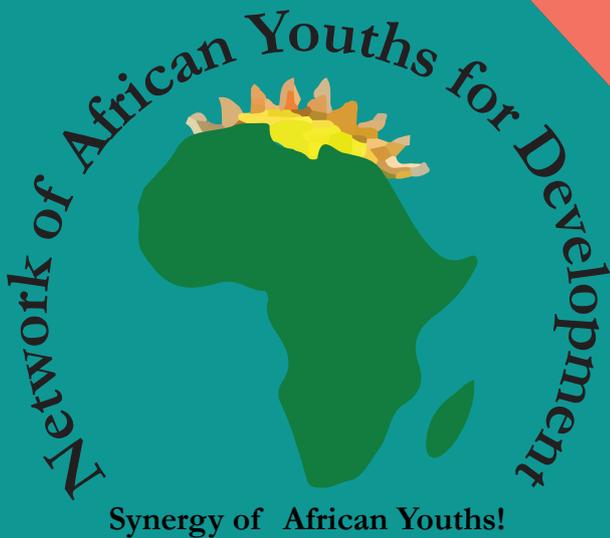


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M A G A Z I N E

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Special Edition

S D G s
& agenda
2063



<http://inspire.nayd.org>

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editorial

An Editorial by NAYD

This September will mark one year since the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by World Leaders, Goals that will guide the next 15 years in global development, Goals that pledge to leave no-one behind.

The Network of African Youths for Development (NAYD) has always had a focus on sustainable development and has been instrumental in promoting the SDGs prior to their adoption using its outreach capability to its thousands of members on social media. Since the adoption of Agenda 2030 the focus has turned to advocacy work in the implementation of SDGs, mainly through #NAYDSDGs, an initiative that seeks to collate the efforts of rural communities and youth-led CBOs in implementing Agenda 2030. A report of this Initiative is presented in this edition.

Young people should be at the core of any development goals as it is they who will be affected by these goals now and in the future. This is why NAYD advocates for youth-led devel-

opment, highlighting the work youth carry out in their local communities that impact positive social change. For this special edition we asked our members some questions on the SDGs and how they localize them. We also asked the opinion of young people who are not necessarily connected to the internet but are doing amazing work at the grassroots level.

As Africa progresses and youth are viewed as competent adults capable of actively taking part in matters that affect them, more young people become actively engaged in the process of sustainable development in various capacities. Their opinion matters and they represent other young people at the table as thought leaders. NAYD talked to some of these young experts and features their opinions here.

The post-2015 development agenda does not exist in a vacuum. It is important to place these goals in relation to national and regional development plans since they all ultimately lead towards a more

self-sustaining Africa. Agenda 2063 is a long-term development plan for Africa and we discuss how it intersects with the SDGs.

Finally, though African youth face the challenges of inadequate resources in their development efforts they need to be at the forefront of the process of implementing the SDGs. NAYD is a positive example of how young people have mobilized. However, these same people still need support through capacity building to nurture the skills they have.

As we mark one year of the SDGs, NAYD would like to appreciate all the young people who take the initiative and commitment to make their communities better for themselves and future generations. Your actions, every one single of them, contribute towards moving Africa to a sustainable future. The Network of African Youths for Development salutes you!

editorial team



Paul Shaw
Team Lead,
NAYD



Nkhensani Valoyi
Researcher, Skills Development and
Capacity Building



Judyannet Muchiri
Social Media Coordinator
& Editor, NAYD



J V. Camatsos
Layout Designer
Creative Camatsos

#NAYDSDGs

Implementing Agenda 2030 in RURAL AFRICAN COMMUNITIES



#NAYDSDGs Burundi holds a discussion on the SDGs

#NAYDSDGs is essentially SDG17 – Partnership for Development with a focus on rural African Communities. NAYD is well positioned to progress SDG17 since it has members throughout Africa active in rural community development. Many of these members are youth leaders of Community Based Organisations (CBOs). Whilst an individual CBO's scope of development is restricted to a small number of communities in each country, the NAYD network stretches to many locations throughout the continent. #NAYDSDGs believes that encouraging CBOs to work together and share their networks with each other would substantially increase the impact in

rural community development. Following an initial meeting on January 2nd 2016, the consensus of those present was to create a platform to implement as well as monitor the progress of the SDGs in rural communities in Africa.

