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The African Women's Development and Communication Network

The Road Towards 2030

How African Women Can Participate in and Influence the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development
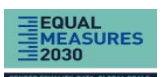
Agenda 2063

The Africa We Want

The Road Towards 2030

How African Women Can Participate in and Influence the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development

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Courtesy of UN Women East and Southern Africa Office and Partners

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Acknowledgements

The famous saying, *"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step"* aptly describes the process of keeping track of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (also known as the SDGs).

Without doubt, African women's rights organizations continue to play a significant role in the review, monitoring and follow up the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In May 2017, FEMNET organized the *first and largest pan-African women's rights Convening on the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, bringing together close to 200 women's rights organizations (WROs) and other key actors advancing gender equality and women's rights in Africa.

It is from this Convening, that the idea of a Roadmap towards 2030 was born and we acknowledge with much appreciation all the contributors who shaped the content of this resulting compilation, including women's rights advocates and activists from all African sub-regions, the Consultant - Yvette Kathurima Muhia; FEMNET Board members and all FEMNET Staff (especially Dinah Musindarwezo, Executive Director; Mildred Ngesa, Head of Communication and Rachel Kagoiya, Information Manager). We also appreciate Hulda Ouma and Simone Oluoch-Olunya from UN Women for their valuable support and guidance.

This publication would not have been possible without support from UN Women-East and Southern Africa Office. Sincere appreciation also goes to other development partners who include the European Union, Action Aid International, Ford Foundation and Equal Measures 2030.

We invite ALL African women and girls to take this journey with us as we endeavor to monitor implementation of the 2030 Agenda and contribute to its overall success.

In Solidarity!

Memory Zonde-Kachambwa,
Head of Programmes, FEMNET

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
ARFSD	Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
Beijing PfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Violence against Women
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
GA	General Assembly
HLPF	High Level Political Forum
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
STI	Science Technology and Innovation
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
VNRs	Voluntary National Reviews
WROs	Women Rights Organizations

1. Introduction

In September 2015, 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Known as the framework to succeed the Millennium Development Goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) contains 17 goals and 169 targets to be achieved by 2030 so as to achieve the sustainable **Future We Want**. Women's rights organizations, gender equality advocates, feminist groups and individuals strategically engaged in the post-2015 processes and played a key role towards advocating for a standalone goal, Goal 5 on gender equality and women's empowerment and for mainstreaming of gender in other goals. This was coordinated through strong coalitions such as the Women Major Group and the Post 2015 Women's Coalition – now known as the Feminist Alliance for Rights (FAR). Moreover, effective partnerships were formed and sustained with UN Women, other UN agencies as well as governments. In Africa, the African Women's Development and Communication Network **(FEMNET) played a leadership role in mobilizing and facilitating African women to engage effectively throughout the entire process**. The 'Africa We Want'[1] position statement developed after a series of consultations was reflected into the Common African Position on Post 2015.

The SDGs were agreed upon in a context of renewed optimism for Africa's prosperity and growth. In 2013, Africa commemorated fifty years since the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now African Union. The African Union Commission Chairperson at the time, H.E. Dlamini-Zuma steered the process of defining a new future for Africa. One that would define Africa not as a continent riddled with poverty, hunger and disease but celebrate it as a continent that is full of promise. The 'Africa is Rising' narrative was coined and with it a host of ideas as to what should comprise the vision for Africa in the next fifty years. This was compiled into a document, Agenda 2063 that consists of seven aspirations for Africa. To note, aspiration six highlights the importance of people-driven development that relies on the potential of African people especially its women and youth. The process of coming up with the Agenda 2063 was largely driven through online consultations spearheaded by the African Union and bodies such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Agenda 2063 was further broken down into a First 10 yr Implementation Plan 2014 - 2023 that highlights goals and priorities for Africa before 2023.

The 2030 Agenda is driven by the principle of **leaving no one behind** and seeks transformation in the sense that it caters not only for economic growth but also social development and environmental protection. The Agenda came into effect on 1st January 2016 and will expire in 2030. In the Declaration, the Vision and Principles are outlined in detail and include "areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet" encompassing the 5 P's - People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership.

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[1] http://femnet.co/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/theafricawewant-pp.pdf

Para 20 of the Declaration demonstrates Member States commitment to gender equality. **"Realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the Goals and targets."** The achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if one half of humanity continues to be denied its full human rights and opportunities. Women and girls must enjoy equal access to quality education, economic resources and political participation as well as equal opportunities with men and boys for employment, leadership and decision-making at all levels. We will work for a significant increase in investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional and national levels. All forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls will be eliminated, including through the engagement of men and boys. The systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation of the Agenda is crucial."

The SDGs and the targets are integrated and indivisible. The 17 Goals as highlighted in the image below[2] show the inter-related nature of the goals.

