



african monitor

African voices for Africa's development

ANNUAL REPORT 2016



INTRODUCTION:

African Monitor's framing mandate for the last four years has been "Unlocking the African Moment: A grassroots led agenda". This framing mandate captures African Monitor's primary goal to promote a grassroots-led and people-centred development agenda among policy makers in Africa and globally, and to build the capacity of African citizens to participate effectively in development delivery.

The year 2015 was a pivotal moment in the development sector, marked the conclusion of the global deliberations on the Sustainable Development Goals. The intergovernmental negotiations at the United Nations, the global summit on Finance for Development and the UN General Assembly were some of the key milestones in the journey towards the adoption of the Sustainable Development Agenda (SDGs). During the same period, African countries adopted Agenda 2063 as the regional framework for sustainable development. African Monitor positioned itself influence the outcomes of both these development frameworks (i.e. Agenda 2063 and the SDGs) through extensive engagements with decision makers within the region.

Through our three programmes i.e. Voice Africa's Future, Africa CSO Working Group on Post2015, and Action 2015, our intention in 2015 has been to meet the following objectives:

- i. Scale up focussed advocacy, influencing and engagement activities with key stakeholders that are shaping the post-2015 development agenda and Agenda 2063 in order to advance a youth centred and people centred development agenda based on principles of inclusive development, equity and human rights.
- ii. Strengthen African Monitor's institutional capacity to provide on-going leadership and support to African civil society, VAF partners, and grassroots communities to engage with the post-2015 development agenda.

This annual report summarises key results achieved through programme activities in 2015. Section A of this report presents an executive summary of the key achievements and result areas of AM's initiatives. This is followed by a report of the main activities and events, organised according to national, regional and global action and results.

Advocacy and influencing work at the global level targeted the United Nations, especially the Africa Group – where the focus was to promote a pro-youth and pro-poor development agenda; and safeguarding priority goals and targets. Advocacy and influencing activities at regional level were conducted with the broader CSO Community – leveraging the collective voice of African CSO's to engage specific regional policy processes. Advocacy and influencing work at country level focused on engaging national policy makers on one hand, and mobilizing a broader youth voice on the other.

A. SUMMARY OF RESULTS:

YOUTH ACTION SHAPING SDG OUTCOMES IN AFRICA

6 COUNTRIES

South Africa. Uganda.
Ethiopia. Burkina Faso.
Malawi. Kenya.

18 YOUTH CHAMPIONS

63 YOUTH-LED EVENTS

Engaging with youth community, Ministers & other govt. officials, Parliament, &

25 AFRICAN MINISTERS

& other government officials directly engaged on SDG

70 000+ SIGNATURES

Supporting the African Youth Petition on SDG's

4 POLICY BRIEFS

& position papers produced on Indicators, Means of Implementation, Financing for Development & Review and Monitoring mechanism for SDG's.

3 Missions to the UN

Leading to engagements with

11 AFRICAN

The overall result or outcome of combined activities has been increased visibility and influence of African youth and CSO's in African government positions on the SDG agenda in all 6 countries; the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and notable presence and influence at the regional and global levels.

Commitment was secured from high-level policy makers in all 6 countries to streamline and prioritize youth development in the negotiations around SDG's, and in the implementation of sustainable development through national policies. AM youth champions used direct bi-lateral engagements, multi-stakeholder forums and the VAF youth petition to engage with Ministers, Ambassadors and Heads of States.

African youth capacity to engage with their policy makers at national level was established and strengthened. Action-based learning proved a powerful tool to support citizen agency. One VAF champion commented: *"Before I got involved in the Voice Africa's Future campaign, I had never met a Minister in my country, and never thought it possible that one day I would meet one. But since I started being involved in the campaign I have met our Ministers and other people from government, and now I am not afraid anymore. I know exactly what to say to them to share our position at VAF."*

Visibility of African youth and CSO perspectives was increased and sustained throughout the various phases of the post-2015 SDG agenda process at national, regional and global level. Both African youth and African CSO's were represented and had a strong influential voice (including official speaking roles) during key national, regional and global decision making platforms, including UN processes.

Substantive technical input was provided to African governments through various processes including Financing for Development, the SDG Outcome document, and SDG indicators. African Monitor has further produced numerous policy position papers (policy briefs) and submissions related to the SDG's and Agenda 2063.

Strong partnership, buy-in and collaborative trust established between African Monitor, African civil society and African governmental representatives at the regional and global levels. African Monitor, VAF partners and the AWG have become the go-to organisations for governments seeking technical support and civil society participation in the sustainable development sector. AM has also co-hosted a number of events with NEPAD & member states.