Objectives

- Identify community based SDG priorities and nuance them with community contexts
- Create awareness of the SDGs in local communities and build constituency
- Enable youth to monitor relevant SDGs in their community by creat-

ing a local monitoring platform

- Create a central knowledge hub that provides technical support, monitoring instruments, toolkits and indicators.
- Develop a capacity building programme that provides mentorship for youth-led organisations and initiatives in relation to the SDGs.

The objectives are implemented by a gender-sensitive country team made up of approximately seven members to coordinate and collaborate with other youth led organisations to benchmark and monitor the SDG activities and have agreed the following actions:-

Popularising & Localizing SDGs

- Understand how well rural communities understand the SDGs
- Conduct community wide

initiatives to create awareness

- Translate SDGs into local languages
- Map the SDGs into local experiences and activities that communities can relate to
- Identify together with the rural communities what issue is a priority to them in relation to SDGs.
- Use radio to reach as many people as possible in rural communities

Cooperation and Partnerships

- Collaborate with stakeholders locally, regionally and globally
- Ensure an open policy where input from all people at the community is valued
- Encourage active participation by women in the rural communities

ICT for rural communities

- Have a central office dedicated for each community, with solar panels and internet/mobile connections, to link all the communities to each other and to the world at large.
- Train rural communities on technolo-



#NAYDSDGs Niger meeting with the Special Councillor for Youth

gies they can use to address local development issues

- Encourage and nurture community-developed innovations.

Capacity building

- Breakdown SDGs into a language that speaks to the local communities
- Train teams on proposal writing and grant applications
- Train the trainers; equip the CBOs' youth leaders with skills that they can transfer to the rural communities

Mobilizing resources

- Form partnerships with national organizations and global organizations
- Train country teams on fundraising
- Seek to collaborate with local and national governments in local projects

Monitoring & Evaluation

- Use of mobile apps to monitor activities by the rural communities
- Devise ways that communities can self-report (through community meetings) and hold each other accountable

Progress-to-date

- Development of country teams and action plans. There are nearly 36 country teams and nearly all African countries are represented
- Regular social media meetings on Google hangout and Tweeter chats on SDGS
- Google hangouts
- 280 youths representing 226 organisations from all over Africa
- Registration on UN DESA

SOCIAL MEDIA

NAYD has been instrumental in creating awareness of the SDGs in the period before they were adopted in September, 2015. Through social media forums like Google+ love hangouts and Twitter NAYD invited young people well versed in the 17 priority areas covered by the SDGs and interviewed them in a bid to have the 60,000+ members of NAYD understand these goals better.

After the adoption of the SDGs, NAYD embarked on a new mission

focused on implementation of the SDGs. Through our weekly #NaydChat and live Google hangouts, we engage with young people who are actively engaged in the implementation of these goals at the community level. Specifically we have been hosting youth from the 54 countries to discuss the progress of implementing the SDGs at the grassroots. Most importantly these chats enable NAYD to identify the needs and challenges that youth-led CBOs are facing on the ground; Somalia is faced with huge security challenges, Swaziland faces lack of political commitment while Uganda still needs to create more awareness among the youth.

Besides engaging with the youth, we continue to interview experts in the 17 areas covered by the SDGs through short features that are published as Blog posts in the In Conversation Series for the youth to access at any time. We have focused on Community Engagement for Social Change, Ubuntu and Cooperation for Development in Africa, Quality Education for Sustainable Development and

Active Youth for Community Development in Africa. Through these social media activities NAYD hopes more young

people will be inspired into action in their local communities. Ultimately it is this combined effort that will lead to effective implementation of SDGs.

Challenges

There are many challenges:

- Eritrea for instance has little internet, no freedom of assembly, any activity is seen as suspicious and can lead to unwanted detention and possible disappearance. Young people are leaving the country in waves. Our team is based out of the country and is using social media to reach out but it is difficult to determine the impact. They are considering prioritising Eritreans in refugee camps in Ethiopia as their contribution to the SDG's.
- South Sudan has a fragile unitary government.
- Somalia's militia do not allow internet in rural communities and mobile communication is widely restricted because of security issues.