For the SDGs to be implemented, concerted effort is required from different stakeholders. In as much as governments adopted the Agenda, support is required from civil society, women's rights organizations, the private sector, financial institutions, research and academic institutions, UN agencies and other actors including the media to ensure its realization. Moreover, national parliaments and regional authorities such as Regional Economic Commissions and African Union Institutions and Departments also play a critical role. The 2030 Agenda seeks to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development through: Finance; Technology; Capacity building and Trade. This is in an attempt to address systemic issues such as policy and institutional incoherence, multi-
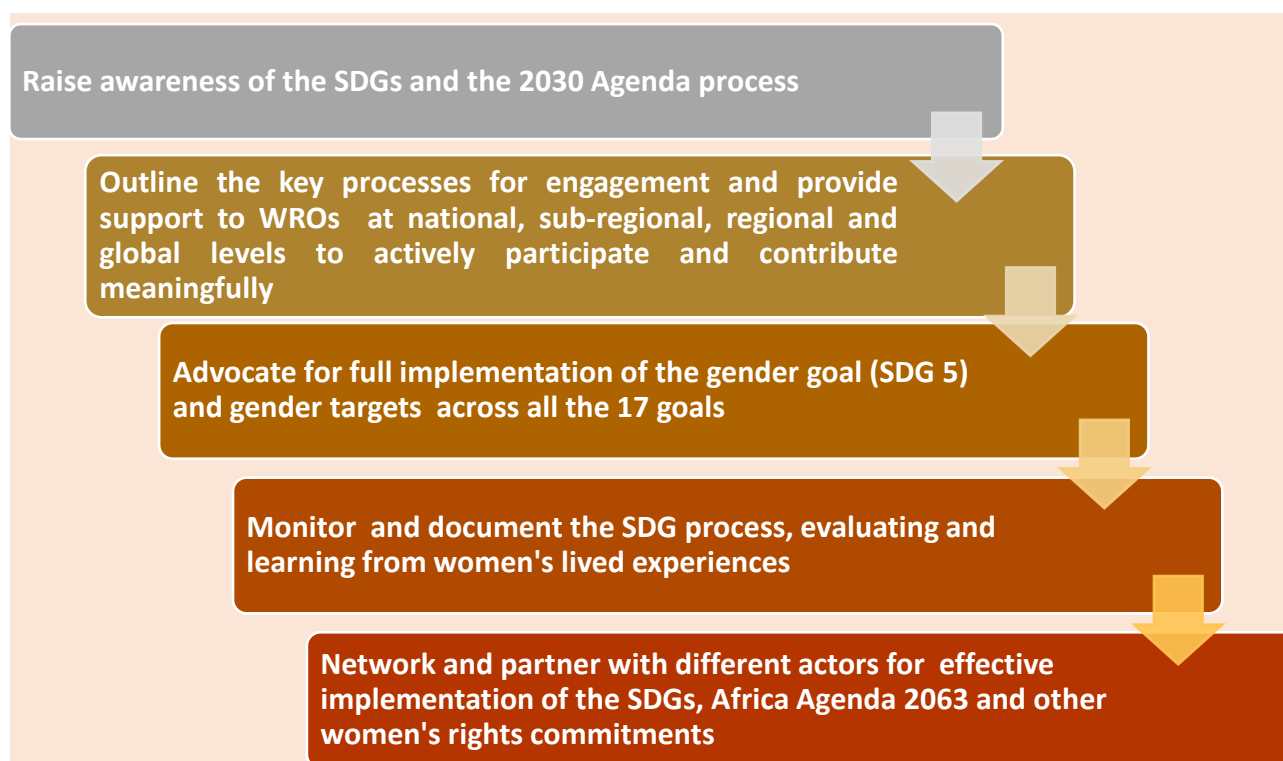
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[2] Image copied from Twitter - @AdamRogers2030

stakeholder partnerships and challenges of data, monitoring and accountability. In addition to a specific goal on the Means of Implementation (Goal 17), there is the Addis Ababa Action Agenda which supports and helps contextualize the 2030 Agenda's means of implementation targets.

Follow up and review mechanism will take place at sub-national, national, regional and global levels. With what the UN Development Group terms as 'Glocalizing the Agenda'[3], Agenda 2030 seeks to have full participation from all citizens. Supporting the *Review and Follow-up* of the SDGs is a global indicator framework outlining a practical set of indicators[4].

What is the Roadmap for?

This Road map is not prescriptive, rather it is a range of strategies that are useful and can be adapted by WROs across Africa to engage meaningfully in the implementation of Africa Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development process. The roadmap aims to support WROs to be involved in the implementation of these two development agendas, raise awareness and advocate for the active role of WROs at national, sub-national, regional and global levels. See below[5]

Raise awareness of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda process

Outline the key processes for engagement and provide support to WROs at national, sub-regional, regional and global levels to actively participate and contribute meaningfully

Advocate for full implementation of the gender goal (SDG 5) and gender targets across all the 17 goals

Monitor and document the SDG process, evaluating and learning from women's lived experiences

Network and partner with different actors for effective implementation of the SDGs, Africa Agenda 2063 and other women's rights commitments

Who is the Roadmap for?

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[3] **Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** *Reference Guide to UN Country Teams*
[4] https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/
[5] Adapted from Roadmap for localizing SDGs: Implementation and Monitoring at Sub National levels, the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments. **gtf2016.org**

The roadmap is intended to support WROs, gender equality and women's rights activists, academia and civil society actors to implement and monitor SDGs from a gender perspective. The roadmap can be used for policy influencing and making sure that the gains made and gender equality commitments are upheld. This roadmap provides the link with other documents on the African continent such as Africa Agenda 2063 and the Maputo Protocol.

2. Review and Follow up Processes of Agenda 2030

In Para 55 of the Declaration, the SDGs and targets are described as global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development as well as respecting national policies and priorities. This means that governments can decide which targets should be included into their national plans. The Secretary General's report[6] on Follow up and Review states that reviews should take place at national, regional and global levels, and that these processes should build on each other.

Para 11 of the Declaration reaffirms the outcomes of all major UN Conferences and summits with a foundation for sustainable development. These include: the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; the World Summit on Sustainable Development; the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action; and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as Rio +20. Moreover, they reaffirm the Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries, The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States; the Second UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Counties and the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. All these are avenues for women's rights advocates to use so as to hold their governments accountable to the SDGs. We must reiterate the link between sustainable development and other relevant ongoing processes in the economic, social and environmental fields. In particular, the instruments on Women's Rights such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the ICPD and CEDAW remain relevant to set standards for WRO's review and follow up on the progress of SDGs implementation towards transforming the status of women and girls.

