

Economic Commission for Africa

Introduction

Since September 2014, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has held and participated in several significant meetings and was involved in creating and publishing key documents related to development on the African continent. Some of these meetings discussed in this update include the African Development Forum and the African Economic Conference. With key partners including the African Union (AU), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the United Nations (UN) Development Programme (UNDP), ECA also published the 2014 Economic Report on Africa (ERA) and the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2014 Report, and will soon publish the 2015 ERA. These documents and events provide analysis to the economic situation of the African continent, and as well as future goals related to the post-2015 development agenda.

Recent Activities

In October 2014, Morocco hosted the Ninth African Development Forum (ADF).¹ Through this forum organized by ECA, African leaders discuss, plan, and initiate strategies to further African development.² The Ninth Forum discussed the topic of “Innovative financing for Africa's transformation.”³ Considering electric power alone, Africa is currently facing a debt of \$31 billion, and with the recent world economic crisis, some funds meant to support African development have been cut; this highlights the need for the recent forum’s discussion.⁴ The Forum also created the African Social Development Index (ASDI) to improve social policies concerning human exclusion.⁵ This ECA index analyzes the reduction of exclusion of individuals in relation to health, education, employment, and income.⁶ The ASDI will also assist the region in assessing the effects of social exclusion among the African Member States and population.⁷

Another event that occurred in 2014 was the Ninth African Economic Conference (AEC).⁸ This conference is organized through a partnership between ECA, AfDB, and UNDP, and was attended by global country and business leaders, academics, economists, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).⁹ The 2014 conference discussed the development of the AU’s Agenda 2063 and the Common African Position (CAP) on the post-2015 development agenda.¹⁰ The AU’s Agenda 2063 is an approach initiated by the AU and supported by ECA that aims in developing an African agenda for the next 50 years.¹¹ The objectives of the conference included the promotion of knowledge management in order to create better policies; the sharing of ideas among researchers and policymakers; research improvement of African economic development issues; and the provision of opportunities for researchers to promote ideas and findings.¹² The conference also discussed the sharing of development knowledge among African countries, and the assistance and preparation that Member States can give to the youth in order to help them enter the job market and support the continent’s peace agenda.¹³

The CAP and the AU’s Agenda 2063 were also addressed during the 69th session of the General Assembly (GA) in 2014.¹⁴ African leaders expressed their concerns in ensuring that the CAP is included in the post-2015 development agenda.¹⁵ Furthermore, at the 15 December AU-Regional Economic Communities-ECA-AfDB Coordination Meeting of the Committee of Ministers, it was discussed that Agenda 2063 needs to include African economic

¹ UN ECA, *Morocco to host the 9th Africa Development Forum*, 2014.

² UN ECA, *Ninth African Development Forum: Innovative financing for Africa’s transformation*, 2014, p. 3.

³ UN ECA, *Morocco to host the 9th Africa Development Forum*, 2014.

⁴ UN ECA, *Ninth African Development Forum: Innovative financing for Africa’s transformation*, 2014, p. 1.

⁵ UN ECA, *ECA launches Innovative tool to boost assessment of inclusive development in Africa*, 2014.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ AfDB Group, *AEC 2014: The 9th African Economic Conference: 1st day (Addis Ababa)*, 2014.

⁹ African Economic Conference, *Investing in people-centred innovation and technology essential to Africa's development*, 2014.

¹⁰ UN ECA, *Ninth African Development Forum: Innovative financing for Africa’s transformation*, 2014, p. 3.

¹¹ African Union, *African Union Agenda 2063: A Shared Strategic Framework for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development*, 2013.

¹² African Economic Conference, *Investing in people-centred innovation and technology essential to Africa's development*, 2014.

¹³ AfDB Group, *Knowledge and Innovation Critical for Africa’s Transformation*, 2014.

¹⁴ UN News Centre, *Africa’s concerns must figure high in new development agenda, African leaders tell UN*, 2014.

¹⁵ Ibid.

integration, recovery from the Ebola epidemic, and collaboration among African nations in order to better develop programs for infrastructure, trade and transportation.¹⁶

The annual consideration of the landmark New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), held in October 2014, further discussed improving Africa's infrastructure in order to diversify and strengthen Africa's economy.¹⁷ Other issues were also debated, such as the fight against malaria and the need for more hydropower dams and transmission lines.¹⁸ The Africa Regional Integration Index is an additional resource created in November by the AfDB, AU, and ECA.¹⁹ This Index is a monitoring system that aims in aiding regional integration in the continent.²⁰ It will help accomplish this by identifying integration discrepancies in Africa to assist with policy making that best fulfills regional integration objectives.²¹

Recent Policy Outcomes

In the spring of 2014, ECA produced the 2014 Economic Report on Africa (ERA) that was later launched by the Chatham House in September 2014; this report focuses on developing economic strategies that will help African Member States in their ability to address market failures.²² The report contains recommendations for Member States in adopting industrial policies applicable for different regions of Africa and in building institutions that will create and develop these policies.²³ Another recommendation included adopting trade policies that assists in overcoming challenges like market failure and export competition.²⁴ In March 2015, ECA will release the new 2015 ERA.²⁵ This report will also emphasize industrialization and structural transformations, similar to previous editions.²⁶ It will specifically highlight the importance of trading and improving trade policies among African countries for accelerating the industrialization in Africa.²⁷ In addition, in January 2015, ECA launched a report titled "Socio-Economic Impacts of the Ebola on Africa."²⁸ This report raises the knowledge of the social-economic impacts that the Ebola virus has on the lives of those that are affected.²⁹

The MDG 2014 Report on "Assessing Progress in Africa Toward the Millennium Development Goals" is another key document recently published by ECA, in conjunction with the AU, AfDB, and UNDP.³⁰ This report discusses the progress of African Member States towards achieving the MDGs, and also considers the CAP.³¹ One goal discussed in this document includes the eradication of poverty, which despite improvement in recent years, will not be achieved by 2015.³² Even though Africa has had a major decrease in poverty rates, Member States in areas such as the Sub-Saharan still face difficulties, including the recent outbreak of Ebola in Western Africa.³³ Gender equality is an area that Africa has achieved great improvements within, especially in the number of girls in primary school; however, policies that promote gender equality are still new, and the report recommends the creation of better policies that address gender discrimination in schools, equal economic rights, opportunities, and more women participating in decision-making activities.³⁴ The CAP is also discussed in the MDG 2014 Report.³⁵ To achieve the potential of African economic development, unity, and peace by 2063, the MDG 2014 report discussed the need for industrialization, infrastructure transformation, improvements in trade policies, and better management of natural

¹⁶ UN ECA, *Agenda 2063 needs to be credible, realistic and technically sound to succeed*, 2014.