- CBO's are used to working independently and not collaboratively.
- It is difficult to get mixed gender teams in some countries.
- There is widespread ignorance of the SDGs throughout Africa.
- Translating existing community development activities into measurable SDGs
- Many African governments have not made firm commitments to the Goals.
- There is no easy to understand monitoring or benchmark system to measure progress in rural communities.
- Communication is problematic in rural communities through no power, regular power cuts, little or poor bandwidth or no internet and mobile phone limitations.
- Different languages and dialects that require SDGs to be communicated in a way that speakers of these languages can understand.
- Financial limitations to support projects by young people



#NAYDSGDs Ivory Coast Using Theatre to raise awareness of the SDGs

Government commitment

To make sure that agenda 2030 takes root at a local level and to help tackle the challenges faced above, we ask each African country's government and its leaders the following questions:-.

Will you develop a clear strategy on how the SDGs will be implemented ?

Will the process be inclusive and participatory ?

Will future spending reviews ensure a coherent cross-department SDGs delivery



Will a Government Minister be appointed for day-to-day responsibility of the SDGs



Will you allow and support progress to be independently reviewed by academia, business and civil society



Brusly Lickiby & Jyer Steven Magnondo of Tictacado Forum, Congo on a Sexual and Reproduction Health and Rights Campaign

Youth and the Agenda 2063

By Nkhensani Valoyi - Researcher Skills Development and Capacity Building



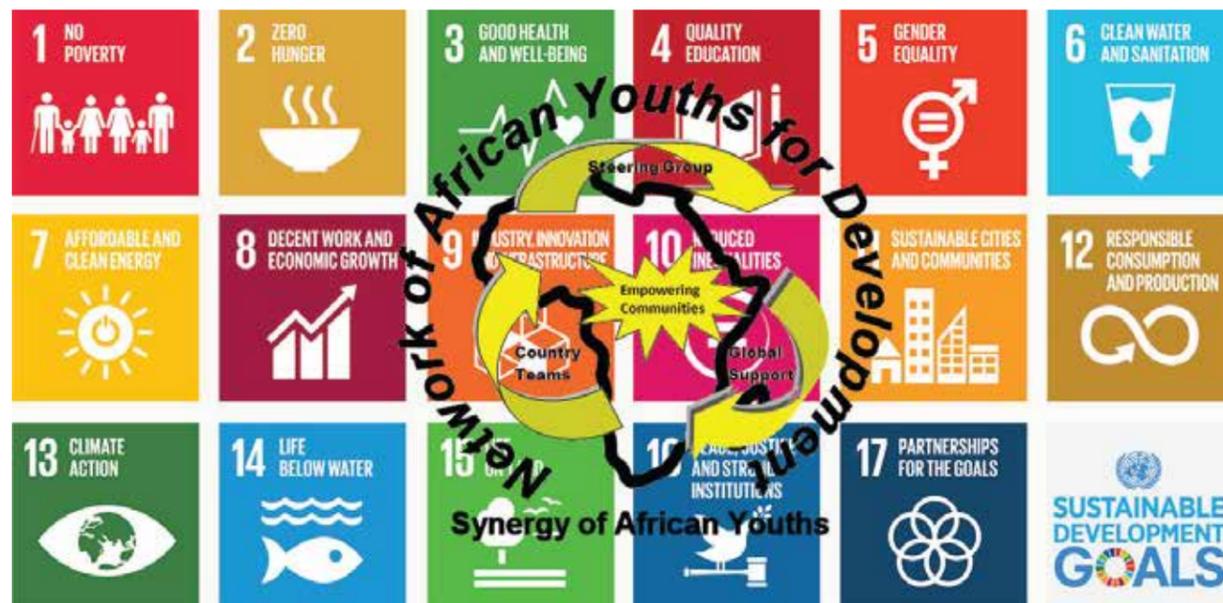
The Africa we want is a vision we should pride ourselves in; it is a vision we should all embark on a journey to achieve. Economic empowerment remains the core of our transformation needs. While in the past 50 years the focus was on decolonization, the way forward should be a collective effort to achieving the aspirations set in the Agenda 2063. It is quite sad that the Agenda 2063 isn't receiving the attention it should receive by our youth. Africa is a youthful continent which has potential to reach independence and its renaissance provided we all unite towards our shared vision. It is our duty as youth to be aware of the activities that take place in our continent and also to be involved in the implementation of the Agenda 2063 projects.

