

# UNDP Africa Policy Brief



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## **Strengthening Strategic Alignment for Africa's Development: Lessons from the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the African Union's Agenda 2063, and the AfDB's High Fives**

### Context

The 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) of May 2013 set a new landmark by adopting a long-term development vision of *'The Africa We Want'* – The Agenda 2063. The Agenda, which established seven aspirations and 20 goals, has been advanced with the development of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (2014-2023). This vision was developed 28 months before the successor to the MDGs was endorsed, providing an important opportunity to incorporate Africa's voices in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), which was adopted by world leaders on 25 September 2015. This voice is reflected in paragraphs 42 and 64 of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. The SDGs, framed under the 5Ps – People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnership – accompanied by 17 goals and 169 targets, are considered to be the most ambitious global development agenda ever prepared. In response to these two agendas, particularly in terms of leveraging and crowding-in financial resources for the continent's development, the African Development Bank Group adopted the High Fives (Hi5s) (*Light up and Power Africa, Feed Africa, Industrialize Africa, Integrate Africa, and Improve Quality of Life for the People of Africa*) with the overarching goal of promoting inclusive development and green growth in Africa.<sup>1</sup>

The three agendas aim to promote social, economic, and environmental development and their sustainability - with *people* as the means and end of development. Aligning these agendas not only creates political consensus for a harmonized perspective on Africa's development aspirations, it also lays the foundation for galvanizing partnerships towards joint implementation and greater prospects for accelerating development outcomes in Africa.

## 2. Overview of the three Agendas

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs) offers major improvements on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The SDGs take a holistic and balanced view of development by addressing the three dimensions of sustainable development (Economic, Social and Environment), significantly raising the level of ambition to achieve the goals and address key systemic barriers to sustainable development - such as inequalities and exclusions, unsustainable production and consumption patterns, weak institutional capacities, and climate change and environmental degradation – that the MDG agenda

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<sup>1</sup> For more information about these agendas, see UN (2015), AUC (2014a) and AfDB (2016).

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did not consider adequately. The 17 goals and 169 targets demonstrate the scale and ambition of this new universal agenda. The relevance of each goal, however, will vary by country (and region), depending on priority focus areas and the development issues faced. The African Union's Agenda 2063 and the AfDB's Hi5s provide the regional context for the SDGs.

The Agenda 2063, Africa's own development Agenda, contains a compelling narrative for Africa's development. To Africa's advantage, the articulation of the Common African Position (CAP) on the post-2015 development agenda coincided with the formulation of the Agenda 2063. This ensured close alignment with regional priorities, on one hand, and the global development framework on the other.<sup>2</sup>

The 2063 Agenda proposes a considerable transformation across all three dimensions of sustainability including the *governance, peace and security pillar* as an important and enabling dimension articulated in the continental framework's seven aspirations.<sup>3</sup> The first aspiration, for "*a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development,*" constitutes the overarching objective for structural transformation. Reviewing the goals and targets, Agenda 2063 captures both systemic and structural barriers to – and the drivers of – change, emphasizing inclusive growth, infrastructure development, technological advancement, environmental sustainability, peace and security, and a politically united Africa. Its first 10-year implementation plan consists of 20 goals and at least 171 targets.<sup>4</sup>

The level of congruence between Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda is as high as 90.0 percent (Figure 1). To a large extent, this congruence underpins a harmonized monitoring framework for the two agendas in Africa.

The only goals that are not reflected in the global agenda are Goals 8 and 16 of Agenda 2063, which address priorities related to, first, a united Africa and cultural values and, second, establishing key continental and financial institutions, respectively. On the other hand, the Agenda 2063 environmental sustainability pillar is not as strong that found in the 2030 Agenda.

To ensure effective implementation of the global and continental agendas, the African Union Commission, AfDB, UNDP, and ECA are already working together closely to articulate continental programmes and monitoring frameworks that will support the implementation of these agendas.

