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Economic Commission for Africa
Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
Eighth session

**Preparatory and capacity development workshop for major groups
and other stakeholders in the African region**
Kigali, (hybrid), 1 and 2 March 2022

Concept note

I. Introduction and rationale

1. Major groups and other stakeholders¹ have been actively working towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through projects, initiatives, knowledge-sharing, advocacy and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.² To that end, they contribute significantly to efforts to strengthen inclusion, including by giving voice to the voiceless and to marginalized and vulnerable populations; promoting accountability, transparency and responsiveness; engaging in capacity-building activities; sharing their experiences and knowledge in planning, implementation and review processes; and strengthening participation and ownership of development processes by diverse communities at the national, subnational and local levels. Clearly, major groups and other stakeholders play an essential role in enhancing the reach, effectiveness and durability of development initiatives and outcomes.

2. In General Assembly resolution 70/1, on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it was recognized that the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders was needed to implement the 2030 Agenda, including in related follow-up and review processes. In that regard, Governments, the United Nations system, civil society, the private sector, and other actors were called upon in the context of an enhanced global partnership to deliver on the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals and targets, which lie at the core of the 2030 Agenda.

3. Under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, a high-level political forum was also established to carry out regular reviews in line with General Assembly resolution 67/290. The reviews are intended to provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders. In addition, major groups and other relevant stakeholders were called upon to report on their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, citizens of African

¹ References to major groups and other stakeholders align with General Assembly resolution 67/290 of 9 July 2012 on the format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Further information on major groups and other stakeholders is available at: sustainabledevelopment.un.org/aboutmajorgroups.html.

² Further information about the contribution of major groups and other stakeholders is available at: sustainabledevelopment.un.org/mgos.



countries, civil society organizations and all other identifiable groups are engaged in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union, which is being implemented in coordination with the 2030 Agenda.

4. Accordingly, the effective implementation of the two agendas requires various actors to work together and strengthen their collaborative and integrated approaches with major groups and other stakeholders. For the contributions of major groups and other stakeholders towards the successful implementation of the agendas to be meaningful and useful, capacity development is required to enhance their knowledge of processes and procedures for engagement. They need access to information so that they fully understand their roles and the platforms that can be used to engage effectively with one another, Governments, and other development partners.

5. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, has been organizing workshops since 2015 to strengthen the capacity of major groups and other stakeholders to articulate inputs to the follow-up and review of progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda at the regional and global levels. Through the capacity-development workshops, major groups and other stakeholders have been actively engaged in the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, which is one of the mechanisms providing inputs to the follow-up and review process at the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

6. The eighth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development will take place in the context of unprecedented global health and economic crises caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The responses to this pandemic have been divergent: while developed countries have deployed more than \$23 trillion (20 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP)) to respond to the economic impact of the pandemic, Africa has managed to mobilize less than \$100 billion (1 per cent of their GDP), leading to a deeper economic crisis that has undermined a high-quality recovery. In addition, by early November 2021, while high-income countries had administered roughly 140 COVID-19 vaccine doses per 100 people, low-income countries had only managed about 6 doses per 100 people.³ High-income and upper-middle-income economies were expected to recover faster in 2021, while lower-middle-income and low-income economies were to continue to struggle, owing to vaccine inequity.⁴

7. The eighth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development is therefore designed to be an action-oriented forum for member States and other stakeholders to explore and propose a set of specific and workable solutions that will enable countries to rebuild from the health and economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. That recovery should lead to a greener, more inclusive and resilient Africa while also advancing implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In that regard, major groups and other stakeholders must be equipped with tools and information to ensure that post-COVID-19 recovery efforts are people-centred and leave no one behind.

8. It is against this backdrop that the Economic Commission for Africa and the Africa Regional Mechanism for Major Groups and Other Stakeholders are organizing a preparatory and capacity-development workshop for major groups and other stakeholders in Africa to help them prepare for the high-level political

³ Further information on COVID-19 vaccinations is available at <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>.

⁴ Further information about the impact of vaccine inequity on economic recovery is available at <https://data.undp.org/fr/vaccine-equity/impact-of-vaccine-inequity-on-economic-recovery/>.

forum on sustainable development, to be held from 5 to 15 July 2022. The workshop will occur during the eighth session of the Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, to be held in Kigali from 3 to 5 March 2022. Owing to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, the Regional Forum will take place in a hybrid format.

9. The theme of the session will be “Building forward better: A green, inclusive and resilient Africa poised to achieve the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.” The Regional Forum will review in detail the following Sustainable Development Goals: 4 (Quality education), 5 (Gender equality), 14 (Life underwater), 15 (Life on land action), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

10. The workshop will focus on empowering young people in Africa, the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In this regard, a high-level panel will be organized to discuss effective ways to leverage the continent’s demographic dividend and to empower its young people to contribute meaningfully towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda and the aspirations of Agenda 2063. Participants will hear from young people on their challenges and opportunities in achieving sustainable development in Africa. Representatives of Governments and intergovernmental organizations will highlight how their organizations engage with young people in sustainable development processes.

II. Objectives

11. The workshop will be held on 1 and 2 March 2022, two days before the start of the main session of the Regional Forum. It is anticipated that the workshop will:

(a) Brief major groups and other stakeholders on the follow-up and review process related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with a particular focus on the five selected Sustainable Development Goals;

(b) Highlight and share contributions and experiences of major groups and other stakeholders in responding to the health and economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa;

(c) Discuss tangible ways to empower young people to contribute to the achievement of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda and the aspirations of Agenda 2063 in Africa;

(d) Produce key messages from major groups and other stakeholders on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, with a particular focus on the five selected Sustainable Development Goals, to form part of the collective input by the Africa region to the 2022 meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

III. Expected outcomes

12. The workshop is expected to lead to the following outcomes:

(a) Increased understanding and capacity of major groups and other stakeholders, and young people, to implement, monitor and review progress towards achieving the Goals of the 2030 Agenda and the aspirations of Agenda 2063;

(b) Greater understanding of efforts exerted by major groups and other stakeholders to mitigate the health and economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa;

(c) Enhanced cooperation among major groups and other stakeholders and between them and other stakeholders, including national, subregional, and regional policymakers, practitioners and experts, and United Nations entities.

IV. Expected outputs

13. The workshop will generate the following outputs, which will be disseminated widely:

(a) A joint statement of the major groups and other stakeholders to be delivered during the eighth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development;

(b) A communiqué by the major groups and other stakeholders on the workshop and the eighth session of the Regional Forum;

(c) A summary report on the workshop.

V. Key documents

14. The documents for the workshop include the following:

(a) The present concept note and the programme of work for the workshop;

(b) The concept note and the programme of work for the eighth session of the Regional Forum;

(c) Background papers on the sub-themes of the eighth session of the Regional Forum.

VI. Participation

15. The workshop will be attended by representatives of nine major-group categories (women, children and young people, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, the scientific and technological community, and farmers). Other stakeholder groups, including local communities, volunteer groups and foundations, migrants and their families, older persons, and persons with disabilities, will be invited to attend.

VII. Working languages

16. The meeting will be conducted in English and French with simultaneous interpretation in both languages.

VIII. Venue and date

17. The workshop will be held on 1 and 2 March in a hybrid format, with participants in Kigali attending in person and international participants attending virtually through an online platform.

IX. Contact

18. Enquiries concerning the organization of the preparatory and capacity-development workshop should be directed to:

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