According to the economic outlook 2016, Africa's Growth in real GDP is estimated at 3.6%, higher than the 3.1% for the global economy and 1.5% for the euro area. Africa remained the world's second fastest growing economy after East Asia. In 2015, sub-Saharan Africa (excluding

South Africa) grew faster than the continental average, at 4.2%, with East Africa leading the way at 6.3%. Growth in Central, North and West Africa was above 3%, while Southern Africa grew by an average of 2.2. However, the reality on the ground is not as sweet as our numbers. Poverty and unemployment are still the monsters of our countries particularly in rural areas. We are living in thought-provoking times. The progression of the SDGs is in place, the Action 2030 and the first 10 years of implementation of the vision 2063 just started. It is perhaps time to prioritize our youth and women by generating opportunities that will permanently transform them, the transformation should reach all communities including rural areas. African states should educate their citizens on the Agenda 2063; young people are the vehicle towards the realization of this Agenda.

Below is a quick reminder of our aspirations:

- A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth.
- An integrated continent politically united.
- An Africa of good governance, with respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law.
- A peaceful and secure Africa.
- An Africa with a strong cultural identity, values and ethics.
- An Africa whose development is people-driven, especially by women and youth.
- Africa as a strong, resilient, and influential global player and partner.



What do young people make of SDGs one year on?

Views from the Grassroots from over 20 African Countries

1 How familiar are youth with the SDGs in your country?

Those who have access to ICT and media coverage are possibly familiar with SDGs but likely they do not fully understand them. This tends to be predominantly in urban areas. Those in remote areas, including community build organisation are in general not aware of the SDGs.

2. In which ways have you raised awareness of the SDGs in your local community?

Through various ways such as:

- Workshops
- Use of local media
- Through Model United Nations
- Discussions with Youth CSOs
- Individual community projects
- Newspaper articles

Recruitment of young volunteers in villages and small towns

- Radio programs
- Journals and magazines
- Generally talking to young people

about the SDGs and their benefits

- Youth leader meetings
- Facebook and Whatsapp groups
- Town hall meetings
- Theatre
- By educating citizens on how to engage their representatives in both the state and National assembly to demand service delivery for the execution of the SDGs projects in local communities.

3. What SDGs are your priority areas of action?

These varied with countries. (Should you want more information about priority areas in your country let us know)

4. What are the major challenges that youth in your country face as they implement the SDGs?

- Political sectarianism
- Lack of education at grassroots levels
- Limited access to global community
- Insecurity
- Exclusion from decision making mechanism
- Lack of information
- Inadequate knowledge & skills
- High rate of unemployment,
- Little deliberate effort by government to popularise SDGs,
- Poor access to internet and electricity in rural communities
- Self interest/not interested
- Social inequality
- Bureaucracy, Governments having no specific office for the SDGs
- Migration (Eritrea)
- Lack of technical
- Material and financial support especially from the government lacking

This is a comprehensive vision that complements the Sustainable Development Goals. At this point in time, given the knowledge that we have gathered regarding our continent, it is time for all of us to stop being audiences and get involved in the development of our continent. We should make the Agenda 2063 fashionable. I have seen so many tweets, articles and digital presence on SDGs by just a few on our vision.

Aspiration 6 speaks directly to African states to start including youth in decision making and the implementation process. Youth unemployment should be the focus in this case. I come from a small location called Letlhabile just next to Brits in the North West Province of South Africa. Letlhabile doesn't have much employment opportunities, so most of our youth look elsewhere particularly in big cities like Johannesburg and Pretoria. One thing though that stands out here is the small businesses that are operational and profitable. Some of them even employ 1 or 2 people. All these small businesses do have potential to grow; the problem though is that the owners don't know how to

grow them. They are not aware of opportunities that are out there, those that are aware are discouraged either because they do not understand compliance or just think is a lot of work. These businesses do provide for their families and have been in existence for many years. This is an opportunity to grow these businesses to employ more people in their community. Perhaps it is time for our government to look deeper in locations and rural areas and harness skill where passion and drive reside. This is the case with most rural areas and locations all around Africa.

The first 10 years action plan of our vision is where the focus is now; my favorite being the Africa's E-University. The complete list is available digitally on AU's website.