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[6] 2030 Agenda, paragraph 79; Report of the Secretary General, A/70/684, paragraph 74

Global Reviews

The High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development[7] is the main platform for reviews of the SDGs at the global level. The Forum will meet annually under the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and every fourth year under the General Assembly. It is tasked with assessing progress, achievements and challenges faced by countries implementing the SDGs. It is important to note that the HLPF is voluntary and more so a forum for peer learning. The methodology introduced to provide reports on SDG implementation at the HLPF is the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). In 2016, 22 countries volunteered to make their reports at the HLPF. In 2017, the HLPF took place from the 10 – 19 July in New York. 44 countries volunteered to provide reviews with seven of them from Africa: Benin, Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Togo and Zimbabwe. In addition to the Voluntary National Reviews that will be presented at the HLPF, thematic reviews will also take place based on themes proposed by the General Assembly[8]. The reporting process provides an opportunity for Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) to hold their governments to account on implementation of SDG 5 as well as the other goals which all have gender considerations.

The theme of the HLPF in 2017 was "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world."[9] WROs had the opportunity to engage their national offices responsible for reporting as Goal 5 was discussed. The next time Goal 5 will be discussed will be in three years. The complete set of goals that were reviewed in 2017 were: -
- Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- ***Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls***
- Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development (will be reviewed each year)

In the recently released Women Major Group[10] Position Paper on the HLPF[11], women's rights organizations urged governments to recall that, "Agenda 2030 was not drafted in a political or

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[7] Format and Organizational Aspects of the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, General Assembly resolution 67/290, 9 July 2013.
[8] GA resolution (A/RES/70/299) of July 2016 decided on the themes for the HLPF in 2017 (Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing), 2018 (Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies) and 2019 (Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality).
[9] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf
[10] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/majorgroups/women
[11] http://www.womenmajorgroup.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/05/HLPF_WMG_Paper_2017_final1.pdf

legal vacuum, but in the context of international agreements and conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform for Action, International Conference and UN Framework Convention on Climate Change." In addition to this list, we can also add UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Peace and Security and key regional instruments to advance gender equality such as the Maputo Protocol. As rights-holders, women's rights organizations are emphasizing that **"a rights-based approach to sustainable development is not an option, but an obligation."**

Other reports that will have impact at the global level include the:

- An annual SDG Progress report, prepared by the Secretary General and based on the global SDG indicators, national statistics and regional information.
- The Global Sustainable Development Report, prepared by the UN system every four years, focusing on the science and policy interface and building on existing assessments.
- An annual Inter- Agency Task Force Report on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development and Means of Implementation. The 2016 Report[12] flagged sources of data which can be used to monitor the commitments on gender equality as indicated in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda that may not be incorporated under SDG 5.
- Reports submitted at the annual UN Statistical Commission sessions by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and the High-Level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG-PCCB), including the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data[13] adopted at the UN World Data Forum (WDF) in Cape Town in January 2017.

Unlike other mechanisms where shadow reporting is permitted, the HLPF mechanism makes no provision for shadow reporting. Member states are allowed less than 30 minutes to make their intervention, leaving very little room/space for discussion. Given this arrangement, it is imperative for WROs to work together with their governments in drafting the Voluntary National Reports (VNR) that will be presented at the HLPF each year.

To assist in generating evidence- based advocacy at the global level, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and the Bertelsmann Stiftung developed the 'SDG Index and Dashboards'. The global report[14] shows how different countries compare against each other as linked to implementation of the 17 SDGs. The organizations also developed regional dashboards that can at a glance demonstrate each country's status as concerns implementation of the 17 Goals.

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[12] http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Report_IATF-2016-full.pdf (Page 26)
[13] https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/hlg/Cape-Town-Global-Action-Plan/
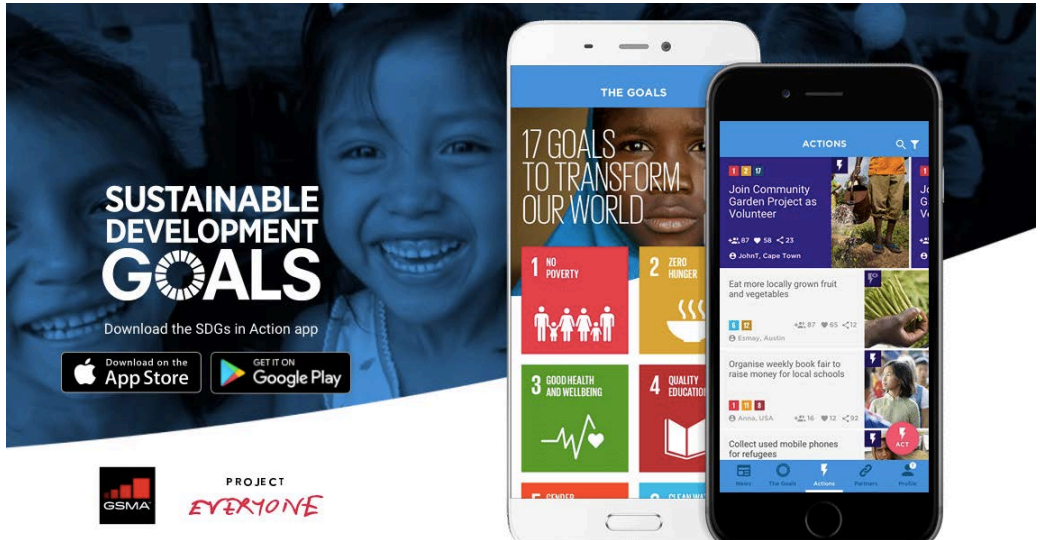[14] http://www.sdgindex.org/download/

Table 1. SDG Dashboard for countries in Sub-Saharan Africa

Green indicates closest to SDG achievement
Yellow – orange – red indicates an increasing distance from SDG achievement

Another tool that is useful in creating or joining global actions is the SDGs in Action Mobile App[15] by GSMA and Project Everyone[16]. The App lists all the 17 SDGs and lets you pick 4 of which you have greatest interest. It then provides you with information on those goals e.g. International Days linked to the goals you have selected. Additionally, it generates actions related to those goals and also permits you to add an action and select contacts to join your action from your other social networks like Facebook and Twitter.