The AfDB supports the implementation of both Agendas through its Ten-Year Strategy (2013 – 2022), which has the overarching, twin objectives of achieving inclusive growth and transitioning to green

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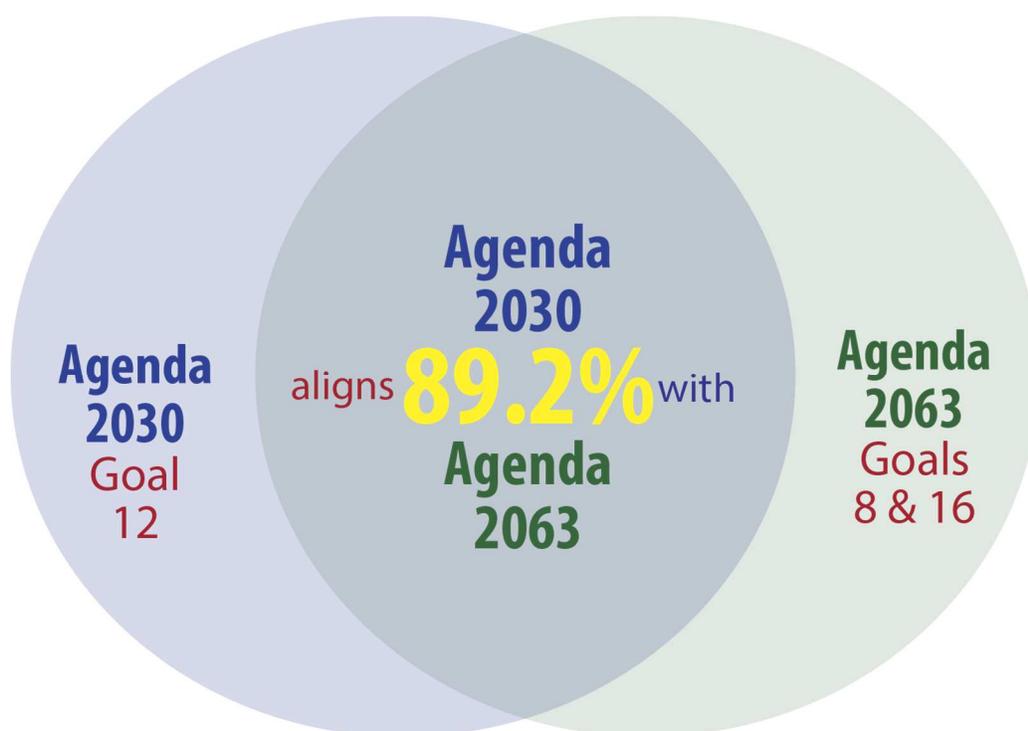
<sup>2</sup> See AUC (2014b) for Africa's development priorities articulated in CAP.

<sup>3</sup> These aspirations are: 1. a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development; 2. an integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's renaissance; 3. an Africa characterized by good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law; 4. a peaceful and secure Africa; 5. an Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values, and ethics; 6. an Africa based on people-driven development, unleashing the potential of its women and youth; and, 7. Africa as a strong, united, and influential global player and partner (AUC, 2014a).

<sup>4</sup> The implementation strategies of the 2063 Agenda and the continent's development priorities between 2014 and 2023 are found in AUC (2015).

growth.<sup>5</sup> Operationally, these two objectives will be met through the following five operational priorities: infrastructure development; regional economic integration; private sector development; governance and accountability; and skills and technology. The Ten-Year Strategy also has three areas of special emphasis - *gender, fragile states, agriculture and food security* - which will be implemented through five priority areas, otherwise known as the High Fives (Hi5s). These priority areas are Light up and Power Africa, Feed Africa, Industrialize Africa, Integrate Africa, and Improve the Quality of Life for the People of Africa. The Hi5s central to the Bank's 10-year implementation plan and are also closely linked to the SDGs and the continental framework, Agenda 2063.