The vision states that "We rededicated ourselves to the enduring Pan African vision of "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena." We should all get involved; it all starts in our commu-

nities. Youth remain important in not only serving as a vehicle to changing their environments but to transforming their continent. The time is now. If we set our minds on it, it can be achieved.

- Access to audiovisual media
- UN SDGs, National and Local development plans do not specifically target youth so youth not fully engaged
- Inaccessible government data

5. To effectively implement the SDGs, what do young people in your country need?

- Political buy-in
- Empowerment in the form of material resource
- Jobs and capital
- Local forums facilitated by thought leaders
- Young people taught the difference between civil society and politics
- Proper implementation of the African Youth Charter
- Raising awareness of the benefits that will result from the SDGs
- National policies to encourage youth participation
- Monitoring tools
- Inclusion of the media to sensitize the SDGs
- Effective inclusion of youth as partners in policy development and

decision making

- Capacity building to make sense of the already available data (for instance formulating indicators) as well as in proposal writing and grant seeking
- National youth symposiums
- Regular media engagements of young people
- Holding of public lectures in the most rural areas of the country
- Organizing international youth exchange programs with much lower bureaucratic restrictions
- Establishment of a national Youth Task Force on the implementation of the SDGs International partnership

6. What are some of the major organizations/individuals involved in SDGs in your country?

A widespread selection of organizations were mentioned including the Mandela Washington Fellowship, the UN in various guises, National and local NGO and community organisations.

7. How collaborative are the implementation efforts?

No evidence of collaboration in most countries and limited to urban areas where it does exist such as the SDG Kenya Forum and UNFPA in Liberia. #NAYDSDSGs was mentioned as an example of collaborative efforts in rural areas.

8. What skills do young people already have that can make implementation of SDGs effective?

- Collaboration
- Negotiation
- Advocacy
- Community organizing and mobilization
- Creativity and innovation
- Communication (mass and social media)
- Enthusiasm
- Entrepreneurship
- Volunteers have a willingness to serve and grow,
- Experience of the MDGs

- Fight against injustice
- Trained skills like teaching, medicine, engineering, peace building and political science that are relevant to good governance

9. How supportive is the political environment in your country?

Opinion varied from hardly to very supportive.

10. On a scale of 1 to 10 how would you rate the implementation of SDGs in your country?

Most answers were in the 2-4 range.

11. Is there a clear alignment of your country's National Development Plan with the SDGs?

Varied between countries from no alignment with most countries saying there was an alignment but matched by comments like 'no concrete action to match the plan'.

12. What do you think of the #NAYDSDGs Initiative?

Young people positively view and embrace the #NAYDSDGs Initiative:

- 'A fantastic space for youth in Africa to share information and knowledge'
- 'It is noble in that it affects the rural areas which has long been the toughest of challenges for our various governments'
- 'This initiative will help African youths have a common progressive platform to meet people of like minds'

They also have some advice for the #NAYDSDGs Initiative to take into account:

- 'We must stay apolitical'
- 'We need to have a partnership with the government and UN to have a real chance to be effective'
- 'We may not gain traction if proponents in individual countries try to sell it as a standalone initiative'
- 'It can achieve its objectives if it is inclusive, well structured and has material and financial support'

Views from the Experts

P a t s o n M a l i s a



On a scale of 1-10 how would you rate the implementation of SDGs across I would rate it at a 4. The reasons being as follows:

- Africa has a wonderful growth vision as set out in the Agenda 2063 declaration. This 50-year plan is facilitated by a decade monitoring mechanism which is entrusted to the African Union Commission, working with other organs of the African Union and sovereign states. This plan of action can produce an Africa that has global prestige in the policy and market space if implemented.

- The economic growth rate in Sub-Saharan Africa shrunk to 3.0 percent in 2015 according to World Bank analysis.

- The factors that are contributing to this shrink are of external and internal nature. Externally, the focus of the developed world is more on rescuing the current world order from economic and security factors. The end of the global commodity super-cycle is also making the price of precious commodities hard to place at profitable positioning for the seller countries. This is forcing Africa to a realization that sooner or later, mass

industrialization and production of indigenous products will be a matter of survival, and not a mere ancillary to the raw material market.

- There is a resolve among member states to cooperate in writing towards integrated development. However, the practicality is proving challenging as tariff, commerce and immigration regulations are proving hard to reform. In some recent instances, there seems to be a tightening of the bottleneck in a contrary move to the agreements.

