monitoring of the two Agendas. The implementation of this Agreement will be facilitated through the existing AU-UN Regional Coordination Mechanism.

15. Mrs. Bekaye then outlined the objectives, main results and recommendations of the report on the implementation of the SDGs in the Maghreb, prepared by the ECA North Africa Office in collaboration with AMU. This report examines the efforts undertaken with regard to ownership and contextualization, institutional governance and monitoring. It also focuses on six themes of relevance to countries and priority interest for regional integration: food security (SDG 2), energy transition (SDG 7), industrialization (SDG 9), youth and women employment (SDG 8), climate change (SDG 13) and desertification (SDG 15). The report also addresses the role of regional cooperation in the implementation of the SDGs, before providing guidance for accelerating the implementation of the SDGs in the Maghreb countries.

16. This paper highlighted a number of challenges (structural shortfall in cereals, high unemployment among young people and women, inadequate contribution of the manufacturing sector to GDP and employment, predominance of low and medium technology exports, limited investment in R&D with a marginal contribution from industry, increased water stress and desertification) but also the progress towards generalizing access to electricity (except in Mauritania), developing renewable energies (Morocco, Mauritania), increasing public agricultural investment (except in Tunisia), developing water-efficient irrigation systems, developing organic agriculture (in Tunisia and to a lesser extent in Morocco). She further highlighted the lack of strategic frameworks to guide action at the Maghreb level and address clearly defined regional priorities, and the necessity to strengthen national ownership of regional objectives and their mainstreaming into national policies. The role of the regional economic communities in sharing experiences and good practices and in monitoring the SDGs was also acknowledged.

17. The address by Mrs. Zahira Abed, Adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Algeria, underscored the progress made towards achieving the MDGs, most notably in reducing unemployment, providing access to electricity in rural areas, gender equality and access to water supply and sanitation. Mrs. Abed pointed out that the Five-Year Plan (2015-2019) includes a set of measures that are consistent with the SDGs and that discussions are currently underway to define national indicators. A joint UNS-MFA program to support the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs has been approved. She also outlined the measures taken to ensure implementation and follow-up of the SDGs. These measures include particularly the integration of sustainable development principles into the 2016 constitution, SDG awareness activities, the development of an institutional governance framework (interdepartmental committee for coordinating and monitoring SDG implementation, thematic groups) and the ongoing preparation of the first progress report (2016-2018). She also highlighted some key challenges, mainly relating to the identification of national indicators, the need to build the capacity of the national statistical system and the heads of ministries responsible for monitoring-evaluation.

18. Mrs. Nour Elashmawi, an economist at the Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Institutional Reform in Egypt stressed the current updating of the sustainable development-vision 2030 strategy to reflect the country's current economic situation, the availability of new data and the need to ensure coherence with the SDGs. The update process is participatory and inclusive (working groups, workshops with all stakeholders and local consultations). The Government has appointed a High Council for Planning and Sustainable Development. When it comes to reporting, Egypt has a solid experience having already submitted two voluntary reports to the High Level Political Forum, in 2016 and 2018.

19. Mr. Makki Mohamed Abdelrahim Alian, Director General of the Department of Economic Planning and Policy at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning of Sudan, reported on the progress made: Awareness-raising on the SDGs and the Agenda 2063, jointly with the media and civil society; the setting up of a national steering and monitoring mechanism for the SDGs chaired by the Prime Minister and the appointment of the National Council for Population and Development as the technical focal point for the national

sustainable development program; ongoing alignment with the national development strategy SDGs (2005-2030) and its third five-year plan (2017-2020). Abdelrahim Alian also reported on efforts being made to improve food security, health, education, water resource management and inequality reduction. He also referred to the steps taken towards strengthening the national statistical system.