**Figure 1: Alignment of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063**



### 3. Alignment among the Agenda 2030, Africa's Agenda 2063 and the AfDB's High Fives

The yardstick used to measure alignment is the congruence between two agendas in terms of specific development priorities. Given the high level of consolidation in the Hi5s, the inclusion of the cross-cutting areas in the yardsticks further strengthens congruence with the other two development agendas. These cross cutting issues are climate change – with a particular focus on climate - smart agriculture and energy; fragility and resilience, which cut across economic, social, political, and environmental dimensions; gender

<sup>5</sup> For more information on this transformation strategy, see AfDB (2013).

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equality and women’s empowerment; and economic governance.<sup>6</sup> In this respect, the Hi5s are, therefore, examined holistically, based on the premise that the crosscutting issues will be mainstreamed (with quantifiable targets) and monitored adequately.

The five Ps (People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnership), as articulated in the Common African Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, are used to categorize the development priorities in clusters. For ease of understanding, *people* stands for ‘social development’ such as health, education and wellbeing; *prosperity* captures economic development issues such as industrialization and infrastructure development; *planet* covers environmental sustainability issues such as climate change and biodiversity; and *peace* stands for governance, inclusive societies, and peace and security. *Partnership* covers the methods of implementing these three agendas.<sup>7</sup> Figure 2 shows the overlaps and differences among these three strategic agendas.

**People:** Building on the MDGs, the three agendas prioritize people-centred development issues. The first six goals and Goal 11 of the SDGs (multi-dimensional poverty, hunger, health and education, gender, water and sanitation, and inequalities and exclusion) place people at the centre of development in interconnected fashion. Two of the seven aspirations in Agenda 2063 are built on the people (aspirations 1 and 6) and seven of its 20 goals focus on the people (Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 16, 17, and 18) (Annex 1). While Strategy 5 of the Hi5s focuses directly on people, the implementation frameworks of the other four strategies do, too. Indeed, the cross-cutting aspect of the Hi5s emphasizes the centrality of the people as the building block of the continent’s development and the 2030 Agenda and the Hi5 Agenda emphasize community-building and societal resilience as long-term objectives. In this regard, the three agendas are closely aligned, with their focus on the people and particular attention to women, youth, and children.

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<sup>6</sup> These five strategies are better understood when examined together with the four cross-cutting areas (climate change, fragility, gender, and governance). Combining the Hi5 Strategy with the cross-cutting issues provide an improved basis for comparing this agenda with the other two.