How well versed are young people with SDGs one year down the line?

The mainstream is not yet running with the program of making SDGs a topic of relevance in pop culture. This is making SDGs a rather difficult topic to engage young people with relevance

to their current situation.

Instead, there seems to be a leadership gap in our generation. We are earnestly yearning for the type of heroes that we were taught about in History books and documentaries. However, the truth is that we can't and we will not reproduce History's battles. We have our own goliaths and challenges which require a different breed of leader. We need to establish that identity in full awareness of the world we are living in. We can't afford to be an island. No region in the world has that luxury. We will have to; therefore, understand that our African identity in the 21st century is significantly tied to global Sustainable Development. This will give us a power and influence that guns and mass action will never be able to give. Understanding this dynamic will make us utilize our economic strengths to leverage effectively in diplomacy and international trade, which are crucial pillars to the realization of SDGs.

Have youth been actively engaged and supported in the process of implementing the SDGs?

Young people have the paradigm of having to maneuver between collaborating with a marginalizing bureaucracy, and creating more effective mechanisms without alienating the system. The truth of the matter is that SDGs are the product of bureaucracy. Therefore, in our efforts to radically transform the society we are inheriting, let us also acknowledge and engage the wisdom of our forerunners. This is not easy because of the gap between the circumstances of our generation, and the understanding of our elders concerning these issues. Therefore, it is pivotal that we innovate with a purpose to build alongside our elders, and inevitably, take the mission to the next level.

Do we have political willpower in African countries for the SDGs to thrive?

There is definitely a political willpower displayed in the African commitment to sustainable development through the adoption of Agenda 2063 and the unanimous African vote on the United Nations Post-2015 Development Agenda. Therefore, from a policy perspective, there is a collective agreement that SDGs must be realized. The fundamental question is, at what cost? At what cost will there be an opening up of borders to collective engagement in policy and practice to achieve the common goal. The reality is that SDGs have both a reward and a consequence. Certain countries view the consequences as a risk that needs to be averted. Thus, in many instances, the policy approach is to delay the implementation to a later administration which will have the fortitude for dealing with those problems.

This is why it is essential that young people are integrated effectively into governance so that these risks may not be foreign to the thought process of our evolution into the part we must play in history.

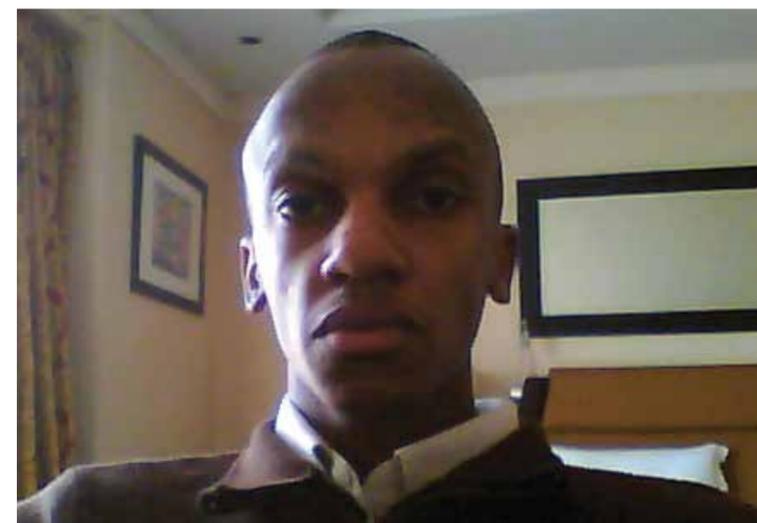
What does the future of SDGs and youth-led development in Africa look like?

SDGs with youth-led development in Africa is indeed very radical. Very unconventional and it is not necessarily in the forms we associate with the aforementioned terms. I believe a breed of leader is rising in Africa who is more interested in building roads and ensuring that there are education facilities in the nearest radius of communities than being put in a magazine article or quoted in a meme on social media. We are breeding a leadership culture that respects the intelligence of the people, and does not seek to insult it with rhetoric of the

impractical. We are raising the bar of leadership in Africa to a position of setting the capacity of the person to get the people to work as the measuring stick for what we consider to be a good leader. Africa is the continent that I and many others will be proud to say that we led a generation in its borders to the next phase of the evolution of mankind in the 21st century.