For women working in/with the Private Sector, the SDG Compass[17] is a tool developed by GRI[18] that helps businesses align their strategies to the SDGs. It includes 'Business Tools' and 'Business

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[15] https://sdgsinaction.com/
[16] www.project-everyone.org
[17] http://sdgcompass.org/business-indicators/
[18] https://www.globalreporting.org/information/about-gri/Pages/default.aspx

Indicators' as linked to all the 17 SDGs. Examples of tools include the 'Gender Equality Principles self -assessment'[19] that assists companies in implementing and promoting gender equality. An example of a 'Business Indicator'[20] linked to the SDG target 5.4 of recognizing and valuing unpaid care work is the "average investment for childcare provisions or benefits (per working family)."

As requested by the GA Resolution 70/1 on 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the President of ECOSOC will convene the meetings of the STI forum once a year to discuss science, technology and innovation cooperation around thematic areas for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In May 2017, the theme of the Forum was "*Science, Technology and Innovation for a Changing World - Focus on SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, and 14*". H.E Macharia Kamau, former Co-Chair of the Open Working Group on Post 2015 is now Co-Chair of the STI Forum. At the Forum, participants highlighted the importance of recognizing indigenous knowledge as well as the importance of engaging women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) from an early age. In most African countries, women are using mobile phones to access information on health among others demonstrating the importance of technology. Additional emphasis should be placed on the 'International Girls in ICT Day'[21] which is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of April each year. Several efforts are underway to bridge the Gender Digital Divide in Africa. The Mastercard Foundation this year profiled young women using ICT to advance development in their countries [22].

The first UN World Data Forum[23] took place in January 2017 to explore ways in which the application of data can be used to measure global progress while at the same time act to inform evidence-based policy decisions on the 2030 Agenda.

Regional Reviews

Paras 80 and 81 of the Preamble address reviews at the regional level. Member States are encouraged to decide which body would be the best to convene at. In most regions, the UN regional commissions are seen as the most inclusive platform. In addition, regional and sub-regional organizations are invited to collaborate to ensure the success of the reviews. Like the global process, the regional reviews are also voluntary and informed by reports generated at the national level. The purpose of regional reviews is to prepare ahead of the global reviews at the HLPF as well as to provide a forum for peer learning and review of Agenda 2030.

In March 2015, African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development adopted a resolution which called upon the UN Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the

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[19] http://www.genderprinciples.org/assessment.php
[20] http://sdgcompass.org/business-indicators/
[21] http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/4/feature-international-girls-in-ict-day
[22] http://www.mastercardfdn.org/bridging-gender-digital-divide/
[23] https://undataforum.org/

African Union Commission and other partners to convene the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD) on a biennial basis. In the same resolution, the Ministers undertook to work in close collaboration with the national Governments to support the convening of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development; and called upon member States to scale up their commitment to support the Regional Forum. The other partners involved in the organization of the ARFSD were the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In 2016, the conclusions of the ARFSD served as a regional input to the High Level Political Forum.

In April 2016, Ministers requested the AUC, UNECA and the African Development Bank to develop an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework for the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. The recommendation was to have a harmonized set of goals, indicators and targets to measure implementation of the two agendas. Ministers also encouraged the AUC and UNECA to develop a common follow- up and review platform such as the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development. In the harmonization, it was discovered that 66 out of the 174 Agenda 2063 targets overlap with one 2030 Agenda target. The rest overlap with two or more 2030 Agenda targets.[24]

In 2017, the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD) took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 17 – 19 May under the theme: *"Ensuring inclusive and sustainable growth and prosperity for all."* This theme was well aligned with that of the 2017 HLPF, which was *"Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world"*. The specificity in the inclusion of 'inclusive and sustainable growth' in the African theme is based on the evidence that economic growth alone does not eradicate poverty. Similarly, there have been greater inequalities evidenced in countries even with recorded economic growth. Moreover, 7 out of the 10 most unequal countries in the world are in Africa.[25]

It was also agreed that the AUC, UNECA, AfDB and others will assist governments in implementing the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. This was particularly in relation to the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)[26] where states outline their contributions to achieving the Paris Agreement goal of keeping the global temperature rise well below 2 degree Celsius in this century. In 2018, Parties will take stock of the collective efforts in relation to progress towards the goal set in the Paris Agreement and to inform the preparation of NDCs. There will also be a global stock-take every 5 years to assess the collective progress towards achieving the Paris Agreement and to inform further individual actions by Parties.[27]

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[24] Presentation made at ARFSD 2017
[25] Background in the Registration form of the AFRSD 2017
[26] http://www4.unfccc.int/ndcregistry/Pages/All.aspx
[27] http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php

In the context of diminishing funds globally, there aren't enough resources to fund the full attainment of the SDGs. Countries/regions therefore have to rely on innovative financing mechanisms such as domestic resource mobilization. It should be highlighted that this should not be at the expense of those already marginalized e.g. taxing the informal sector while providing tax havens for multinationals. In Africa, countries need to implement the recommendations of the High- Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa as well as implement policies to combat corruption. Moreover, states should implement progressive tax systems that increase taxes on the wealthy and bring about an end to tax havens.