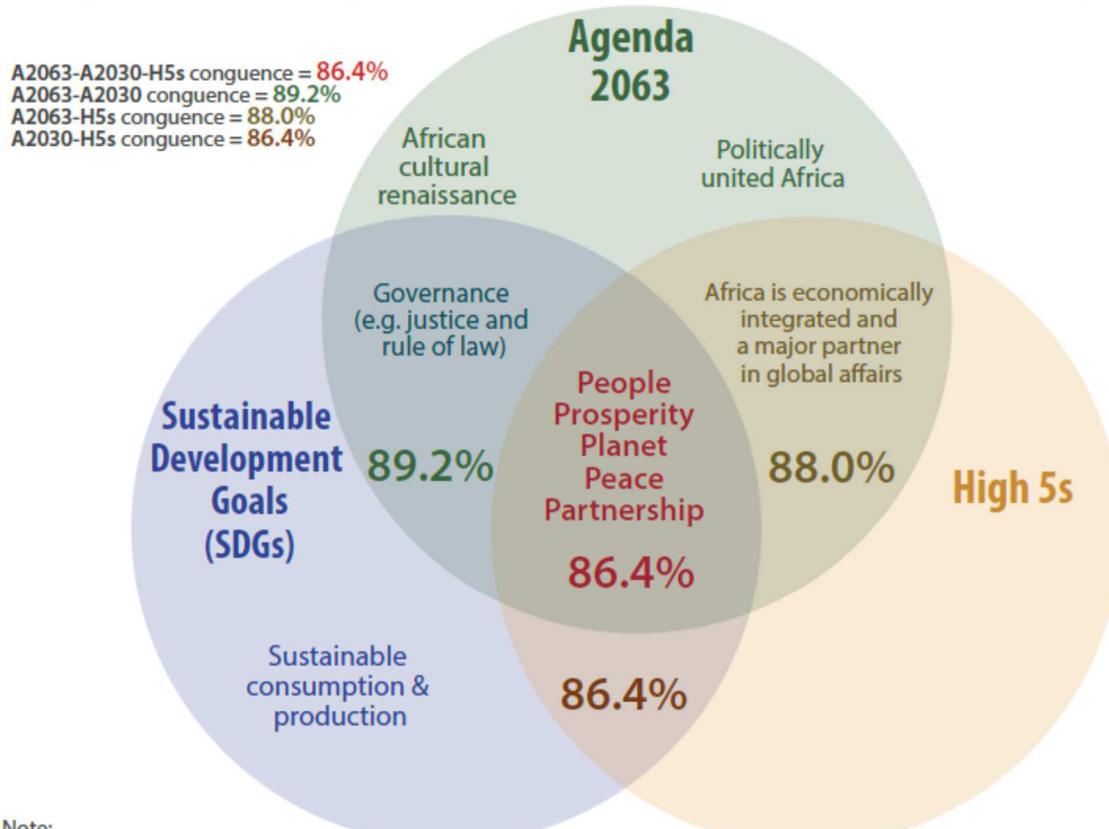
<sup>7</sup> For a detailed categorization of the SDGs into the six principles of dignity, prosperity, people, planet, partnership, and justice, see (Oduola, 2015); SDGs prioritization (Fall and Kamwendo, 2016); comparison among ongoing and emerging frameworks with strategic interest to Africa (including CAP, Agenda 2063, the SDGs and TICAD V) see UNDP (2015a); and comparison between the SDGs and Agenda 2063 see (UNDP, 2015b).

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Resilient nations.

**Figure 2: Extent of congruence between the SDGs, Agenda 2063, and the AfDB High 5s**



Note:

1. **People** e.g. wellbeing, healthy, and educated population, youth and women empowerment
2. **Prosperity** e.g. industrialization, modern agriculture, infrastructure development
3. **Planet** e.g. climate change, biodiversity, land degradation
4. **Peace** e.g. stability and resilience
5. **Partnership** e.g. governments, private sector, CSOs, development partners, and donors

**Prosperity:** The SDGs frame five of the goals (7-9, 11, and 12) through the prosperity lens – affordable energy, growth and productive employment, infrastructure and industrialization, sustainable cities and human settlement, and sustainable consumption and production patterns. In terms of Agenda 2063 side, in addition to two aspirations focused on prosperity, six goals (4, 5, 6, 9, 10, and 20) are dedicated to prosperity – modernizing agriculture, transformed economies, world-class infrastructure, continental financial system, financing Africa’s development, and promoting a blue economy. All five Hi5s strategies have a significant bearing on prosperity, especially *Light up and power Africa*, *industrialize Africa*, and *integrate Africa*. The central role that the strategies assign to science, technology, and innovation, particularly in the first and fifth, is very significant. The three agendas underline the importance of prosperity to bridge the human and infrastructural development deficits in Africa.

**Planet:** The need to respect the planet Earth, in terms of environmental sustainability, is prominent among the three agendas. The SDGs place considerable emphasis on the environment, with six environmentally-focused goals (6, 7 and 12-15) – water and sanitation, energy, sustainable consumption

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and production pattern, climate change, ocean and marine resources, terrestrial ecosystem, and biodiversity. Goals 6 and 7 of Agenda 2063 – focusing on blue economy and climate resilient economies and communities with particular focus on climate change adaptation and mitigation – underpin the imperative of promoting environmental sustainability in Africa. The Hi5s not only dedicate H1 (climate financing) and H2 (climate smart agriculture) to environmental sustainability, but also stipulate all forms of resilience, governance of natural resources, and climate change as among the cross-cutting issues for AfDB’s strategic engagement in Africa. There is unanimity on the need to bridge the climate change paradox in Africa: the continent contributes the least to the carbon footprint, but bears the heaviest burden of the impact of climate change.