¹⁷ UN News Centre, *Erasing infrastructure deficit key to Africa's growth, development – UN official*, 2014.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ UN ECA, *Continent prepares for the launch of the Africa Regional Integration Index*, 2014.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² UN ECA, *2014 Economic Report on Africa to be Launched in London*, 2014.

²³ UN ECA, *Launch of the Economic Report on Africa in Abidjan*, 2014.

²⁴ UN ECA, *Forthcoming Economic Report on Africa to tackle trade and industrialization*, 2014.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ UN ECA, *Launch of the Study on the Socio-Economic Impacts of the Ebola Virus Disease on Africa*, 2014.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ UN ECA, *Forthcoming Economic Report on Africa to tackle trade and industrialization*, 2014.

³¹ UN ECA, *MDG 2014 Report: Assessing progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals*, 2014, p. vii.

³² Ibid., p. 11.

³³ AfDB Group, *Boosting crisis response and financing key for Africa's continued progress*, 2014.

³⁴ UN ECA, *MDG 2014 Report: Assessing progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals*, 2014, p. 55.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 104.

resources.³⁶ Promotion of innovation in technology in Africa, peace and security, and financing for better implementation of the agenda are also considered significant.³⁷

Implementation of Economic Commission for Africa Outcomes

ECA focuses in seven main areas of work: macroeconomic policy, social development, regional integration and trade, natural resource management, innovation and technology, gender, and governance.³⁸ Within these areas, ECA collects and analyzes data, thus producing economic reports and surveys.³⁹ The Commission provides advocacy and advisory in policy-making, helping improve the economic plans of Member States, such as in regional trade.⁴⁰ The committee also promotes programs and organizes forums and conferences to gather leaders and researchers for them to share, debate ideas, created innovative initiatives.⁴¹ Additionally, ECA works to provide research and tools that will help in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and incorporating this into sustainable development.⁴² ECA's Strategic Planning & Operational Quality Division and Public Information and Knowledge Management Division assist in creating and providing knowledge material for ECA, and all ECA divisions are supported by the ECA Partnerships Office and the Joint Secretariat Support Office between ECA, AU Commission, and the AfDB.⁴³ As a regional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), ECA reports to the Council each year, and makes recommendations on potential actions in relation to Africa.⁴⁴

Conclusion

As the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda approaches, the Economic Commission for Africa has discussed many significant issues and is preparing to explore important topics further. The recent meetings and documents of ECA have promoted pertinent issues in Africa, but much more still remains to be done. The economic situation in Africa is still challenging, requiring the continual efforts of ECA and other UN and non-UN bodies worldwide in order to assist with the development of the continent.

³⁶ UN ECA, *MDG 2014 Report: Assessing progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals*, 2014, p. 108.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 108, 118, 119.

³⁸ UN ECA, *Overview*.

³⁹ UN ECA, *About Macroeconomic Policy*.

⁴⁰ UN ECA, *About Regional Integration and Trade*.

⁴¹ UN ECA, *Overview*.

⁴² UN ECA, *About Gender*.

⁴³ UN ECA, *Overview*.

⁴⁴ UN ECOSOC, *Terms of Reference of the Economic Commission for Africa*, 1958.

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African Union. (2014). *Common African Position (CAP) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda* [Report]. Retrieved 8 January 2015 from: <http://www.nepad.org/sites/default/files/Common%20African%20Position-%20ENG%20final.pdf>

This document is the African Union's statement on the post-2015 development agenda released in 2014. The document discusses possible goals focused on Africa to be implemented in the agenda such as eradicating poverty, increasing Africa's infrastructure, and better financing the post-2015 development agenda. The document shows the involvement of the AU in fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals and the Union's focus on the post-2015 agenda. It is a great resource for delegates for information not only on the developing post-2015 agenda, but also on the more specific needs of the continent.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (n.d.). *Post 2015 Development Agenda* [Website]. Retrieved 5 January 2015 from: <http://www.uneca.org/post2015>

This is a useful ECA resource for delegates that are researching key documents and events concerning the post-2015 development agenda. The website contains several links to documents such as reports, speeches, and messages that involve the post-2015 development agenda. These documents contain further discussions of the work needed in achieving the MDGs and Africa's major topics to be discussed in the post-2015 development agenda. It is a great place for learning more about this topic and finding primary resources about the development agenda.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2014). *2014 Economic Report on Africa to be Launched in London* [Press Release]. Retrieved 8 January 2015 from: <http://www.uneca.org/media-centre/stories/2014-economic-report-africa-be-launched-london#.VLBLvivF9jS>

The 2014 Economic Report on Africa (ERA) is a valuable source published by ECA and the AU concerning the economic status of Africa in 2014, and this press release discusses the launch of the 2014 ERA. The report features important areas of focus within the African continent, including the creation of innovative policies that will facilitate trade among African countries in order to help industrialization. This document is a great resource on Africa's economic development and in potential improvements for access to energy and financing the transformation of the continent.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2014). *MDG 2014 Report: Assessing progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals*. Retrieved 6 January 2015 from:

http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/MDG_Report_2014_11_2014.pdf

The MDG 2014 Report is a report created by jointly by ECA, AU, AfDB, and UNDP. This document discusses the MDGs in extensive detail, highlighting each of the MDGs in relation to what has been achieved and what still needs to be accomplished. Some of the issues here include the urgency of creating policies that will promote gender equality; better management of the continent's natural resource; strengthening Africa's economy in order to help eradicate poverty; improving health for mothers; and approaching the spread of malaria, HIV/AIDS, and Ebola. The document is a step towards implementing Africa's interests and needs in the post-2015 agenda.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2014). *Ninth African Development Forum: Innovative financing for Africa's transformation (ECA/ADF/9/Inf.1)* [Concept Note]. Retrieved 7 January 2015 from:

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---africa/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_310407.pdf

This document contains information concerning the Ninth African Development Forum that occurred in October of 2014. The document highlights the objective of the forum and the topics that were discussed and debated. It is a great resource for delegates to use in order to prepare for the conference as the document contains the most recent actions of ECA, especially concerning financing for African development.