It is important to state that the targets under SDG 5 on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment are all captured in the groundbreaking document that is the Maputo Protocol as evidenced in the table below. **The success of implementing SDGs will be achieved if it is aligned with existing instruments such as Maputo Protocol instead of shifting attention and resources from the existing efforts towards universal ratification and implementation**.

SDG 5 Targets	*Articles in the Maputo Protocol*
5.1: End all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere	Article 2: Elimination of Discrimination against Women
5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation	Article 4: The Rights to Life, Integrity and Security of the Person
5.3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	Article 5: Elimination of Harmful Practices
5.4: Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate	Article 13: Economic and Social Welfare Rights
5.5: Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life	Article 9: Right to Participation in the Political and Decision – Making Process
5.6: Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences	Article 14: Health and Reproductive Rights
5A: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and	Article 13: Economic and Social Welfare Rights

control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws	Article 19: Right to Sustainable Development Article 21: Right to Inheritance
5B: Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women	Article 12: Right to Education and Training
5C: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels	Article 26: Implementation and Monitoring

Sub-regional Reviews

Harmonization of the SDG Targets into the SADC Gender Protocol

Africa has some of the world's most progressive instruments and policies as relates to gender equality. The most renowned document is the Maputo Protocol, an additional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights with specific reference to Women's Rights. At the sub – regional level, the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Gender Protocol follows in popularity. This is because it has been formatted into a Gender Barometer that SADC citizens can use to gauge implementation of the Protocol. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and Africa Agenda 2063, the SADC Gender Protocol has been revised to be in harmony with these frameworks. In addition, the Gender Protocol now also includes sections on sexual and reproductive health and rights and makes particular reference to the environment given the flooding in Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa due to deforestation. On SRHR, the countries in the region are working to end child marriage as well as conduct legal reforms to address access to safe abortion. With the harmonization of the 2030 Agenda and the Africa Agenda 2063, the SADC Gender Protocol which also includes provisions from CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action presents an all-inclusive framework which women from SADC countries can use to hold their governments accountable. Moreover, it presents a good practice which can be emulated in the other sub-regions in Africa. To monitor its implementation, women in SADC can engage in the following:

✓ Engage Ministries of Gender in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi who are working on developing their own Gender Barometers to ensure all targets are included and measured;

✓ Participate at the SADC Summit where all Gender Ministries are present. During the Summit, CSO are given an observer seat and can record statements linked to implementation of the Gender Protocol. Similarly, WROs can participate in the SADC Council of NGOs that takes place in the margins of the SADC Summit;

✓ Conduct advocacy at the SADC Parliamentary Forum on implementation of Goal 5 as well as gender targets within other goals. Currently, the Chair of the Women's Caucus is from Malawi;

✓ Participate in the Committees put in place by the SADC Secretariat Directorate to raise issue specific matters on gender equality. There is a Committee on Trade, Regional Integration, Water and Sanitation among others.

✓ Network and coordinate activities within the SADC Gender Protocol Alliance to be more effective as CSO groups.

National Reviews

In Para 79 of the Preamble member states are encouraged "to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels which are country-led and country-driven. Such reviews should draw on contributions from indigenous peoples, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders, in line with national circumstances, policies and priorities. National parliaments as well as other institutions can also support these processes."

The national level could perhaps inform the most critical level of intervention by WROs. This and the sub-national level afford WROs the opportunity to ensure that the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda indeed 'Leaves No One Behind' – paying special attention to the needs of the most marginalized who have previously been left out insofar as access to their rights is concerned. This could manifest in denial of services or lack of access, lack of equal opportunities and invisibility when data is collected.

With this in mind, a key body/department to engage with is the National Statistics Offices that is mandated to coordinate the collection of data in Demographic Health Surveys. Moreover, WROs can also engage with Line Ministries in charge of Planning. In some countries, specialized agencies have been designated to take lead in the harmonization of the SDGs and National Development Plans. In as much as the 2030 Agenda is universal, it requires implementation at the sub-national and national level. Member States were therefore given carte blanche to decide their own priorities and develop national plans with the targets most appropriate for their contexts.

> **Egypt** – National statistical agency, CAPMAS, established an SDG Coordination Unit to contextualize and set the national indicator framework necessary to monitor and track Egypt's progress of SDGs.
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> **Mauritania** – Facilitated a rapid integrated SDG assessment of its Strategic Framework to Fight against Poverty to inform the formulation of Mauritania's upcoming Strategy of Accelerated Growth and Shared Prosperity for the period 2016-2030, finding that 92 targets are currently prioritized.
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> **Morocco** – Thirty-five high-level panelists from Parliament along with other agencies and stakeholders probed collectively into implementation challenges in the arenas of policy coherence, adequate financing, and monitoring and evaluation systems.
>
> Source - **Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** *Reference Guide to UN Country Teams*

Data collection

Given the ambitious and transformative nature of the SDGs, little or no data exists for the proposed 230 indicators of the SDGs[28]. This as elaborated on in the Women Major Group Position Paper on HLPF provides an incomplete picture for women and girls. As evidenced in the MDGs, and as well illustrated by Economist G.K. Galbraith said "if it is not counted, it tends not to be noticed." WROs therefore should call upon Government bodies and UN Agencies to collect data and disaggregate it by sex, age, ability, ethnicity, class, location, income/wealth and other relevant characteristics so as to ensure that human beings in all their diversity are 'noticed' therefore avoiding discrimination and exclusion.