Views from the Experts

Eric Mwangi Njoroge



On a scale of 1-10 how would you rate the implementation of SDGs across Africa?

2. Most, if not all, of African countries have not drawn up comprehensive and binding national plans for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as the regional Agenda 2063. Existing vehicles said to be the means of implementation of the same are not fully aligned with their goals and targets. There is an evident need to revise the said implementation vehicles for compatibility with the debates being open to all concerned actors.

How well versed are young people with SDGs one year down the line?

I think it's very poor. But this could be improved with onsite activities such as guided tours, lectures, workshops, debates, movie screenings, concerts, dance performances, talk shows, flash mobs, culinary festivals and activities for children and youth.

Have young people been actively engaged and supported in the process of implementing the SDGs?

In Kenya, I have not yet come

across any national or county governments' supported efforts to involve young people in the implementation of the SDGs or the Agenda 2063.

Do we have political willpower in African countries for the SDGs to thrive?

Yes rhetorically. There needs to be efficient structures as well as sufficient human and financial resources at all levels. Very few governments have pledged to regularly report on the status of their national implementation plans (if any) as well as on all goals, targets and indicators agreed upon at both the UN and regional level.

What does the future of SDGs and youth-led development in Africa look like?

I think young people themselves have now acquired a new mindset and things now look promising. That's the

Africa, Youth and Sustainable Development in Rural Communities

Interview conducted with Ms. Namhla Mniki-Mangaliso the Director at African Monitor on the 25th August 2016.



What is African Monitor?

African monitor is an organization that's been working for a very long time on issues of sustainable development and ensuring accountable government and inclusive economies. In the last three to four years we've worked with a fairly significant youth constituency across the continent to make sure that Africa's youth have a voice and perspective and influence over the new sustainable development goals. We also work with civil society across the continent to ensure that they are also equally engaged.

African monitor is very much an organization about bringing a power and voice to the usually excluded and the voiceless.

How inclusive are the youth in the development of Africa?

About seventy percent of people are below 35 in Africa. This is going to increase over the next few years so while the rest of the world is aging Africa is actually getting younger. You would expect these 70% to make primary decisions, that at the very least they should have

influence and power over development policy but it has been our experience that they are excluded and partly marginalized. What A/M has done in the last three years is to build that capacity for young people to engage better with their own government. In other words they're not just sitting there with opinions but they can actually do things to radically transform the continent. The SDGs talk a lot about making sure that the power to effect changes comes from citizens themselves and our governments have signed onto this. Young people should be able to force their governments who have made these commitments to implement them.

More people are sliding into poverty - how do we get out of this cycle?

The exclusion of young people from economic participation essentially traps them in the cycle where they cannot ever move out of poverty. At African Monitor we've been strong advocates of

saying young people must participate in decision-making processes. The only way to hold your governments accountable and make sure that they're doing the right thing is to actually participate in decisions and to make sure that those policies are relevant and timely. If those policies are not being implemented we are never going to see improving productivity across our various countries. We're never going to see an Africa that becomes an innovator, an Africa that uses infrastructure and technology and energy effectively. Policies alone are not enough, you have to make sure that the action resulting from the policies actually leverages the skills and the energy and the passion that already exists amongst young people.

Are the SDGs relevant at the grass roots level?

They are incredibly relevant and have huge potential to change the lives of the poor, marginalised and excluded, if they were to be implemented. After one year few countries have made significant headway in adopting the SDGs at the national level. We can all agree that this is a global agenda but if they are not a national policy, integrated into planned programs and translated to budget priorities we're not going to see anything happen. Parliamentarians and local governments know very little about the SDGs yet they are the first port of call in terms of government responsibility. Systems are not in place. **There are 3 milestones to meet - firstly national development plans must integrate the targets that are included in the SDGs; secondly budgets must then prioritize those things that are in the SDGs; thirdly institutions of legal accountability need to be in place that include civil society, young people, academia and business which will oversee the planning, implementation, monitoring and review of the SDGs; finally we need to build the capacity of local governments to understand the SDGs and how they can integrate them**

into their own local development plans.

Are young people asking too much and contributing too little?