20. Mr. Abdelrahim Alian offered an overview of the main institutional reforms conducted in the financial sector and underscored the importance of PPPs, which are covered by a special law to facilitate their development in all sectors. Efforts have also focused on the development of microfinance, the growth of public expenditure up from 13% of GDP in 2012 to 14% in 2017, particularly with regard to spendings made to achieve the "pro-poor" objectives which rose from 4.5% of GDP in 2012 to 7.2% in 2017. The incidence of poverty was cut from 46.5% in 2009 to 36% in 2015. Expenditure in the health sector also increased (8% of total public expenditure in 2014 against 10.3% in 2017).

21. Mr. Mohamed Salah Bedda, City of Béja Sustainable Development Strategy Coordinator (Tunisia) presented the experience of the localization of SDGs in Tunisia. He first recalled the context of local governance with the adoption in 2014 of the new constitution highlighting the importance of decentralization and the role of cities and the enactment in April 2018 of the Organic Law of the Local Government Code enshrining the autonomy of local authorities.

22. Mr. Bedda went on to present the "Madinetouna" project supported by UNDP which contributes to the integrated development of cities (9 cities are concerned). This project includes the participatory and integrated production of a sustainable development strategy for the city - CSDS (diagnosis, framework and strategic objectives, action plan and monitoring and evaluation system). This cross-sectoral planning tool should facilitate the localization of SDGs. The project also aims to build the capacity of local actors. It has developed the methodology used to ensure the alignment, on the one hand, of Béja city's development strategy with the SDGs and their targets and, on the other hand, of the Strategy's Action Plan with the indicators. It also indicated that the next steps will involve training on the definition of indicators and the implementation of a system of indicators to measure the VDS contribution to the CSDS.

23. At the end of the session's discussions, the participants underscored the importance of such exchanges of experiences between countries and expressed the wish to obtain a deadline to be able to transmit their comments on the report prepared by ECA (in particular the validation of data) and provide further/updated information.

24. The participants made the following recommendations:

- Broaden and intensify ownership of SDGs and Agenda 2063 at all levels;
- Build the technical and financial capacity of national statistical systems to enable them to collect and analyze the data needed to monitor the SDGs;
- Undertake work on the harmonization of methodologies used to measure indicators relevant for the region and organize a regional training workshop on indicators for statistical institutes;
- Develop a regional profile using an agreed set of indicators for the region for which the benchmarks would be identical, to allow cross-country comparison;
- Set up a cross-country exchange platform;
- Pay more attention to the opportunities offered by the SDGs in fostering regional integration.

## Session 2: The Ownership of the SDGs by the key stakeholders

25. Mr. El Kébir Mdarhri Alaoui, the UNDP-Tunisia Deputy Resident Representative, first began his statement indicating that the sectoral ministries usually regard the SDGs as another low-priority task and that it is therefore an important task to ensure better communication on the added value of SDGs and notably their capacity to challenge the silo approach. He pointed out that Tunisia had served as pilot country to direct reflection on the SDG 16 on governance.

26. Mr. El Kébir then outlined the approach taken to mainstream the SDGs into the national entrepreneurship strategy, headed by the Ministry of Employment. This approach specifically involves aligning the SDGs with the strategy's budgeting scheme due to be submitted to the national entrepreneurship meeting (end of July 2018).

27. Mr. El Kébir rounded off by briefing participants on the state of play of the joint UN system program (17 UN agencies). The RIA (Rapid Integrated Policy Assessment) exercise to review the consistency between Tunisia's five-year plan and the SDGs is under way. A data gap analysis has also been completed and an interim report is available. A national workshop on statistics and data at the service of SDGs in Tunisia will take place on 5 July 2018 and seek to mobilize the main protagonists of information and data generation for enriching and finalizing the "Data Gap Analysis" study and sharing experiences and good practices on metadata and SDGs.