There is also need to ensure that the data collected is of high quality, accessible and timely. WROs are advocating for the development and use of gender-responsive tools to not only collect the data but also analyze and report on implementation progress. The collected, disaggregated, analyzed and well documented data must be used to inform and influence policies and processes at national level. In some cases, citizen generated data is the only

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[28] https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/

available data to reflect the indicators linked to gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment.

Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs)

As highlighted earlier in the HLPF section of this document, VNRs are voluntary and are driven mostly by the offices/departments/ministries working on planning. In 2016, it was noted that the process of a country undertaking a VNR can enhance mainstreaming and implementation of the 2030 Agenda (UNOSD 2016).

Uganda – It was one of the first countries to report to the HLPF in 2016. While reviewing the country's National Development Plan II (2015/16 to 2019/20) as linked to the Country's Vision 2040, Uganda mainstreamed the SDGs by incorporating SDG targets adjusted to national circumstances. To strengthen the implementation of the plan, Uganda in its report to the HLPF said it will seek to have national and local level consultations; high-level policy dialogue engagements; IEC campaigns and an engagement with the private sector. It was flagged that Uganda's national statistical framework only contains 80 indicators with data readily available. WROs can therefore work with existing structures to develop and integrate the missing indicators especially those linked with gender equality. In Uganda, the SDG implementation will be monitored, evaluated and reported through the national standard indicator framework that builds on the national monitoring and evaluation policy, and on the integrated monitoring and evaluation strategy. WROs can also follow up on the efficiency/efficacy of the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit that was to be established to strengthen implementation of the SDGs.

3. Main Messages in the 2017 Voluntary National Reports (VNRs)

At the HLPF in July, seven African countries presented their national reports. The section below highlights some of the main messages presented online in preparation for the HLPF as well as opportunities where WROs can follow up at national level.

Benin

Benin like other African countries has developed a roadmap for the implementation of the SDGs. Benin has undertaken the MAPS exercise that is provided by the UN System in countries to Mainstream, Accelerate and provide Policy Support so as to achieve the SDGs. To create greater awareness of the SDGs in-country, several awareness raising workshops were held with different constituencies including youth and women groups, the media and parliamentarians. In addition, the Rapid Integrated Policy Assessment revealed that 60 – 70% of the SDG targets are included in national plans and strategies.

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=522&menu=3170

Botswana

The national statistics office, Statistics Botswana has mapped all the SDGs indicators relevant and measurable in Botswana and aligned them to the country's vision 2036, the National Development Plan (NDP 11) and the AU Agenda 2063. For greater ownership, the SDGs have also been translated into local language by civil society. The implementation of the SDGs will be coordinated by the National Steering Committee (NSC) which consists of state and non-state actors. This Committee will be assisted by a Technical Task Force (TTF) under the leadership of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. WROs should familiarize themselves with the roadmap that has been developed on SDGs and ensure inclusion in both the NSC and TTF.

Source:https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=487&menu=3170

Ethiopia

The SDGs have been mainstreamed into the Second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II) which spans the period 2015/16 – 2019/20. The statistics body mandated to collect data in Ethiopia is the Central Statistics Agency. As concerns SDG5, Ethiopia has reported that women jointly with their spouses and women headed households have received second degree entitlement on rural land ownership. WROs can advocate for the right of women to access and own land regardless of their marital status. They can also use the GTP II as the tool for monitoring implementation of the SDGs.

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=368&menu=3170

Kenya

Kenya is in the process of preparing the third Medium Term Plan (2018 – 2022) of the Vision 2030 which will mainstream the SDGs and AU Agenda 2063. In preparation for this, The Kenya

National Bureau of Statistics undertook an indicator mapping and identified 128 indicators which could be measured within 1-2 years given available data or data that can be produced. SDGs implementation is steered by an Inter-Agency Technical Committee with representation from line Ministries as well as CSOs and Private Sector. Going forth, WROs can join and participate in the County Dialogues hosted by SDG Forum Kenya. Similarly, WROs can contribute to the development of the Third Medium Term Plan and County Integrated Development Plans through participation in County Stakeholders Meetings. Lastly, WROs can monitor the review of the National Statistical System (NSS) so as to collect reliable and disaggregated data.

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=372&menu=3170

Togo

Togo has launched the process of developing its national development plan to succeed the former plan that was focused on accelerated growth and employment. The new plan which will run from 2018 – 2022 will serve as a basis for the integration of SDGs. In preparation for this, objectives have been defined and targets have been prioritized. The commitments made by Togo at the 21st Conference of the Parties held in Paris for the global response to the threat of climate change and the fight against poverty will also be included.

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=400&menu=3170

Nigeria

To coordinate the policies and strategies on the SDGs, Nigeria has the office of a Senior Special Assistant to the President (SSAP) on SDGs. Two select Committees on SDGs have also been established in the Senate and the House of Representatives. Of all the African countries making their presentations at the HLPF in 2017, Nigeria is the only country that has appointed a female focal point in-charge of SDGs implementation. WROs in Nigeria have been participating in the consultations to prepare the VNR through the project 'Women CSOs Networking to Realize the Sustainable Development Goals' also known as "Women 2030". The coalition comprises of global and regional women networks: Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF International), Women Environmental Programme (WEP), Global Forest Coalition (GFC), Gender and Water Alliance (GWA) and the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD). Locally, they are facilitated by Echoes of Women in Africa Initiatives (ECOWA) and WRAHP. At the sub – county level, a focus group discussion was carried out on Goal 5 in Lagos State by ECOWA. The next steps highlighted in the main messages include resource mobilization especially in curbing illicit financial flows, technology transfer and capacity building. It is therefore imperative for WROs to engage government on the recommendations of the High-Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows.