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United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2014, November 24). *Continent prepares for the launch of the Africa Regional Integration Index* [Article]. Retrieved 28 January 2015 from: <http://www.uneca.org/media-centre/stories/continent-prepares-launch-africa-regional-integration-index#.VMY97mjF8eH>

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I. Innovative Financing for Africa's Transformation

Introduction

The world is currently facing the 2015 deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that have the common aim for the alleviation of poverty around the globe.⁴⁵ The international community has met progress in some areas in relation to the MDGs; however, there is much to be accomplished to reduce poverty and achieve development goals.⁴⁶ Several Member States still experience a funding gap and lack of credit history and investors' confidence in the prospective success of investments.⁴⁷ Developing countries, including those in Africa, need innovative financing mechanisms.⁴⁸ On its way towards transformation, the continent will require up to \$40-\$60 billion of financing per year.⁴⁹ With high financial needs, African Member States often turn to external loans, while they could take advantage of foreign direct investment, remittances, and official development assistance (ODA).⁵⁰

Throughout the end of 2014, the United Nations (UN) released a number of reports on the achieved results and the future post-2015 development agenda. One of these key documents is the recent Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on "The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet," which proposes a universal agenda for sustainable development for the next 15 years.⁵¹ The report considers both the positive and negative experience of the international community on the way to sustainable development during past years and presents the up-to-date frame for actions in order to ensure that promised actions are accomplished.⁵² The new development agenda requires actions in the sphere of financing, technology and investments in sustainable development capacities, which are the means of agenda implementation.⁵³

From 13-17 October 2014, an "Africa Week" organized by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in cooperation with the African Union (AU) New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism, was held at the UN Headquarters as a series of high-level discussions and events focused on actions aimed at implementation of Agenda 2063, the AU's plan for African development by the named date.⁵⁴ On 30 November 2014, following the roadmap proposed by the Financing for Development Office, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) posted the unedited draft report "Financing Sustainable Development: Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through Effective Investment Strategies and Partnerships," which was open for public consultation until January 2015.⁵⁵ This draft report provides a roadmap for the financing of sustainable development in preparation for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in July 2015.⁵⁶ Focusing on a wide range of financial issues, such as public-private partnerships, ODA, and economic regulations, the SDSN report aims to present initial recommendations to be discussed later at the conference.⁵⁷

⁴⁵ UN General Assembly, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/55/L.2)*, 2000.

⁴⁶ The World Bank, *Innovative Financing for Development*, 2009.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ UN ECA, *Ninth African Development Forum: Domestic Resource Mobilization*, 2014.

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⁵¹ UN General Assembly, *The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet: Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda (A/69/700)*, 2014.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ African Union, *About Agenda 2063*, 2013.

⁵⁵ UNSDSN, *Financing Sustainable Development: Implementing the SDGs through Effective Investment Strategies and Partnerships*, 2014.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Recent Developments

Regional Events on Financing and Development

In October 2014, preparations began for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, with its scope defined by General Assembly (GA) resolutions 68/204 and 68/279.⁵⁸ Since October, the GA has held two substantive informal sessions, from 10-13 November and 19-12 December 2014.⁵⁹ The Conference is anticipated to result in an outcome document, which will support and make valuable contributions to the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.⁶⁰ In addition, the Second UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) was held in November 2014 in order to develop a new roadmap aiming to determine the development paradigm for the 32 LLDCs for the coming years.⁶¹ The Conference resulted in the adoption of a ten-year action-plan for LLDCs, the *Vienna Programme of Action*.⁶² This outcome document stressed the urgent need for an effective and innovative action programme to assist developing countries in achieving the fundamental transformation of their economies and in furthering sustainable growth.⁶³

One of the noticeable events of recent months is the Ninth African Development Forum, which was on the theme of “Innovative Financing for Africa’s Transformation.”⁶⁴ The Forum focused on ways of mobilizing domestic capital in order to articulate the national development agenda, raise the national ownership of public policy and scale down the risk of volatility related to external funding.⁶⁵ Forum participants emphasized that traditional solutions in funding are no longer relevant to the continent’s needs, which currently seek for innovative development mechanisms in relation to financing development opportunities.⁶⁶ In the discussions, several concerns were voiced on significant issues in Africa: the large amount of transactions that occur outside the taxation system, the need of private sector investments, public-private partnerships, and recourse to international sources of funds like Eurobonds.⁶⁷ As the outcome document of the Forum, the *Marrakech Consensus Statement* was adopted.⁶⁸

Key scenarios for upcoming decades, and ways to shape Africa’s future for its transformation, became the major issues discussed by the panelists at the African Economic Conference 2014 held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in November 2014.⁶⁹ According to panelists, in order to foster the development of the continent, it is important to focus on people-centered innovation and technology, as well as education.⁷⁰ Doing so will contribute to dynamic, intellectual youth that can help build the future of African Member States.⁷¹ In 2015, two important summits will be held and will determine the scheme of international cooperation for upcoming years: the Third Conference on Financing for Development in July and the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda by the UN in September.⁷²

⁵⁸ UN General Assembly, *Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development (A/RES/68/204)*, 2013; UN General Assembly, *Modalities for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development*, (A/RES/68/279), 2014.

⁵⁹ UN General Assembly, *Preparatory Process for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, First round of Substantive Informal Sessions (10-13 November 2014)*, 2014; UN General Assembly, *Preparatory Process for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, Second round of Substantive Informal Sessions (9 – 12 December 2014)*, 2014.

⁶⁰ UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service, *Preparations begin for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2014.