28. Mrs. Rajae Chafil, Head of the Observatory of Studies and Planning at the State Secretariat for Sustainable Development of Morocco, made a presentation on Morocco's National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) (2030 horizon) adopted in June 2017. She first presented the legislative reference system embodying the concept of sustainable development (Constitution, Framework Law) along with the findings of the national consultation on SDGs organized in 2016. The NSDS embraces the principles of sustainable development and its economic, social, environmental and cultural dimensions. It draws on the existing sectoral strategies. It is implemented by means of sectoral Sustainable Development Action Plans (SDAP 2019-2021). At the territorial level, discussions are currently underway to ensure the coherence of the implementation of the NSDS with the Regional Development Plans (RDPs).

29. Mrs. Chafil noted that a study was underway to explore the level of coherence between the strategy and the SDGs, refocus its action plan to speed up the achievement of the SDGs, and assess the financial resources required. A Strategic Implementation Committee for the NSDS, chaired by the Head of Government, was established in March 2018.

30. Mr. Yousif Ismail Alzubair, Civil Society Forum Coordinator for the SDGs in Sudan, first recalled that civil society organizations have not been sufficiently involved in the implementation and monitoring of the MDGs, particularly in the processes of planning and formulation of policies and strategies. He stressed the role that these organizations could play in advocacy and outreach, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs, pointing out that their effective participation would require the set up of institutional mechanisms for systematic consultations, strong accountability mechanisms as well as capacity building. He also highlighted the role of young people in being key actors in civil society.

31. Mr. Alzubair also outlined the goals of the Forum, consisting of about 300 organizations working in close collaboration with the National Council for Population and Development and local communities. He gave an overview of the main activities carried out by the Forum (advocacy, training sessions, local surveys to identify priorities, consultations with the private sector).

32. Mr. Alzubair concluded by outlining a number of challenges that impede the implementation of the SDGs (limited data availability, lack of financial resources, unclear responsibility of key stakeholders, lack of institutional space towards civil society

organisations effective participation, limited capacity of civil society,...) then offered recommendations (capacity building for civil society networks and organizations, improving coordination and information exchange, giving more attention to the possibility of assessment by civil society organizations, strengthening the support given to countries by regional institutions and organizations, and training specialized teams).

33. The discussions of the session 2 focused on the following points:

- The overhaul of the existing institutional governance system which should be able to: (i) facilitate intersectoral and vertical coordination to create linkages between SDGs, (ii) accommodate the needs of populations and (iii) ensure effective resource mobilization;
- The adaptation of educational and vocational training systems which will need to cater for the current and future needs of economic operators and the entrepreneurial sector;
- The importance of social dialogue towards improving working conditions;
- The various approaches to decentralization and local planning;
- The foundational role of civil society. Civil society participation is facing challenges related to the selection of credible organizations and the need to build their capacity.

#### **Sessions 3 and 4: The work of the employment and food security thematic groups**

34. The Session on Food Security was chaired by Mr Michael Hage, Coordinator, FAO Sub-Regional Office for North Africa. The findings were presented by Mrs. Fouzia Chakiri, Head of Division, Food Security Directorate, AMU. The session began with an introductory statement by Mr. Hage on the status and characteristics of food security in North Africa where current prevalence rate of under-nutrition varies from 3.5% to 25.6% across countries and where demand growth is exceeding production growth. This was followed by a presentation by Mr. Carlo Scarmella, WFP Deputy Regional Director (joining the session by skype) on WFP's actions to combat world hunger. Mr Scarmella has also emphasized the many factors involved in food insecurity (inadequate production, poverty, social stability, limited inter-regional trade, etc.)

35. The food security group discussed the three following issues:

1. Are the North African countries likely to meet the Agenda 2030 food security and nutrition targets?
2. How can governments be supported in providing context and monitoring for food security objectives and targets?
3. What "quick wins" initiatives should be implemented as a matter of priority?