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=524&menu=3170

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has committed to implementing all the SDGs with an emphasis on SDGs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13 and 17. A Steering Committee has been formed to provide overall guidance on implementation of the SDGs. This is chaired by the Chief Secretary to the President and

comprises of all line Ministry Permanent Secretaries. Additionally, A Technical Committee was formed to provide technical guidance. This is supported by Thematic Clusters led by the Ministry of Macroeconomic Planning and Investment Promotion. In preparation for the HLPF in July, a group of WROs, The Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe met and agreed to prepare a shadow report to the VNR that will be presented by government. WROs can participate in implementation by: - Monitoring the enhancement of the Statistical Agency to capture data demands; build capacities of citizens so as to align sub-national strategies to the national plan; monitor the budget especially on SDG 5 implementation and follow up on the Financing for Development recommendations. Joint meeting could be held with WROs in Nigeria especially on domestic resource mobilization to share lessons and experiences. A great opportunity also exists in the review of the Constitution to ensure that it addresses the empowerment of all women and girls.

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=503&menu=3170

4. Country reporting

In addition to the VNRs, country reports will be presented at the HLPF that track national progress as well as provide baselines where no data existed. Country reports also link in with the follow up and review processes of other UN major conferences and functional commissions, at the global, regional and national levels.

Use of mobile technology to monitor implementation of specific SDGs.

> **Zambia M-WASH:** "Zambia noted the use of M-WASH, a mobile/web-based monitoring, evaluation and reporting system that covers 1.7 million people and advances accountability by making water and sanitation data transparent. The technological component inspires competition among districts by publishing results and maps that demonstrate which districts and provinces are making the most progress towards improved access to water and sanitation." (UNDG 2015, p 19)

Institutional mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the SDGs

In most cases, new offices/departments have been proposed/created to monitor the implementation of the SDGs. Sierra Leone which also presented in 2016 reported that the SDGs were integrated into their 2016 National Budget. The SDGs have been aligned to the eight pillars of Sierra Leone's third-generation poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSPIII), also called the Agenda for Prosperity (A4P) 2013-2018. It adds that a 'Pillar Working Groups (PWGs)' of the A4P will be modified to capture technical follow-ups and reporting on the SDGs within the pillars, and that a draft set of SDG indicators specific to Sierra Leone has been formulated.

> **Sierra Leone** - At the institutional level, the summary highlights a proposal for a Presidential Board on the SDGs (PBS) at the highest policy and political level to provide overall policy and strategic guidance to the implementation of the SDGs. The PBS would be chaired by the Sierra Leone President, with members from the Office of the President, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC), the Ministry of Information and Communication, and the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC). There will also be a Ministerial Committee on the SDGs (MCS) to provide operational guidance to the SDGs process to line ministries, departments and agencies at the central and local levels, and other stakeholders such as civil society organizations, the private sector, the media and the research community. The MCS would include MoFED, MFAIC, Statistics Sierra Leone, the Open Government Initiative/Partnership (OGI/P) and Strategy and Policy Unit (SPU) in the Office of the President, and other ministries, departments and agencies.
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> Source: http://sdg.iisd.org/news/sierra-leone-uganda-highlight-sdg-implementation-steps-in-advance-of-vnrs/

5. Opportunities for Women Rights Organizations (WROs) to monitor SDG implementation

Global level
- African WROs should join groups such as the Women Major Groups to keep abreast of SDG monitoring at the global level.
- Where possible, attend the HLPF held annually in NYC and participate/speak in Expert Panels during the Thematic reviews as well as the VNR Caucuses which provide an opportunity to interact with governments and UN Agencies on implementation of the SDGs.
- Convene side events at the HLPF to present spotlight reports and shadow reports developed to respond to the VNRs
- Utilize the SDG Index as a source of data to measure your country's rating as linked to the SDGs.
- Utilize the SDGs in Action App to create or join global actions on implementation of Goal 5 and other gender related targets in the goals.
- Review the Inaugural Report by the Inter- Agency Task force on Financing for Development to monitor the commitments under gender equality as well as the recommendations made
- Participate at the UN World Data Forum in calling for quality, accessible and disaggregated data

Regional level

- Build partnerships with regional institutions convening the ARFD including UNECA, AUC among others
- Participate and lobby policymakers attending the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development hosted at the ECA annually ahead of the HLPF
- Enhance collaboration among WROs in Africa and with UN Women to work together towards achieving common objectives
- Participate in reviews of the Beijing Declaration and PfA as well as ICPD reviews as human rights frameworks with a focus on gender equality and women's rights
- WROs should tailor advocacy messages/material that demonstrate linkages between the Maputo Protocol and targets under SDG 5
- Review the 10- year Implementation Framework on Agenda 2063 to map out targets on GEWE

At the **sub-regional level**, WROs from other sub-regions can learn from the experiences of the Southern Africa WROs in harmonizing the Gender Protocol to reflect SDG targets. At the first Eastern African Sub-Regional Women's Colloquium on SDGs, it was discussed that the East African Commission Gender and Development Barometer will be revised to include SDG targets. For more information on this, kindly contact The Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative for the advancement of Women (EASSI).

6. The Role of Women's Rights Organizations

Universality, Integration and indivisibility

The core principles of the 2030 Agenda are universality, integration and indivisibility, leaving no one behind, human rights and national ownership. WROs should monitor implementation of the SDGs so that governments can view them as indivisible and interrelated. This is to ensure that the social and environmental goals are implemented as well as the economic goals. WROs should also seek partnership with groups that can help advance the empowerment of women and girls. This can include traditional partners and non–traditional partners. Trade Unions for example could be an ally in advocating for decent work for women.