⁶¹ Second UN Conference on LLDC, *We must recognise the special needs of landlocked developing countries*, 2014.

⁶² UN General Assembly, *Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 (A/CONF.225/L.1)*, 2014.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ UN ECA, *Ninth African Development Forum: Overview*, 2014.

⁶⁵ Ibid.; UN ECA, *Ninth African Development Forum: Domestic Resource Mobilization*, 2014.

⁶⁶ UN ECA, *African Presidents, Ministers, attend the ninth African Development Forum in Morocco*, 2014.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ninth African Development Forum, *Marrakech Consensus*, 2014.

⁶⁹ UN ECA, *To shape Africa’s future, impacts of knowledge and innovation will diverge by country and by sector, depending on investments made*, 2014.

⁷⁰ UN ECA, *Investing in people-centered innovation and technology essential to Africa’s development*, 2014.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service, *Preparations begin for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development*, 2014.

Looking Beyond the “Mainstream” Methods of Finance

Innovative financing aims at better distributing the world’s wealth and reducing inequalities, which is a crucial aspect of the post-2015 development agenda.⁷³ During the past decade, a wide range of different innovative finance schemes have been developed and introduced, including financial transactions taxes and diaspora bonds.⁷⁴ These proposals have received different level of support internationally; some of them are still under discussion.⁷⁵

The events held on financing in recent months outlined the paradigm for developing countries for the coming years.⁷⁶ Within the conclusions of the Second UN Conference on LLDCs, there are the means of implementation for specific actions, such as the effective and full-scale usage of domestic and external resources by LLDCs and their transit neighbors; industrial and financial support from development partners to help LLDCs build efficient transit transport systems; the further integration of Member States into the global economy and the transformation of their economies; and improvement of their productive capacities.⁷⁷ Other actions discussed at the conference included the discharge of undertaken ODA responsibilities, aid for trade along with collaboration in the trade-related infrastructure development, and the maximum level of cooperation with the private sector.⁷⁸ During the Ninth African Development Forum, support was expressed towards the creation of African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), which would help double the scope of intra-African trade and foster economic development.⁷⁹

Conclusion

In order to become more attractive for investments from the private sector and donors, it is crucial to raise the effectiveness of current resource usage by mobilizing domestic resources and developing new financial mechanisms.⁸⁰ The recent and upcoming events of ECA and other partners have highlighted the significance of the topic of innovative financing for Africa, and the need for continued discussion on this topic. As seen through recent efforts, the international community has shown its commitment in many ways to the process of Africa’s transformation, and must continue to show such commitment.

⁷³ Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development, *Concept note to the Leading Group’s side event in partnership with the United Nations: “Innovative financing: a solution to diversify the financial toolbox for sustainable development and climate,”* 2014.

⁷⁴ The World Bank, *Innovative Financing for Development*, 2009.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ UN General Assembly, *Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 (A/CONF.225/L.1)*, 2014, pp. 66-72; International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development, *Africa is counting on domestic resource to finance its development*, 2014.

⁷⁷ UN General Assembly, *Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 (A/CONF.225/L.1)*, 2014, pp. 66-72.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development, *Africa is counting on domestic resource to finance its development*, 2014.

⁸⁰ The World Bank Group, *Financing for Development Post-2015*, 2013.

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The Marrakech Consensus is the outcome document of the Ninth African Development Forum. The statement includes recommendations on the Forum's focus areas: domestic resource mobilization, illicit financial flows, private stock, partnerships, and climate financing. This document is important for delegates, as it is the result of the major event held on the issue in recent months, and draws from the vector for actions towards African economic development.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2014). *Ninth African Development Forum: Domestic Resource Mobilization* [Issues Paper]. Retrieved 23 January 2015 from:

http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/uploaded-documents/ADF/ADFI/adf_ix-issues_paper_1-domestic_resource_mobilization.pdf

This issues paper prepared for the Ninth African Development Forum provides background on the topic of Domestic Resource Mobilization. This issue is essential when talked about innovative financial mechanisms, as it is a tool to mobilize internal financial resources. The document will be helpful for delegates, as it discusses precisely about financial mechanisms in the context of domestic resource management improvement in Africa.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa & Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2014). *The Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness in Africa: Promise & Performance*. Retrieved 3 January 2015 from: http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/publications/mrde-2014_english.pdf

The 2014 report from the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is divided into four sections: sustainable economic growth, investing in people, good governance, and financing for development. The document summarizes the actions taken by African Member States and their development partners on the path to continent transformation. It analyses the achieved results and points out future priorities. The last section will be particularly useful for the delegates, as it focuses specifically on domestic public resources for development, foreign direct investments, and other private finance flows.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2014). *The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet: Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda (A/69/700)*. Retrieved 4 January 2015 from:

http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/700&Lang=E

The recent report from the UN Secretary-General proposes a universal agenda for sustainable development for the next 15 years, considering both the positive and negative experiences of the international community on the way to sustainable development after the adoption of the MDGs. It is essential for delegates, as it is one of the key UN documents on the post-2015 agenda. Among other issues, the report focuses on financing sources for sustainable development.

United Nations, Sustainable Development Solutions Network. (2014). *Financing for Sustainable Development: Implementing the SDGs through Effective Investment Strategies and Partnerships* [Draft Report]. Retrieved 27 December 2014 from:

<http://unsdsn.org/resources/publications/financing-for-sustainable-development/>

This draft report has been prepared as a part of the preparation process for one of the major upcoming events – the Third Conference on Financing for Development – that will be conducted in Addis Ababa in July 2015. The document examines the key investment strategies and financing mechanisms in major financial areas. Notwithstanding the fact that the document is still undergoing the drafting process, the information and ideas that it contains will be useful for delegates in formulating their own proposals.