African position on SDG indicators influenced. African Monitor is one of the few civil society organisations that have been invited to give input into the process of developing African indicators for the SDG's.

African Monitor's capacity to coordinate African CSO's and African youth has been strengthened. African Monitor has played a critical role to ensure that this platform is a coherent, effective and visible player in the SDG process within the region.

African Monitor has contributed to the establishment of SDG implementation & monitoring forums in countries like Uganda, Kenya, and Burkina Faso.

B. NATIONAL INFLUENCING ACTION:

VAF YOUTH CHAMPIONS SHAPING NATIONAL POSITIONS ON THE SDG's

YOUTH LED/FOCUSED ACTIVITIES TO INFLUENCE DECISION MAKERS:

A significant number of activities and events were organized in 6 countries, with the following highlights:

- **In Burkina Faso**, the VAF Youth Petition was handed over to the President of the Republic, and a meeting was held with the Minister of Finance, and the newly appointed Minister of Youth to agree on key priorities for youth development to be included in the National Development Plan. Subsequently, AM Director conducted a mission to support youth champions in their engagements with the government. During this mission meetings with the Presidency and Ministry of Youth were held, and agreement was reached to establish a multi-stakeholder forum to monitor implementation.
- **In Uganda**, numerous meetings were held with the Ugandan Chairman and other officials of the National Planning Authority (NPA), as well as Members of Parliament to secure political commitment to deliver on sustainable development. As part of this programme, AM Director conducted a mission to Uganda, where during meetings with youth representatives the National Planning Commission made a commitment to work with youth and civil society in Uganda on the implementation and monitoring of development commitments.
- **In South Africa**, numerous roundtable discussions on SDG's were organized by VAF and civil society to engage with DIRCO (Department of International Affairs and Cooperation) and DPME (Department of Monitoring and Evaluation) on the SDGs, where agreement was reached to establish a CSO coalition to engage with government on issues of sustainable development.
- **In Malawi**, the State of the Union High-Level Dinner on the African Youth Charter (AYC) was organized where 105 delegates including government officials and Members of Parliament endorsed the VAF Youth Petition. Further meetings were held with the Minister of Youth, who also gave government commitment to implement youth priorities. Also, the VAF team led the drafting of the final communiqué that was presented to the President after several consultations to gather civil society perspectives.
- **In Ethiopia**, a high level policy forum on International Youth Day in Ethiopia was held with the aim of promoting youth engagement and participation around the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.
- **In Kenya**, a bilateral meeting was held with the Director of the MDG Unit in the Ministry of Planning in Kenya to share the VAF Key Asks, and promote youth participation.

Voice Africas Future youth champions and country coordinators used various media platforms to promote key messages, and participated in several regional and global processes to promote and share Key Asks. In a majority of these engagements, VAF champions were invited to show-case and share youth perspectives. Furthermore, VAF champions have attended numerous events organised by UN agencies at the national and regional levels.

LOOKING AHEAD:

The year 2015 was an important milestone in the sustainable development agenda given the impending adoption of the SDG's. Post the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, the focus must shift towards ensuring that African countries have effective strategies to domesticate the SDG agenda at the national level. Domestication for African Monitor entails aligning the SDGs to Agenda 2063 as the regional development framework; and to further ensure that both global and regional agendas are integrated into National Development Plans. Furthermore, it is important to create suitable conditions for the implementation of sustainable development commitments by ensuring that structures are in place for multi-stakeholder decision making and monitoring, to ring-fence financing for critical delivery priorities, and to establish an effective review and monitoring mechanism at the country level. The participation of youth and civil society in these processes at the national level remains a critical element to the achievement of sustainable development in Africa.

C. REGIONAL INFLUENCING & ENGAGEMENT:

CSOs INFLUENCING AFRICA'S POSITIONS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

African Monitor and partners have played a significant role engaging with the African Union member states during the development of the Common African Position (2013) and during the Open Working Group (2014). In 2015 the focus has been maintaining focus and resolve of African governments to prioritise key African positions during the intergovernmental negotiations on SDG's; and to inform and strengthen their positions on emerging themes such as financing development, means of implementation, and the monitoring and review framework. In the period after September 2015, the focus shifted towards establishing a working partnership with AU agencies, especially the African Union Commission and NEPAD to promote Agenda 2063, and to promote the domestication and implementation of the SDG's in Africa. These development entities have been concerned with aligning the SDGs to Agenda 2063 and integrating this into National Development Plans.