36. They have resulted in the following key recommendations:

<b>Are North African countries likely to meet the food security and nutrition targets of Agenda 2030? ?</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	
A- From a political point of view	<p>Revamp the agricultural policies, promote public investment and encourage small-scale farming;</p> <p>Enhance the development policies for rural areas (infrastructure, services, opening up of areas with abundant production) to stem rural-urban migration;</p> <p>Improve the targeting of subsidies and work towards fair food prices;</p> <p>Promote strategic sectors such as the fishing industry;</p> <p>Ensure greater coherence between agricultural, energy, water resources management and trade policies;</p> <p>Advocate the different initiatives (in particular the triple A initiative, the family farming initiative, the water scarcity initiative).</p>
B- Increasing farm production amid high vulnerability to climate hazards	<p>Promote farming production models centred on the production of products known as strategic;</p> <p>Ensure better management of overproduction as a means of limiting losses (opening up production areas, conservation techniques);</p> <p>Focus on the efficient management of agricultural production and processing;</p> <p>Strengthen the sector's resilience to climate change and develop warning systems.</p>
C- Marketing	<p>Develop marketing systems and regulate national markets;</p> <p>Promote regional economic integration and intra-regional trade to alleviate the impact of instability of international trade.</p>
D- Partnership	<p>Set up greater partnerships between North African countries using existing complementarities;</p> <p>Use the opportunities afforded by regional programs/projects which have received increased attention from development partners;</p> <p>Promote South-South cooperation.</p>
E- Research & Development	<p>Develop local seed varieties which are better adapted and more resilient to climate change;</p> <p>Transform agriculture into smart agriculture;</p> <p>Fight against genetic erosion (local traditional varieties);</p> <p>Promote local know-how.</p>

1. 2.	<b>How can governments be supported in providing context and monitoring for food security objectives and targets?</b>
-	Strengthen advocacy activities in favour of SDG 2, its targets and interrelations with other SDGs
-	Carry out a study to identify and popularize good practices;
-	Support countries in setting up an emergency fund;
-	Promote intra-regional trade ;
-	Strengthen inter-country exchanges and South-South cooperation;
-	Implement tools to elicit and sustain countries' commitment at the highest level.
1. 3.	<b>What "quick wins" initiatives should be implemented as a matter of priority?</b>
-	Manage wastage and loss
-	Reorganize marketing at domestic market level;
-	Readjust nutrition based on categories notably children, the elderly, etc., ...
-	Develop community outreach programs for agricultural development;
-	Combat harmful subsidies such as water subsidies, energy subsidies or subsidies for certain foods;
-	Create an institutional and legal framework for food security;
-	Draw up a situation report on food security policies and update the data.

37. The session on employment was chaired by Ms. Amal Elbeshbishi, Economist at the ECA Office for North Africa. The findings of the work were given by Mrs. Yomn El Hamaki of the Egyptian Forum for Sustainable Development.

38. The employment group talks were focused on the main challenges, opportunities and realities on the ground. The main challenges underlined by the participants are the limited technological level and slow industrialization, brain drain, insufficient inclusion of women and young people in job creation strategies, inadequate education and vocational training systems for the requirements of the labour market, an unattractive business environment, lack of entrepreneurial culture, the disproportionate importance of the informal sector and the insufficient integration of gender policies in employment strategies.

39. Using country examples, opportunities for the creation of sustainable jobs were brought to the fore, in particular the importance of social and solidarity-based economy, the role of PPPs in financing local projects and programs to support young people in starting their own businesses. In Egypt, the development of incubators led to the creation of sustainable jobs. In Algeria, structures such as ANSEJ (National Agency for supporting youth employment) and ANEM (National Employment Agency) were set up to support job creation and entrepreneurship through the granting of credit. Such structures also exist in other countries. Tunisia has a good track record in the promotion of corporate social responsibility.

40. The facts on the ground clearly show that all countries are pursuing employment strategies, although their implementation may not always be effective.