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II. Access to Energy

“Without energy, our hospitals will not run well; without energy, our children cannot study at night; without access to energy, we cannot process food and store it long enough to deal with food security issues.”⁸¹

Introduction

Access to energy remains a challenging topic, especially for those developing countries that are highly dependent on commodity prices.⁸² With declining commodity prices at the end of 2014 and beginning of 2015, a paradigm shift occurred to reject dependency on commodities and promote a greater diversity in the energy sector to achieve more stability and sustainability.⁸³

According to the “Africa Energy Outlook” report, Sub-Saharan Africa is rich in energy resources, but has not achieved to build up an independent, efficient and stable energy production; consequently, many African states have been severely affected by the decreasing commodity prices.⁸⁴ Almost 30% of global oil and gas discoveries in the past five years have been extracted in Sub-Saharan Africa.⁸⁵ In order to address this destabilizing dependency, the main proposal is to diversify the sources of energy requirements.⁸⁶

The General Assembly Second Committee report on sustainable development in the energy sector (A/69/468/Add.9) recommends the promotion of innovative and renewable ways of energy production.⁸⁷ The report encourages rapidly implementing the strategic objectives of the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All.⁸⁸ One of the most important aims underlined in the report, is the evaluation of the actions implemented in the last decade, in order to improve and increase efficiency of processes and policies concerning the access to energy.⁸⁹ Another challenge towards an effective and expedient energy production in the region that was addressed in the report is infrastructure.⁹⁰ More integrated energy system is necessary in order to use resources more efficiently, and to enable and facilitate the access to energy for the poorest and those living in the remote areas of the African continent.⁹¹ A primary measure to reach this goal is the enhancement of the quantity and quality of data collection and analysis concerning energy in order to adjust policy frameworks and responses accordingly.⁹²

The UN Climate Summit 2014

The UN Climate Summit 2014 was one of the outstanding events concerning climate in 2014, especially in relation to the topics of agriculture, cities, energy, financing, forests, industry, resilience and transportation.⁹³ One achievement of the UN Climate Summit 2014 was the adoption of the Africa Clean Energy Corridor (ACEC) initiative.⁹⁴ This action plan assembles strategic partners, such as the African Union (AU), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) among others, to cooperatively support the activities to develop the markets and financial frameworks for the ACEC.⁹⁵ The ACEC aims to expand the proportion of renewable energy used by the “power pools” of eastern and southern Africa from currently 12% up to 40% in 2030.⁹⁶

⁸¹ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Improving sustainable energy access for rural areas*, 2014.

⁸² *What Vlad can learn from Chad*, The Economist, 2015.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ International Energy Agency, *Africa Energy Outlook*, 2015, p. 1

⁸⁵ Ibid., p.2.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p.5.

⁸⁷ UN General Assembly, *Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (A/69/468/Add.9)*, 2014, p. 6.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ International Energy Agency, *Africa Energy Outlook*, 2015, p.1.

⁹¹ Ibid., p.4.

⁹² UN General Assembly, *Sustainable Development: Promotion of New and Renewable Sources of Energy (A/69/468/Add.9)*, 2014, pp. 1-10.

⁹³ United Nations Climate Summit 2014, *Africa Clean Energy Corridor*, 2014, p.3.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p.4.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p.5.

⁹⁶ United Nations Climate Summit 2014, *Extensive Renewable Energy Projects in Africa and Small Island. Developing States to Cut CO2 Emissions, Improve Energy Access*, 2014, p.1.

Recent Developments

Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL)

SE4ALL initiative is one of the main pillars in the focus of the global strategy towards universal energy access.⁹⁷ Along with the initiatives carried out by the AU and ECA, the SE4ALL strategy provides integral energy strategies in order to reach the African goal to increase the consumption of clean and sustainable energy.⁹⁸ SE4ALL has set 2030 as the deadline to fulfill the following objectives: doubling the global rate of energy efficiency improvements, doubling renewable energy's share in the global energy mix, and ensuring universal access to modern energy services.⁹⁹ The SE4ALL high-level event in September 2014 concentrated on the "Implementing Sustainable Energy for All" initiative.¹⁰⁰ The following topics were particularly prioritized: investment in energy efficiency, acceleration of innovation in renewable energies, and scaling up at the country level in order to fund a public policy.¹⁰¹ This event provided a platform for agents from the public sector to meet with potential private investors in order to fulfill objectives towards expanding the horizons of energy access.¹⁰²

Capacity Building and Financing

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is an initiative of the AU with a main focus on socio-economic development and the implementation of efficient and adequate policy frameworks for the region.¹⁰³ NEPAD acknowledges the necessity to connect the resources of the private sector with energy project developers within the African region.¹⁰⁴ In 2014, NEPAD held the 7th Africa Private Sector Forum, which assembled key agencies and industry leaders from the energy sector in order to review and disclose investment opportunities for energy projects with the aim to attract private investment.¹⁰⁵ The strategic objective of the forum was to promote the significant role of the private sector in energizing the African economies.¹⁰⁶

Post-2015 Development Agenda

For the African continent, the incorporation of alternative energy resources and climate resilient energy systems into the post-2015 development agenda is extremely significant.¹⁰⁷ One of the key projects of the post-2015 framework will be the data revolution that the UN introduced in order to magnify the impact of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).¹⁰⁸ In 2014 the African states also agreed on the "Common African Position" comprising of six pillars, of which the first pillar, structural economic transformation and inclusive growth, the third pillar, people-centered development, and the fourth pillar, environmental sustainability natural resources management, and disaster risk management, have a direct connection to energy access.¹⁰⁹ These goals also focus on the enhancement of energy related infrastructure that is reliable, sustainable, environmentally friendly and affordable in order to guarantee access to energy, sanitation, clean water needed in the process of urbanization and climate change.¹¹⁰ In the African context, these issues are narrowly related to the lack of access to energy and unsustainable energy production, therefore the promotion of renewable energies and efficient energy production, consumption and recycle, is one of the priorities of the African continent.¹¹¹

The Synthesis Report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 development agenda emphasizes the need of a "Data Revolution" in order to enhance the evaluation of the African countries policy decision-making processes.¹¹² Furthermore, the regional commissions highlighted the importance of regional efforts in order to agree on common

⁹⁷ UN General Assembly, *International Year of Sustainable Energy for All (A/RES/65/151)*, 2011.

⁹⁸ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Improving sustainable energy access for rural areas*, 2014.

⁹⁹ United Nations Climate Summit 2014, *Action Areas/Summit Announcement-Energy*, 2014.