**Peace:** The SDGs and Agenda 2063 focus on democratic governance and peaceful, safe, just, and inclusive societies, while the Hi5s focus on economic governance and institutional development and, indirectly, through the five strategies to promote peace and inclusive societies. SDG 16 emphasizes effective governance, based on effective, inclusive and accountable institutions, the rule of law, protection of human rights, and freedom from fear and violence. The third aspiration of Agenda 2063 - *‘an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law’* - aligns with SDG 16, adding specific language on democracy, which is absent in Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda. The fourth aspiration of the continental agenda, *‘A peaceful and secure Africa’*, focuses on peace and security, covering issues of conflict prevention and resolution, human security, illegal human trafficking, and including a pledge to end all wars by 2020. Overall, Goals 11-15 of Agenda 2063 focus on peace. The premise of the Hi5s strategies is that improving access to electricity, eliminating hunger, and providing decent jobs through the five strategies addresses the fundamental and structural causes of conflicts in Africa. Creating cross-cutting governance issues that focus on promoting fiscal decentralization, enhancing public financial management, stopping illicit financial flows, and deepening domestic resource mobilization also provides a basis for promoting good governance, peace, and stability in Africa. Consensus exists on the need to strengthen economic management capacities, promote economic governance, deepen domestic resource mobilization, and stop illicit financial flows in Africa.

**Partnership:** The three agendas consider an innovative and results-oriented partnership to be the building blocks to implement the other goals and strategies effectively. SDG 17 issues a call to renew the global partnership for development and mobilize the means necessary to implement the new agenda, including in the areas of finance (domestic, international, private, and public), trade, science, technology and innovation, capacity development, and a more inclusive system of global governance. The role of partnerships under Agenda 2063 is raised to the level of an aspiration: *‘Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner’*. Both the SDGs and Agenda 2063 underscore the importance of self-reliance and effective domestic resource mobilization, reducing aid dependency, halting illicit financial flows, and gaining access to technology and innovation. The Hi5s strategy, on other hand, gives primacy to public-private partnerships, co-financing facilities, and innovative partnerships with non-traditional actors. Unlike the other two agendas that focus on all-embracing partnerships, the Hi5s emphasize partnerships based on each of the five strategies, including green growth partnerships, transformative partnerships on energy for Africa, agricultural transformation partnerships for Africa, and the African Investment Forum, among others. This creates partnerships that are more focused and result-oriented.