41. **Session 5: parallel round tables:** four parallel panels were organized on the following themes:

- Inclusive institutional governance of SDGs
- SDG integration and policy coherence

- Financing and budgeting mechanisms
- Indicators and data for SDG monitoring

42. These panels were an opportunity to exchange experiences, identify challenges and recommendations. The institutional solutions and approaches implemented to integrate SDGs into national policies are different in each country. The same applies to decentralization approaches. The capacities of national statistical systems are currently being assessed in order to identify gaps.

43. The tables below summarize the main recommendations of the round tables:

<p>- <b>Panel 1: Inclusive institutional governance of SDGs</b></p> <p>Chairperson : ECA <span style="float: right;">Rapporteur: Algeria</span></p>	
<p><b>Findings:</b></p> <p>The experiences of countries are quite varied as far as institutional solutions are concerned. In most cases the transversal departments ensure the coordination of SDG implementation, while NSIs are generally in charge of the follow-up of SDGs although some countries say that they still do not have an operational institutional framework. Inclusive consultations were held by all countries to build awareness of SDGs among stakeholders, particularly civil society. The experiences of decentralization vary according to the territorial organization scheme of each country and are still in their early stages (with the exception of Sudan).</p> <p>The countries touched upon the challenges faced in implementing SDGs at the sectoral level, in the light of the planning scheme adopted internally. The transversality of SDGs and the vertical nature of sectoral strategies are causing issues of policy convergence.</p>	
<p><b>Main recommendations</b></p> <p>Adopt the SDGs as comprehensive development framework and boost the implementation of an institutional framework for steering and monitoring SDGs;</p> <p>Strengthen and expand take-up of SDGs at national and local levels, prioritize SDGs and identify targets and indicators at the national and local levels;</p> <p>Identify means of implementation and remove barriers related to budgeting and budget trade-offs, especially at sectoral level;</p> <p>Develop tailored modalities for engaging civil society and professional organizations which mobilize the private sector;</p> <p>Undertake the selection of credible interlocutors relating to civil society involvement. In this respect, countries set clear criteria;</p> <p>Build civil society capacities as the necessary prerequisite for their involvement;</p> <p>Build statistical capacity for SDG monitoring, as well as coordination between statistical institutions and sectors;</p> <p>Draft and submit national reports to the HLPF. The reporting assists in drawing lessons and giving greater visibility to the development partners, particularly for the mobilization of resources.</p>	
<p><b>Panel 2: SDG integration and policy coherence</b></p> <p>Chairperson: ECA <span style="float: right;">Rapporteur: Mauritania</span></p>	
<p><b>Findings:</b></p> <p>There was agreement among participants on the importance of ensuring that national</p>	

policies are coherent with sustainable development goals.	
<b>Main recommendations</b> Strengthen communication and outreach about SDGs and national strategies; Enhance coordination and synergy among different governmental actors; Set up a monitoring and evaluation system for SDG implementation; Improve direct mainstreaming of SDGs into national strategies while targeting specifically the three dimensions of sustainable development; Strengthen the mid-term review of policies, the gap analysis, and the revision of goals, in connection with the SDGs; Make sure resources are available in budgeting national strategies; Adopt UN-developed approaches such as Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA); Seek the support of technical and financial partners, particularly with respect to data harmonization, project implementation and funding mobilization; Prioritize and schedule projects according to available national capacities.	
<b>Panel 3: Financing and budgeting mechanisms</b> Chairperson : ADB <span style="float: right;">Rapporteur: Mauritania</span>	
<b>Findings :</b> Resource mobilization is based, first and foremost, on the integration of SDGs at national, sectoral and local levels. Domestic resources are scant given the substantial investment needs, against a backdrop of declining official development assistance.	
<b>Main recommendations</b> Analyze in-country budgeting mechanisms and assess to what extent they integrate the SDGs and identify potential actions to be implemented in order to adapt them according to a SDG-sensitive approach; Promote the management by objectives and the program budget approaches while bearing in mind the country priorities per SDG; Ensure readability of SDGs in Finance Acts; Rationalize and enhance efficiency of public spending: fighting inefficient use and waste of resources; Mobilize and raise tax revenues without increasing the tax burden; Direct diaspora remittances towards productive development projects and SDG achievement Improve the (very low) degree of bank penetration to contribute to the funding of development programs broken down into sectoral strategies; Make more effective use of extractive resources by focusing on processing and by factoring in the improvement of the neighboring populations' living conditions and by lessening as much as possible the impacts that their operation may have on populations and on environment; Diversify funding mechanisms and encourage PPPs; Improve and boost the appeal of the investment framework and provide incentives for domestic investors to implement bankable projects with a ripple effect for foreign investors. Initiate notably land reforms; Improve access of companies (small- and medium-sized enterprises and industries) to public procurement, with, where relevant, the use of the national preference clauses in public procurement; Build human resource capacities by gaining national expertise in designing and evaluating incentive-based economic development projects;	