¹⁰⁰ International Institute for International Development, *High-Level Event Focuses on Implementing Sustainable Energy for All*, 2014.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ The New Partnership for Africa's Development, *About*.

¹⁰⁴ The New Partnership for Africa's Development, *NEPAD to connect energy project developers and investors*, 2014.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ African Union, *7th Private Sector Forum*, 2014.

¹⁰⁷ CAN, *Energy and the post 2015 development agenda*, 2014.

¹⁰⁸ United Nations, *Data Revolution Report*, 2014.

¹⁰⁹ African Union, *Common African Position (Cap) On The Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2014, p. 5.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 8, 12f.

¹¹¹ AU, *Common African Position (Cap) On The Post-2015 Development Agenda*, 2014, p. 13.

¹¹² United Nations, *The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet*, 2014, p.13.

policies that can adjust to different regional realities.¹¹³ Along with an improved data collection, the key factors of the energy sector can be evaluated in order to implement the most adequate policies.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, during the United Nations General Assembly 69th session, Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya, emphasized the need to tackle economic, environmental and social challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate change, economic development, biodiversity loss and environmental protection.¹¹⁵

Gender and Access to Energy

According to UN-Women's 2014 World Survey on the role of women in development, it is predominately women that are taking care of cooking in their household.¹¹⁶ In order to minimize accidents and injuries related to unsecure energy usage in the cooking process, the Cookstoves Future Summit, held in New York in November 2014, discussed the topic of safety of women and children in their households.¹¹⁷ Access to cleaner and secure energy is a crucial issue in order to guarantee safe cooking in urban and rural households.¹¹⁸ Related to this topic the AU pledged to intensify efforts in Africa between 2015 and 2017 by promoting clean cooking solutions and the support of the International Organization for Standardization's (ISO) process to enhance the cookstove quality.¹¹⁹

Africa Future Energy Summit

On the 18-19 March 2015, Kenya will host the Africa Future Energy Forum focusing on to "Unlocking Africa's Energy Potential".¹²⁰ The forum will look into policy options and discuss technology and financing topics.¹²¹ The Agenda of the Forum will consists of topics, such as energy security in the changing African energy landscape, capacity building for power sector growth, global fossil fuel industry and oil and gas development in Africa, universal access to clean and renewable energy, and social responsibility and public-private partnerships.¹²²

Conclusion

Close cooperation of ECA and its Member States has initiated global programs, such as SE4ALL, and also contributed to the outcomes of the UN Climate Summit 2014 in order to strengthen access to energy within African region and globally. The region has also experienced strong public private sector partnerships directed towards finding efficient ways to access and consume energy. As the post-2015 development agenda is being finalized, the priorities have yet to be determined and should concentrate on human rights, equal work relations and payment, monitoring and accountability mechanism, and the inclusion of civil society.¹²³ Energy is a crucial topic for the future of Africa, and further innovative and creative approaches and frameworks are necessary to abolish unsustainable energy production and inefficient energy consumption.

¹¹³ United Nations, *The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet*, 2014, p.11.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ International Institute for International Development, *69th UN General Debate Opens, Addressing Post-2015 Agenda*.

¹¹⁶ UN-Women, *UN-Women calls for clean cooking solutions for women at Cookstoves Future Summit*, 2014.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, *Cookstoves Future Summit: Post-Summit Report*, 2014, p. 6.

¹²⁰ AFEF, *African Future Energy Forum*, 2015.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ United Nations, *Summary of the Interactive Meeting with Civil Society for the High-level Stocktaking Event on the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Contributions to the Secretary-General's Synthesis Report*, 2014.

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This Concept Note is a useful source in order to understand the aim of the 7th private sector forum. This source explains the core elements of promoting the private sector participation towards an energy policy based on private investment and development. Furthermore delegates will find background information on the region and their current situation relating to the access to energy and a sustainable and stable energy production.

International Energy Agency. (2014). *Africa Energy Outlook* [Report]. Retrieved 5 January 2015 from:

http://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/AEO_ES_English.pdf

This is a very comprehensive source that helps delegates to understand the status of the economies of the African region. The African Energy Outlook provides an overview on the topic and analyzes the most important issues on energy policy of Africa. Delegates will find this report useful as it was recently released and contains the most updated status and information about the energy sector and latest developments.

United Nations Climate Summit 2014. (2014). *Africa Clean Energy Corridor* [Website]. Retrieved 4 January 2015 from:

<http://www.un.org/climatechange/summit/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/09/ENERGY-Africa-Clean-Energy-Corridor.pdf>

The UN Climate Summit 2014 was one of the main events of the last year in relation to sustainable development and consequently, sustainable and climate-neutral energy production. In this document delegates will find the proposal of the initiative on an Africa Clean Energy Corridor that was one of the main topics discussed among African countries. The source contains also a plan of action that is expected to work along the upcoming years.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2014). *Improving sustainable energy access for rural areas* [Website]. Retrieved 28 December 2014 from:

<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/news/sustainable/rural-energy-access.html>

This source provides a good overview on the necessity of a strong energy policy to the rural areas of Africa. It also discusses the linkages between energy and development, analyses various other factors that feed into sustainable energy such as innovation and technology. Delegates will find this a useful read and will be able to familiarize with broader discussions around energy topic.

What Vlad can learn from Chad. (2015). *The Economist*. Retrieved 10 January 2015 from:

<http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21638197-why-some-commodity-exporters-are-coping-better-lower-prices-others-what-vlad-can-learn>

This article comes from the lead economics and politics magazine "The Economist", and delegates are going to find an analysis of commodities prices at the beginning of 2015 in this source. A strong shock has hit commodity-dependent economies and has caused instabilities and unbalances that must be taken into consideration in order to have a current view and to introduce this into delegate's work.