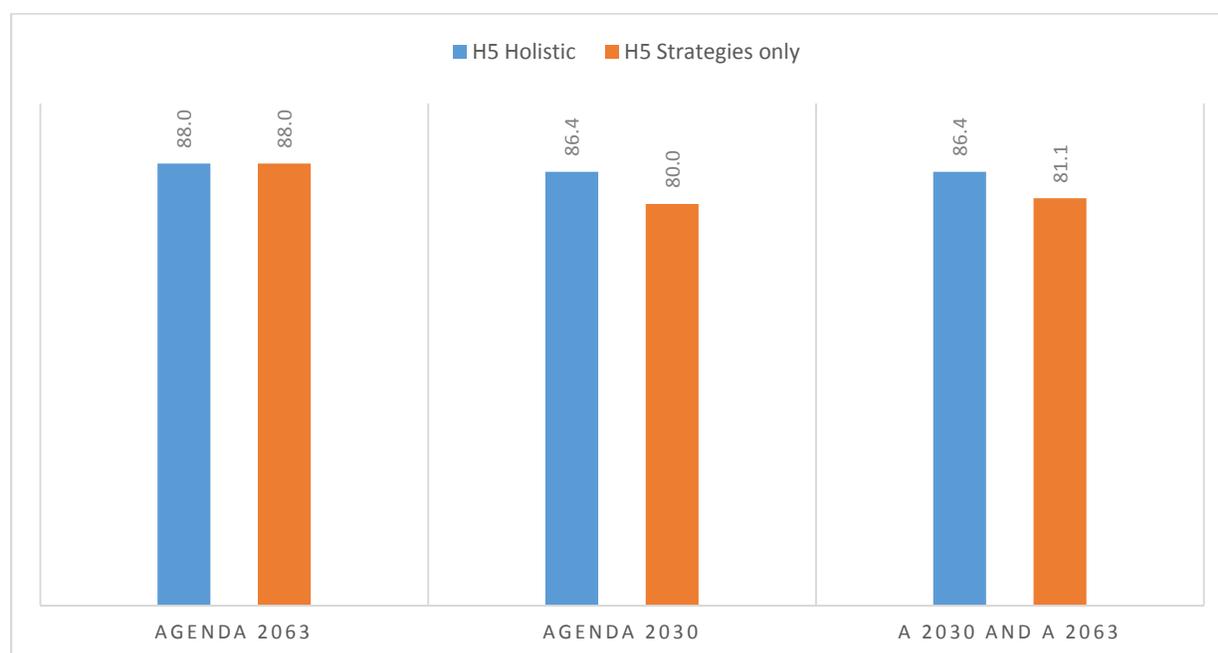
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These agendas cannot be implemented and monitored at the national and regional levels without partnerships.

Congruence between the AfDB Hi5s and other continental and global agendas is quantified and displayed in Figure 3, below. When both the Hi5s strategies and the holistic form are considered, they are 88.00 percent congruent with the African Union’s Agenda 2063. As indicated in Figure 1, the Hi5s and Agenda 2063 address the vision of Africa becoming an economically integrated and a major partner in global affairs. Effectively implementing these issues will help the continent to achieve the overarching goal of becoming “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven and managed by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena,” as articulated in Agenda 2063.

**Figure 3: Congruence of the AfDB Hi5s with Agenda 2063, 2030 Agenda and the combination of Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda<sup>8</sup>**



Given the importance the SDGs assign to climate change, the ‘Hi5s holistic’ approach is more aligned to the SDGs than when only the Hi5 Strategy is considered. This varies from 80.0 percent congruence (when only the five strategies are considered) to 86.4 percent (when the Hi5 holistic

<sup>8</sup> Given the unbalanced bases between two agendas, a normalized base (i.e. the sum of the agendas’ goals or strategies) is used.

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approach is considered). The strategic interventions in both the Hi5s and the SDGs tend to give prominence to a broader perspective of inequalities both within and between countries.

Congruence between the Hi5 (holistic approach) and the combined 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 is as high as 86.4 percent. This shows that synergy exists in the combined implementation of these agendas in Africa. When the two sub-common goals (ensuring Africa becomes economically integrated; and promoting good governance including ensuring rule of law and access to justice) are mainstreamed into the implementation and monitoring strategies, the impact could be substantial. Building coalitions and partnerships for the integrated implementation and monitoring of the three agendas in Africa is therefore pivotal.

## 4. Towards a joint implementation of the three agendas

Africa has never lacked solid developmental ideas. The missing link – translating visions and development plans into concrete development outcomes – has always been the challenge to implementation. Joel Barker's conclusion - *"Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world"*<sup>9</sup> – is thus quite apt in the African context. Aligning development aspirations within the African region, and between Africa and the globe, is a starting point to promote better implementation through aligning ideas, strategies, processes, and practices. It lays a solid foundation for building coalitions and partnerships around Africa's development priorities. This alignment should take the form of both programme interventions and implementation by enhancing the capacities of national and regional institutions to increase sustainability, coordinate institutions and partners, and develop joint monitoring and evaluation frameworks for the three agendas in Africa.