AM & AFRICA CSO WORKING GROUP ENGAGING WITH REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS:

Partnership with NEPAD:

African Monitor's key strategy is to work closely with NEPAD to bring active CSO participation in its work activities as it promotes the domestication of Agenda 2063 and the SDG's through CAADP and other programmes. NEPAD has identified and is prioritizing CAADP as an avenue through which to implement the SDGs with member states. AWG participated in a CAADP Partnership Platform preparatory meeting at the end of February 2016 organized by the African Union Commission and NEPAD Secretariat. The theme of this year's CAADP-PP was "Innovative financing for agriculture development". In the context of these discussions, AWG advocated for financing mechanisms that benefit marginalized groups especially youth and rural women; as well as need for improved openness, accountability and transparency of the private sector. The CAADP PP was held on the 10-15 April, where AWG facilitated the participation of African CSO representatives. During the meetings, bi-lateral engagements were also held between AWG members present and key policy makers namely; Commissioner Rhoda Peace (AU Commissioner for Rural Economy), Kadré Desiré Ouedraogo, President of ECOWAS; H.E. John Kufour, former President of Ghana and President of the Kufour Foundation; Dr Agnes Kalibata, President of Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA); Hon. Prof. Monty Jones, Minister of Agriculture Food Security & Forestry (Sierra Leone); Prof. R M Mkandawire, Vice President African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP). The key outcomes of engagements were a strengthened link between AWG teams in specific countries with programs of AGRAA, ECOWAS, among others.

Engagement with Permanent Secretaries of the African Union:

African Monitor and AWG participated in the Permanent Secretaries Retreat, which took place on the 10-11 March 2016. The main objective of the retreat was to provide a space where Permanent Secretaries can reflect on CAADP and their work in general. From the Africa CSO Working Group perspective we were keen to ensure that SDGs and Agenda 2063 are well integrated into the implementation strategy for CAADP. During this engagement, briefing sessions were organized with Permanent Secretaries and Directors from Togo, Ghana, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Cameroon, Zambia, Malawi, Cameroon, South Africa, Swaziland, Lesotho, and Uganda. During these engagements, it was clear that there is little understanding among departmental officials on

the role of the 2030 Agenda in national planning and implementation. AWG shared strategies that can be used by national departments to mainstream the SDGs.

Engagement with United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA):

African Monitor and partners have sought to develop strong relationships with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, which has significant influence on the development of policy to support the African Union. Engagement with the following key individuals/offices is on-going: Aida Opoku Mensah (Advisor to UNECA Executive Secretary on post 2015) and Adam Elhiraika and Gamal Ebrahim (Head of UNECA Macroeconomic Division and Deputy Head of UNECA Macroeconomic Division, respectively). Through these on-going dialogues a working relationship has been established, which has ensured the participation of Africa CSO Working Group at key regional platforms, including the FfD Consultations, African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, among others.

ON ALIGNING NATIONAL POLICIES TO AGENDA 2063 & SDGs

A regional meeting on aligning national and regional responses to SDGs was held in Accra from 3-4 December 2015. It was jointly organized by the Africa CSO Working Group and the NEPAD Agency and was attended by 45 participants drawn from the Africa CSO Working Group, farmers' organizations, advocacy groups at local, national and regional levels.

The objective was to identify and agree on opportunities for increased engagement and participation of local CSOs in aligning CAADP to SDGs especially related to (a) advocacy at national and regional levels; (b) strengthening community level CSO groups and networks to play an active role in delivering on selected SDG targets within the agriculture sector; (c) Identifying opportunities to strengthen the role of local CSO groups in monitoring and accountability through their involvement in national mutual accountability platforms and processes. The CAADP programme proved to be a useful case study as it is seen as one of the regional responses to the SDGs.

The meeting identified that key opportunities for CSO involvement included advocacy at local, national and regional levels. While multi-stakeholder dialogues are functional in a few countries, these need to be enhanced in a majority of countries. NEPAD committed to avail advocacy space for AWG engagement with national and regional policy makers on SDG implementation, and the indicator development process.

ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN SDG INDICATORS:

African Statistical Offices had a mandate to develop the Africa position on SDG Indicators, which was later adopted through the United Nations in March 2016. African Monitor has sought to inform and influence this process by providing much needed technical support to the group of African Statistical Offices involved in developing the indicators. Within Africa, this process was led by the South African Statistician General.

- AM participated in a meeting of policy makers from Statistical institutions and SDG contact points from 18 African countries to frame and discuss SDG indicators in Pretoria, in April 2015, where African CSO's provided technical support. AM also participated in a meeting of over 50 African Member States in Algiers (from Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning, SDG contact points) to finalize the emerging African Indicator Framework.
- AM has also held engagements with Statistics South Africa (including the Statistician General) on the data revolution and role of CSOs.