Leaving No One Behind

"To address the needs of 'those left behind', we first need to know who they are.[29]" Women as a homogenous entity have for some time been considered as a marginalized group. However, certain populations of women face increased vulnerabilities and it is important for WROs to advocate for all women in totality. Examples include but are not limited to - Indigenous women, women with disabilities, women of varied sexual orientations and identities, young women, women living with HIV, stateless and forcibly displaced women. Goal 5 should therefore be advocated for as written to include the empowerment of all women and girls everywhere. WROs should also not work in isolation but engage other bodies such as National Human Rights Institutions which have long histories in advocating for the rights of vulnerable groups.

National Ownership

National ownership as a critical principle of the 2030 Agenda means that implementation is largely state-driven. It is therefore imperative for WROs to familiarize themselves with the state body mandated to coordinate SDG implementation, call for an inclusive process in the generation of reports and participate in content generation. Partnership with government should not be a one-off engagement but a sustained relationship often with challenges where relationships with government are tough to establish. Similarly, WROs have to engage with national statistical bodies mandated to collect data so as to demonstrate who is left behind. It is equally critical for WROs to follow the budget processes in-country so as to advocate for resources towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

WROs should continuously advocate for data that is of good quality, is accessible to citizens, is reliable and disaggregated. Para 125 of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in addition to highlighting the important role of national statistical systems calls for data and analysis from civil society, academia and the private sector. While we generally agree that it is not the role of WROs to collect data, it is our role to analyze it so as to reveal key gaps in implementation of the goals. WROs can also work in partnership with other organizations to connect data and action. An example of this partnership is 'Equal Measures 2030'[30] of which FEMNET is a member. This

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[29] ODI report on the SDGs - www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odiAassets/publicationsAopinionAfiles/9938.pdf.
[30] Equalmeasures2030.org

partnership aims to create a data tracking tool to monitor targets and indicators that would ensure that no woman or girl is invisible as we seek to deliver the 2030 Agenda.

Raising awareness and working with allies

Awareness creation is key in generating interest from other citizens to hold governments accountable to fulfilling the SDGs. WROs can generate scorecards to demonstrate progress of implementation as well as build capacities of citizens to understand the SDGs.

The media also plays a powerful role in outreach and can bring in people who would otherwise have been overlooked. Moreover, the media can reach out to more audiences therefore hastening the dissemination of messages. WROs can develop factsheets on the SDGs and share with media agencies so as to create greater awareness of the SDGs. These factsheets can be translated into local languages and also manipulated to create short messages for awareness raising through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Recognizing the importance of the media, FEMNET seeks to create a Pan African Women in Media Association with members from Uganda (UMWA), Tanzania (TAMWA), Kenya (AMWIK) and Zambia (ZAMWA). This partnership will work with the media, redefining their role in transformation as well as in playing the watchdog role in tracking implementation of the SDGs. Moreover, the media will amplify the voices and faces of women thus making visible the role of women and girls in development.

WROs should also build/sustain relationships with opinion leaders who possess influence in the community given that SDG implementation should predominantly take place at local level for meaningful change. This includes working with religious leaders, youth movements and creative artists among others to spread the message as ambassadors. An initiative that seeks to build allies from individuals and organizations supporting SDG 5 is the 'Deliver for Good Campaign'[31]. It is a global push that applies a gender lens to the SDGs and promotes 12 critical investments that have the potential to bring about social change. One of the key lessons learned from the success of women's engagement during the Open Working Groups sessions was that breaking down of silos helped to advance further the key ask of a gender standalone goal.

WROs can also work with and appoint SDG champions. In 2016 the UN Secretary General appointed a group of 17 eminent persons[32] to support him to generate momentum and commitment to achieve the SDGs by 2030 among them were Ms. Leymah Gbowee, Director, Gbowee Peace Foundation , Mrs. Graça Machel, President, Foundation for Community Development and Ms. Alaa Murabit, Founder, The Voice of Libyan Women.

Continued partnership with gender machineries is critical in going forward. UN Women supports states to conduct gender-responsive budgeting as a tool to realize commitments to women's rights. Additionally, UN Women in conjunction with other UN Agencies seeks to collect data that makes gender issues visible so as to influence policies.

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[31] http://womendeliver.org/deliver-for-good/
[32] http://deliver2030.org/?p=6700

7. Conclusion

WROs in Africa were well organized in the lead up to the development of the SDGs (also known as Post 2015 process). In the period leading up to 2030, it is imperative that WROs sustain their momentum and partnerships across various levels to ensure implementation of the SDGs. The focus will predominantly be at the local levels therefore demanding greater coordination at sub-national and national levels. There is a wealth of information online that can be shared for adaptation to local contexts. Organizations such as FEMNET and UN Women are vital to create linkages at regional and global level and provide additional support in understanding the processes and opportunities for engagement.

In addition to the opportunities provided above in engagement at different levels, WROs in Africa should ensure that they collectively embark on the following priorities in the coming years: -

- Continuously hold governments accountable to achievement of Goal 5 and gender targets in the other goals;
- Advocate for financing for SDGs through innovative financing mechanisms;
- Continue to build alliances and strengthen the movement through cross-sectional movement building;
- Advocate for quality data collection that is representative of the various sub-sets of women;
- Fight against ALL forms of inequality;
- Tirelessly advocate for the right to expression, association and assembly secured through civic space in the current context of fundamentalism.[33]

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[33] More information on the priorities is outlined in the output of the African Women's Conference hosted by FEMNET in May 2017.