## 5. Conclusions

The Hi5s have a high degree of operationality and their implementation strategy is stronger than the Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063. Committed implementation of the Hi5s could yield an effective implementation of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 to a level of about 90 percent. Combined implementation of these agendas in Africa creates synergy. In this respect, building a strong partnership among the AfDB, the African Union, and UNDP offers a valuable opportunity to promote synergy and manage trade-offs associated with these three agendas.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://brooksinternational.com> Joel Barker is an independent scholar and futurist. He was the first person to popularize the concept of paradigm shifts. He is known around the world as the "Paradigm Man." Sep 29, 2011.

## Annex 1 The extent of congruence between the SDGs, Agenda 2063, and AfDB High 5s

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030	AU Agenda 2063 (2023 target for the 1 <sup>st</sup> 10-year plan)	AfDB High 5s 2025
<b>Goal 1:</b> End poverty in all its forms everywhere	<b>Goal 1:</b> A high standard of living, quality of life and wellbeing for all	H5 Improve the quality of Life
<b>Goal 2:</b> End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture	<b>Goal 5:</b> Modern agriculture for increased productivity and production	H2 Feed Africa; H5 Improve the quality of life
<b>Goal 3:</b> Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	<b>Goal 3:</b> Healthy and well-nourished citizens	H5 Improve the quality of life
<b>Goal 4:</b> Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	<b>Goal 18:</b> Engaged and empowered youth and children	H5, H4 Integrate Africa, H3 Industrialize Africa, H1 Light up and power Africa, H2 Feed Africa
	<b>Goal 2:</b> Well-educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation	H5
<b>Goal 5:</b> Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	<b>Goal 17:</b> Full gender equality in all spheres of life	H1, 2, 3, 4, 5 + cross-cutting with Gender
<b>Goal 6:</b> Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	<b>Goal 7:</b> Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities	H1, 2, 3, 4, 5 + cross-cutting with Climate Change H1&2
<b>Goal 7:</b> Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all		
<b>Goal 8:</b> Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all	<b>Goal 4:</b> Transformed economies and job creation	H2, 3, 4, 5
<b>Goal 9:</b> Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation	<b>Goal 10:</b> World-class infrastructure that crisscrosses Africa	H1, 2, 3, 4, 5
<b>Goal 11:</b> Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable		H4, 1
<b>Goal 10:</b> Reduce inequality within and among countries	<b>Goal 1:</b> A high standard of living, quality of life and wellbeing for all	H1, 4,5
<b>Goal 13:</b> Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	<b>Goal 5:</b> Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities <b>Goal 6:</b> Blue/ ocean economy for accelerated economic growth	H4 cross-cutting with Fragility and Resilience, H5
<b>Goal 14:</b> Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development		
<b>Goal 15:</b> Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss		
<b>Goal 16:</b> Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels	<b>Goal 11:</b> Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched	Cross-cutting with Governance + H1-5
	<b>Goal 12:</b> Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels	
	<b>Goal 13:</b> Peace, security, and stability are preserved	
	<b>Goal 14:</b> A stable and peaceful Africa	
<b>Goal 17:</b> Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	<b>Goal 15:</b> A fully functional and operational African peace and security architecture	H1, 2, 3, 4, 5
	<b>Goal 9:</b> Key continental financial and monetary institutions established and functional	
	<b>Goal 19:</b> Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful co-existence	
<b>Goal 12:</b> Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	<b>Goal 20:</b> Africa takes full responsibility for financing her development	H1, 2, 3, 4, 5
	<b>Goal 8:</b> United Africa (federal or confederate)	
	<b>Goal 16:</b> African Cultural Renaissance is pre-eminent	

NB: Red items denote areas of divergence between A-2030 and A-2063; and inequality in Agenda 2063 is imbedded under Aspiration 1 (Goal 1).

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