The engagement with African Statistical Offices has led to increased opportunity for national CSO's to engage their statistical offices at the national level. For example, the governments of Tanzania, Ghana, Kenya, Botswana, South Africa, Swaziland, and Cameroon committed to on-going multi-stakeholder consultations subsequent to the calls for greater civil society participation.

ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

African Monitor participated in the regional consultations to prepare for the Finance for Development global conference, and further provided technical support to Africa Group negotiators during the conference.

- **Africa regional consultation on FfD:** A dialogue was held with the Africa Group Negotiators during the Finance for Development Consultations in April 2015, to prepare for the Finance for Development Conference in July 2015. The key negotiators present during the meeting included Mr Abdallah Bong (First Secretary Chad Embassy in NY), Mr Sunny Edem (First Secretary for Nigerian Embassy in NY), and Mr Thulane Nyembe (South Africa, Coordinator of Africa Group's First Committee on G77). A one page position paper was produced as a result, dealing with means of implementation in the SDG and FfD agenda at the request of the negotiators. This brief was used in the plenary discussions and captured in the outcome report.
- **Meetings with Finance Ministers:** Key informal bi-lateral meetings were held with several Ministers during the Meeting of African Ministers of Finance in March 2015. These various meetings were an opportunity for information exchange, intelligence gathering about positions of key countries on SDG's and FfD, mutual learning, and promoting African Monitor and VAF positions on the SDG's. Meetings were held with Ministers of Finance from Rwanda (Mr Claver Gatete), Ghana (Seth Tekpey), Gambia, Permanent Secretary of Finance of Zimbabwe (Willard Manungo) and Minister of Finance for Zimbabwe (Mr Patrick Chinamasa). Dialogues were further held with Country Teams from Gambia, Namibia, Botswana, Swaziland and Mali. The key outcome of the dialogues was to raise awareness on how FfD is linked to the SDG agenda – an area which was a big knowledge gap for government country teams.

AFRICA CSO WORKING GROUP STRATEGIC FOCUS

African Monitor has continued to provide coordination support to CSO's across Africa working on sustainable development. A series of dialogues and learning processes, which led to the development of AWG's focus areas:

- Provide support to African Policy makers to align and integrate national and regional responses to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development while promoting inclusion and ownership.
- Host a platform for stakeholder engagement on solutions, mutual learning facilitated and coordinated to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Support CSOs and increase their capacity to generate and use data in SDG implementation, monitoring, reporting and accountability
- Link and strengthen sub-national, national, regional and global actions on SDG implementation.
- Prioritize advocacy on financing in SDGs and Agenda 2063 implementation

Since the signing of SDGs in September, the Africa CSO Working Group has been enhancing and strengthening its reach among CSOs at the regional and global level as the key platform for engagement on SDGs. To strengthen this, several discussions are underway with key global alliances such as Together 2030 and Action on Sustainable Development to develop and sign MOUs to collaborate better. Partnership has also been established with key regional partners such as NEPAD and UNECA to recognize Africa CSO Working Group as the key regional platform for engagement at the Africa and global levels. Because of this, African Monitor and the Africa CSO Working Group are able to penetrate and engage in more strategic spaces at national, regional and global levels.

LOOKING AHEAD:

Results achieved at the regional level demonstrate the importance of apex platforms or organisations in coordinating CSO engagement, such as the African CSO Working Group, as well as the importance of

organisations like African Monitor which support those platforms. Effective CSO coordination eliminate fragmentation and presents a strong resource to African governments even from the perspective of technical expertise. Furthermore, there has been immense value and reward gained from investing in and developing relationships with key African institutions, including the African Union, NEPAD, African Statistical Offices, Sherpas, Permanent Representative Councils and UNECA. Going forward, AM will leverage on these relationships to drive the domestication agenda in a way that promotes the integration of the SDG's to Agenda 2063 and National Development Plans; and in a way that promotes people's participation – especially women and youth.

D. GLOBAL INFLUENCING & ENGAGEMENT:

INFORMING, INFLUENCING & SUPPORTING THE AFRICAN REPRESENTATIVES TO THE UNITED NATIONS

African Monitor's vantage point at the global level is access to the Africa Group, i.e. the group of negotiators that represent African countries at the United Nations. This group is made up of all the African Permanent Representatives to the United Nations. Over and above influencing this group in order to shape the Africa position, AM and partners also targeted South Africa, who as Chair of the G77 & China had an influential role.