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III. Including Vulnerable Populations in Economic and Social Development

Introduction

The issue of fighting exclusion of vulnerable populations, consisting of women, persons with disabilities, children and youth, migrants and further groups, has been frequently discussed over the last month in relation to the post-2015 development agenda and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.¹²⁴ The issues faced by persons with disabilities are particularly pressing on the African continent and the need to address this was also emphasized on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, marked annually on the 3 December.¹²⁵ In 2014, the theme of this Day was “Sustainable Development: The Promise of Technology” and highlighted the core issues of disability-inclusive development goals, disaster risk reduction and emergency responses, and the creation of enabling work environments.¹²⁶ United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon pointed towards the importance to enhance the global situation of the more than one billion persons with disabilities.¹²⁷

In December 2014 the Secretary-General presented a synthesis report “The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all live and protecting the planet”.¹²⁸ He highlighted the inclusion of the poor, children, adolescents, persons with disabilities, migrants, and other vulnerable groups and minorities, and the special attention required for this group and especially for those affected by hardships, such as climate change, humanitarian emergencies, and terrorism among others.¹²⁹ The report highlights the fact that economic strength should be measured by its redistributive capacities and by the degree of inclusion of all economic power, which also includes vulnerable populations.¹³⁰ Furthermore, the synthesis report also stresses the importance of areas, such as finances, access to justice, participation in education and technology, in relation to vulnerable populations.¹³¹

Despite recent hardships caused by the economic crisis and its effects on the African region, current predictions in the Global Economic Outlook Report claim that the African economies are expected to experience ongoing growth.¹³² The GDP of the African region is expected to rise from 3.5 in 2014 to 4.6 in 2015 and 4.9 in 2016.¹³³ However, this positive outlook is only one side of the story, as the report also acknowledges that the informal working sector on the African continent accounts to 40 to 50 percent of total employment.¹³⁴ This is especially worrisome in relation to the inclusion of vulnerable populations, such as women and young people, who often work in informal sector with low wages and no social security or labor rights.¹³⁵

In October 2014, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) presented a new instrument to improve data collection and monitor the impact of social policies on human exclusion, namely the African Social Development Index (ASDI).¹³⁶ The Index includes, inter alia the dimensions of health, education, employment and income, and evaluates the progress of inclusion of vulnerable population groups in these sectors.¹³⁷ The initiative has been a pilot project in five African countries and the collected and analyzed data has already been efficiently used to implement social policies.¹³⁸ The initial results have, inter alia, shown that Kenya faces a very high exclusion rate from health care and education, and that these factors have significant implications on opportunities in life of vulnerable groups.¹³⁹ In Morocco, the collected data has been used to diminish exclusion by 30% between 2001 and 2010, and

¹²⁴ UN, *On world Day, Ban spotlights how technology can improve life for 1 billion persons with disabilities*, 2014.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ United Nations Enable, *International Day of Persons with Disabilities*.

¹²⁷ UN, *On world Day, Ban spotlights how technology can improve life for 1 billion persons with disabilities*, 2014.

¹²⁸ UN General Assembly, *The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all live and protecting the planet: Synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda (A/RES/69/700)*, 2014, p.1.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.12.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.19, 24, 26.

¹³² United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, et al., *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2015*, 2015, p. 1f.

¹³³ *Ibid.*p. 2.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹³⁶ UN ECA, *ECA launches Innovative tool to boost assessment of inclusive development in Africa*, 2014.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

to significantly decrease the gender gap by implementing adequate social policies.¹⁴⁰ The aim is to extend the initiative to the whole continent, by implementing regional and sub-regional training and data collection processes and finally, promoting a more inclusive development agenda.¹⁴¹

Recent Developments

Post-2015 Development Agenda

The Secretary-General's synthesis report on the post-2015 development agenda was published in December 2014.¹⁴² The report emphasizes the importance of the year 2015 to agree on a comprehensive and efficient post-2015 development agenda with the main aim to transform the world, economies, societies and environments.¹⁴³

During the General Assembly debates (69th session), several African states emphasized the Common African Position (CAP) and the goals of the Agenda 2063. The African states aspire to implement six pillars into the post-2015 development agenda, which are: structural economic transformation and inclusive growth; science, technology, and innovation; people-centered development; environmental sustainability, natural resource management and disaster management; peace and security; and finance and partnerships.¹⁴⁴ Special attention was furthermore drawn towards the challenges faced by small island developing States and their call for a 'blue economy', which incorporates the potential of the oceans and acknowledges the urgent need to further protection of these resources.¹⁴⁵

At the African Forum in August 2014, organized by ECA, the African Union Commission and the UN Development Group, representatives from civil society, governments and the international community stressed the importance of an accountability framework as part of the post-2015 development agenda, which should be implemented across society and pursuing a bottom-up and people-centered approach.¹⁴⁶ The role of monitoring and reporting through data-collection as basis for accountability of the commitments was highlighted.¹⁴⁷

Gender Issues in Economic and Social Development

The African Union proclaimed 2015 the "Year of Women's Empowerment" at its 23rd Session of the Summit of the AU on 27 June 2014.¹⁴⁸ The 24th Summit of the AU took place in January 2015 and was concerned with the leading topic of 2015 in relation to development towards the achievement of the Agenda 2063.¹⁴⁹ The agenda of the AU Summit put a strong emphasis on gender equality and women's empowerment, while the adoption of the Agenda 2063, which incorporates the inclusion of vulnerable persons as a priority on the agenda of policy making in the African region.¹⁵⁰

At the 9th Regional Review of the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (Beijing +20) in November 2014, it was made clear that further achievements towards gender sensitivity in key sectors of the African economy are crucial.¹⁵¹ Despite the social progress on the continent in the last years, gender has remained a neglected topic and governments are required to reflect the gender-sensitivity of their social policies in areas of industry, broad-base education, investment and trade.¹⁵²

The Security Council confirmed during its meeting in October 2014 the importance of empowered women and girls to achieve sustainable development, especially in conflict torn regions.¹⁵³ Thereby the necessity of gender inclusion

¹⁴⁰ UN ECA, *ECA launches Innovative tool to boost assessment of inclusive development in Africa*, 2014.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² UN General Assembly, *The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all live and protecting the planet: Synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda (A/RES/69/700)*, 2014, p.12.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p.33.