Promote affirmative action on gender and spatial equity;  
Develop a strategy for mobilizing external resources with bilateral and multilateral partners as part of a win-win approach.

#### **Panel 4: Indicators and data for SDG monitoring**

Chairperson: ECA

Rapporteur: Tunisia

#### **Findings:**

All countries undertook an assessment of the capacity of the national statistical system to address the data needs for the indicators of the global framework, using the TIER classification. The preliminary results indicate that the currently available data range from: Egypt: -43%, -Morocco: 60%, -Tunisia: 55%, -Algeria: 50%, -Mauritania: 46% and -Sudan 45%. A substantial gap exists for data on environment, agriculture and governance.

#### **Main recommendations**

Popularize the SDGs, targets and indicators;  
Consolidate the national statistical system and carry out training on metadata, tools, methodologies... at local level;  
Harness data from administrative sources;  
Promote collaboration between statistical offices in the countries of the sub-region;  
Adopt national data dissemination strategies and build and update websites;  
Engage statistical information users and civil society operators in the formulation of development policies and strategies;  
Organize national consultations on indicators, methodologies, interpretations and analyses;  
Submit a report on the implementation of all the SDGs in North Africa, identify disparities between countries and make recommendations towards reducing them;  
Support countries in the generation of statistics (new surveys) and build data analysis capacity;  
Promote the use of technological media for the dissemination of data;  
Organize a Regional Forum with the NSIs to discuss indicators and targets;  
Leverage the experience of existing national observatories to collect data.

### **Summary of recommendations and closing**

44. At the end of the session, the Director of the ECA Office for North Africa thanked the participants for their valuable contribution to the session. She pointed out that the report of the meeting and the different speeches will be shared with everyone.

45. Mr. Reda El Merini, the representative of the AMU, thanked the ECA for organizing this important meeting, and considered it very enriching. He also commended the participants for their dedicated participation. Mr. El Merini reaffirmed the need to start an educational work at country level to explain and promote understanding of the implications of the 2030 and 2063 agendas. He also pointed out that SDG mainstreaming in public policies could facilitate regional integration.

## Annex I: Summary of main recommendations

Below is a summary of the key cross-cutting recommendations arising from the discussions:

### 1- Recommendations to States

- Build and strengthen ownership of SDGs and Agenda 2063 on all levels;
- Expedite the establishment, in countries where this does not yet exist, of a SDG coordination and monitoring institutional framework capable of ensuring better convergence of development policies and programs;
- Establish appropriate mechanisms to foster dialogue and partnerships with CSOs, the private sector, local communities and the scientific community (committees, exchange forums, etc...);
- Expedite the review of public policies and the prioritization of SDGs, targets and indicators;
- Reflect on the relevance of NSDSs and their connections with national development strategies/plans;
- Engage a process to mainstream SDGs into strategic local development planning;
- Improve data availability, reliability and consistency and raise attention on environmental data;
- Establish regional data bases ;
- Draw on the experience gained through existing national observatories for data collection.