INPUTS AND SUBMISSIONS:

African Monitor and partners have taken every opportunity to make inputs and submissions into various documents developed during the negotiations on the SDG's, the Indicators and the Finance for Development, including:

- Various drafts of the Finance for Development Outcome Document. Consolidated submission were made to the Africa Group. The inputs and comments were used during the FfD negotiations, and positive feedback from the Africa Group was received.
- At the request of Africa's key negotiators in the FfD process, a short analysis was developed and submitted on Means of Implementation under SDGs and in relation to FfD.
- Submissions were made at each stage of the intergovernmental negotiation sessions and inputs were shared with major groups on women, youth and children, key civil society partners, UN agencies and key government contacts.
- Responses were developed featuring strong youth perspectives, targeting the SG Report on the Post 2015 Agenda; the Post-2015 Development Agenda zero draft; the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA); and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

AFRICAN MONITOR EVENTS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

- **UN SIDE-EVENT:** African Monitor co-hosted a side event themed "*Regional and National Follow-up and Review Mechanisms: Opportunities and challenges for the post-2015 development agenda in Africa*" at the United Nations, on the margins of the post-2015 negotiation session on Review and Accountability in May 2015. The event was co-hosted with the Government of Tanzania, the Africa CSO Working Group on post-2015, Beyond 2015 Africa, NEPAD, and African Development Interchange Network.
- **FFD SIDE EVENT:** African Monitor co-hosted a side event at the FfD Conference in Addis Ababa with the Government of Tanzania, Government of Kenya and Government of Cameroon and the Africa CSO Working Group. Panellists at the event included Ambassador Kamau (UN SDG Co-chair), and the Director General of Ministry of Planning in Cameroon. The side event raised the urgency of domestic resource mobilisation and the role for African CSOs after the adoption of FfD and SDG agendas.
- **UNGA SIDE EVENT:** AM co-host a high-level side event during UNGA with NEPAD and the Government of Zambia, to bring attention to practical strategies for promoting people centred development in the context of the SDG's. Panellists at this forum will include AM President, Archbishop Ndungane and Dr Mayaki, CEO or NEPAD.

ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS WITH KEY SDG INFLUENCERS:

- Dialogue with Ambassador Macharia Kamau: Held in July 2015 on the side-lines of the FfD Conference in Addis. He took time to share intelligence on the UN process and emphasized key issues around the post-2015 agenda, which in turn sharpened our strategic actions.

- Meeting with the Office of the Secretary General, United Nations: An African CSO delegation met with Nelson Muffuh from the Office of the Secretary General in May 2015.
- Dialogue with Minister Nene, Finance Minister, South Africa: AM coordinated a meeting between South African CSOs and Minister Nene at the FfD Conference in Addis. The meeting touched on the global tax body, common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR), and means of implementation.
- Meetings were held with negotiators of the Africa Group at the United Nations: African Monitor directly engaged in bi-laterals with government delegations of South Africa, Liberia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Nigeria, Chad, Egypt, Brazil, Zambia, Indonesia, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Niger.

LOOKING AHEAD:

At the global level, AM is focussing on leveraging the United Nations General Assembly and the UN High Level Political Forum as platform to bring attention to the implementation of sustainable development at country level. . This action will be supplemented with engagement with UNDP and UNECA as UN agencies to support efforts to create an enabling environment for African governments and African citizens to implement the SDG agenda.

E. CONCLUSION

LOOKING FORWARD TOWARDS EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION

African Monitor has achieved incredible results in FY2016. These included:

- the establishment and sustained engagement of youth champions and youth groups in participant countries;
- adoption of the VAF *Key Asks* as key priorities not only for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but also as national priorities for implementation;
- trust based collaborative relationships with a number of African development entities including specific member states, the African Union Commission, NEPAD Agency and the UN Economic Commission for Africa;
- establishment of SDG implementation and monitoring forums in a number of countries like Kenya, Burkina Faso, and Uganda.
- enabled and strengthened the visibility of African CSO's in the global discussions on the SDG's, FfD and Indicators. As the Secretariat for the Africa CSO Working Group, African Monitor has played a critical role to ensure that this platform is a coherent, effective and visible player. It will be important to continue doing this work, and to consolidate gains made to further strength relationships with key African institutions.

African Monitor's programme activities in the next 3-year period will aim to accelerate the domestication and implementation of the SDG's and Agenda 2063 as instruments for effective development delivery in Africa, by ensuring that (i) national policies prioritise the needs of vulnerable groups (especially youth), (ii) institutional mechanisms are in place to promote multi-stakeholder decision making, and (iii) systems for reporting, monitoring and review are in place and implemented.