¹⁴⁴ UN ECA, *Post-2014 Round-ups*, 2015.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ United Nations Regional Commission, *African Forum on Post-2015 provides elements for accountability*, 2014.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Oxfam International, *AU declares 2015 Year of Women's Empowerment*, 2014.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ AllAfrica, *Africa: Women Top the Agenda At AU Summit*, 2015.

¹⁵¹ UN ECA, *Experts call for gender-sensitive strategies ahead of post-2015 development negotiations*, 2014.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ UN, *UN reaffirms importance of women's empowerment for global peace, security*, 2014.

in social and political processes as part of the peacekeeping missions in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and in South Sudan (UNMISS) has been acknowledged.¹⁵⁴

At a high-level panel organized by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and World Bank during 69th Session of the UN General Assembly, various leaders of African States, UNFPA, the World Bank and other non-governmental organizations met and discussed the need to empower women and girls.¹⁵⁵ Lack of education, child marriage, adolescent pregnancy and maternal mortality were identified during the panel as serious issues hindering the achievement of sustainable development and the increase of economic growth.¹⁵⁶ Investment towards the enhancement of health care, human rights, education and professional skills of young people, with a special emphasize on young girls and women, is indispensable to achieve a demographic transition.¹⁵⁷

Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

On the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the focus was placed on the importance to eliminate limitations and hardships people with disabilities face.¹⁵⁸ The theme of this day, “Sustainable Development: The Promise of Technology”, is also a topic of high importance to be incorporated into the post-2015 development agenda.¹⁵⁹ Adaptive, assistive and inclusive technologies can make a significant difference to persons with disabilities to bring their potential into their communities and workplaces.¹⁶⁰ This is also a significant corner stone for the advancement of sustainable development and economic growth of the African continent.¹⁶¹

At the meeting of 40 regional and national leaders of organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) in November 2014, the African Disability Forum (ADF) was founded.¹⁶² It serves as an umbrella organization to assemble the African DPOs, with the aim to represent the DPOs collectively and to streamline the work of African DPOs.¹⁶³ AFD is supposed to work in close cooperation with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), ECA and the AU.¹⁶⁴ The Forum’s purpose is to provide a strong and unified voice to Africans with disabilities and their relatives, and to advocate their rights and positions concerning issues of inclusion into development and society.¹⁶⁵

Conclusion

The topic of inclusionary politics of the UN community with an emphasis on vulnerable persons remains an urgent and pressing topic. It is particularly relevant with the ongoing negotiations of the post-2015 development agenda, which will have significant impact on further policies and possibilities on the African continent. However, the most pressing issue is the actual inclusion of vulnerable people into different societies, the abolishment of discrimination and the economic and political exclusion. Further empowerment and policy development is required to fully address the needs of vulnerable persons.

¹⁵⁴ UN, *UN reaffirms importance of women’s empowerment for global peace, security*, 2014.

¹⁵⁵ United Nations Population Fund, *Empowering girl key to Africa’s success, leaders affirm*, 2014.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ UN, *On world Day, Ban spotlights how technology can improve life for 1 billion persons with disabilities*, 2014.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ UN, *Adaptive, Assistive, Inclusive Technology Can Aid Persons with Disabilities in Reaching Their Potential in Communities, Workplace*, 2014.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² UN ECA, *African Disability Forum (ADF) established at Regional Meeting*, 2014.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Annotated Bibliography

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Economic Commission for Africa, Economic Commission for Europe, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific & Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. (2015). *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2015* [Report]. Retrieved 28 January 2015 from: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/wesp_archive/2015wesp_full_en.pdf

The paper provides an analysis of the current global economic situation and an outlook towards the expected development in the upcoming years. The report contains also specific sections for the different geographic regions, including the African continent. This source is a very good overview of the situation of the African economy and the expected changes in the next years. Furthermore, the report provides tables and images to illustrate the data collected.

United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Economic Commission for Africa, Thirty-second meeting of the Committee of Experts. (2013). *Report on progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Africa, 2013 (E/ECA/COE/32/3)*. Retrieved 11 January 2015 from:

http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/document_files/report-on-progress-in-achieving-the-mdgs-in-africa.pdf

The publication contains an analysis of the development of the MDGs specifically on the African continent. With the SDGs to be adopted shortly, it is important to note the progress made by the MDGs and continue addressing remaining issues in the post-2015 development agenda. The paper provides in-depth analysis of each goal of the MDGs in relation with the African region.

United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa. (2014). *ECA launches Innovative tool to boost assessment of inclusive development in Africa* [Website]. Retrieved 10 January 2015 from: <http://www.uneca.org/media-centre/stories/eca-launches-innovative-tool-boost-assessment-inclusive-development-africa#.VLJEH1p8xd2>

This paper describes a new instrument introduced by ECA to improve the implementation of adequate policies and to facilitate the assessment of effects and changes. The aim of the assessment tool is to measure human exclusion by improving data collection and consequently, follow up policies. The concept is currently piloted in five African countries and is soon to be extended. The publication gives delegates an idea how data collection can support and enhance the inclusion process.

United Nations Population Fund. (2014). *Empowering girls key to Africa's success, leaders affirm* [Website].

Retrieved 10 January 2015 from: <http://www.unfpa.org/news/empowering-girls-key-africas-success-leaders-affirm>

The assessment by the UNFPA draws the attention towards the need to incorporate girls into the debate about disadvantaged groups that face difficulties in the economic and social integration process. Girls are often seen as experiencing double difficulties, as being children and being females. The text analyses the necessary areas that require further development and attention to enhance the situation of girls on the African continent.

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-ninth session. (2014). *The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all live and protecting the planet: Synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda (A/RES/69/700)*. Retrieved 12 January 2015 from:

http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/700&Lang=E

The Synthesis Report adopted by the General Assembly in December 2014 highlights the main topics Secretary-General wants to stress for the ongoing negotiations of the post-2015 development agenda, which should contain of the aims and indicators of global development until 2030. The report delivers an overview about the development of the goals and its agenda setting, it also describes funding measures and methods and ways to monitor the progress achieved. The SDGs are a highly important issue for the African continent, and especially the agenda setting and the funding mechanisms that will be agreed in the post-2015 agenda will have a fast impact of Africa's development in the next years.

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