### 2- Recommendations to the ECA

- Develop a regional profile based on an agreed set of indicators in the region with similar calculation benchmarks to allow cross-country comparison;
- Set up a platform for the exchange of experience and good practices between countries;
- Build the capacity of national statistical systems to enable them to collect and analyze the data needed to monitor sustainable development goals;
- Start work towards harmonizing methodologies to measure indicators relevant for the region and organize a regional training workshop on indicators for use by statistical institutes;
- Give more attention to the opportunities offered by the SDGs in promoting regional integration;
- Draw up a report on the implementation of all the SDGs in North Africa, pinpoint disparities across countries and formulate recommendations to reduce them.

## Annex II: work program

### Tuesday 26 June

08h30-09h00

#### Registration of participants

09h00-09h30

#### Opening Session

- Address by **Mrs. Lilia Hachem Naas**, Director of the ECA Office for North Africa and introduction to the objectives of the meeting and the program of work (ECA-NA)
- Address by **Mr. Abdellah Ben Mellouk**, Director, Multilateral Cooperation and International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAEC), Kingdom of Morocco
- Address by the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

09h30-10h30

#### Session 1: Progress and challenges in SDG implementation and monitoring in North Africa

- Integrated approach to the implementation of Agenda 2063 and of the SDGs: Context and support to the ECA (**Mrs. Marieme Bekaye**, ECA)
- Submission of the report on the implementation of SDGs in the Maghreb (**Mrs. Marieme Bekaye**, ECA)
- Discussions

10h30-11h00

*Coffee break and group photo*

11h00-13h00

#### Session 1: Progress and challenges in the implementation and monitoring of SDGs in North Africa (cont'd)

- Status of the first progress report on the implementation of SDGs in Algeria (2016-2018) (**Mrs. Zahira Abed**, Adviser to the Interministerial coordination committee for the monitoring of the implementation of SDGs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
- Progress in the sustainable development strategy in Egypt (**Mrs. Nour Elashmawi**, Economist, Ministry of planning, monitoring and administrative reform)
- Strategic urban planning and the localization of SDGs: the case of the city of Béja in Tunisia (**Mr. Mohamed Salah Bedda**, CDS Project Coordinator, Municipality of Béja)
- Discussions

13h00-14h30

*Lunch*

14h30-16h00

#### Session 2: Ownership of SDGs by key stakeholders

- Mainstreaming SDGs in the National Entrepreneurship Strategy and initiatives implemented to mobilize private partners in Tunisia (**Mr. El Kébir Mdarhri Alaoui**, Deputy Resident Representative / UNDP-Tunisia)
- The National Strategy of Sustainable Development-2030 of Morocco (**Mrs. Rajae Chafil**, Director of Observation of Studies and Planning - State Secretariat in charge of Sustainable Development)

- Civil society action from strategy development to implementation in Sudan (**Dr Yousif I. Alzubair**, Coordinator of the Sudanese Civil Society Forum for SDGs)
  - Discussions
- 16h00-16h30 *Coffee break*
- 16h30-18h30 **Session 3: Thematic working sessions**
- Employment Group (Lead ECA)
  - Food Security Group (Lead FAO)

### Wednesday 27 June

- 09h00-10h30 **Session 4: Feedback on the work of thematic groups and discussion**
- 10h30- 11h00 *Coffee break*
- 11h00-13h00 **Session 5: Parallel Sessions:** four parallel panels
- Inclusive corporate governance of SDGs
  - Mainstreaming SDGs and coherence of policies
  - Funding and budgeting mechanisms
  - Indicators and data for SDG monitoring
- 13h00-14h00 *Lunch*
- 14h00-15h00 **Session 5: Parallel Sessions (cont'd)**
- 15h00-16h30 **Session 6: Restitution of parallel sessions' works and discussions**
- 16h30- 17h00 *Coffee break*
- 17h00- 18h00 **Session 7: Summary of main recommendations/messages and closing**

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