How can young people contribute to the economy when all the money is going to people who don't deserve the resources? The culture of corruption is eating us inside out. The first responsibility is for governments to redistribute resources in a way that makes sure people have future capacity. Building schools and improving primary health, whilst important, doesn't eradicate poverty in the long term because once you've healed someone and once you've educated them you still have to create a system that makes it possible for them to create wealth and produce. That is why the SDGs are exciting because they move beyond just social development to saying we need to transform our economy, our governance systems and we need to take care of environmental degradation. Governments should create an enabling environment for them to participate in economic activity.

Who is responsible to ensure the governments carry out their promised development activities?

It's all of our responsibility as citizens. We elect those who we want to give the responsibility to govern. It is the responsibility of citizens to impress upon those elected to account to citizens. If politicians are not forced to be accountable they will not account to anyone. Many African countries make it impossible for citizens to participate and use police and army that actually can be quite violent towards citizens. How can we push back against this? We have to start coming together as African youth to push back against this culture of impunity that makes our leaders think that they can force us into silence. I've been very encouraged by many different events where we have seen young people come together. The only way to push back against corrupt government is to organize in numbers. The legitimacy

comes from the numbers organised. We need to continue to build strong institutions and support those institutions. The legal system is important, the judiciary is important and in some countries you've got public protectors of some kind like the Auditor General.

How do you integrate the 2030 and 2063 agenda's?

Agenda 2063 is Africa's 50 year vision – it's a positive move by Africa's governments to work together. Unfortunately Africa youth were not that engaged with it. 2063 agenda affected Africa's contribution to agenda 2030. SDGs have gone further to goals and targets. How do we bring them together as one agenda in national development plans? AU is currently working on this.

What can Africa youth hope from the HLPF?

The HLPF is the main accountability structure for the United Nations in relation to the implementation of Agenda 2030. Countries come together every year and give a report

back on how far they have come in the implementation of the SDGs. This year was the first year of reporting that 22 countries volunteered to report back. Most of these countries were really just focusing on what they plan to do in other words what's on paper in terms of what they are going to do and most of them hadn't taken substantive actions in terms of actually implementing. Civil society across Africa and globally has identified the HLP Forum as an important way to hold their governments accountable on a year-by-year basis.

The problem with the HLPF is that it's based on a voluntary structure - countries decide out of their own free will. There's nothing anyone can do to say these are the consequences of not implementing and this continues to be a problem for Africa. I think they're three main concerns - firstly that most countries were presenting papers but you wondered to what extent is this happening on the ground and what we found out is in many instances nothing actually was taking place and they were just general commitments

and plans that African governments were making. So it's important for us to make sure that what our governments are telling the global community is a reflective of the truth that's going on the ground that's why we have been encouraging young people to be part of the stakeholder SDGs forums at the national level so that they actually can influence the reporting of African governments. Second none of them had any plans for monitoring and citizen participation - citizens must have the power and the platforms for accountability Review and monitoring. We think that it's important to actually make sure that that happens. Thirdly, African governments have no idea where money to implement the SDGs will come from. Development assistance can be a good option to finance the SDGs actually but this is a problem because there are no commitments on the table. There are no clear commitments either from development partners or from African governments themselves about how they're going to raise resources and how they are going to allocate those resources. At the end of

the day we need to say this much of the budget is going to be related to youth priorities that are linked to some of the indicators and in the SDGs.

How can we ensure rural communities are not excluded from the SDGs?

Rural communities continue to be excluded. Rural youth need special attention as they are away from most of the avenues that allow access to information that might help them to participate better and so extra attention needs to be given to how we can make sure that we build their capacity overall. Speaking directly to rural youth across Africa:

- Get better organised. I've stressed it but it's such an important point. Governments listen to pressure; if you are not organized in order to pressure nothing is going to change. Without pressure continuously forcing governments to do the right thing nothing will not happen. Young people really don't understand

how much power they have and how much right they have to organise.

- Understand that your first point of call is your local council and your local government as they have the first responsibility on delivering services and creating opportunities. That's where you should be targeting your attention. Africa has adopted a policy system called decentralisation where they've said they're actually allocating budgets at the provincial and local government to implement programs. It's local government that must decide where money goes, how it goes there and how fast it gets there.

- Specifically related to the SDGs, most governments are going to set out a national stakeholder SDGs monitoring system and review forums which is an avenue that allows you to have a seat at the table as opposed to speaking from the side-

lines and so you become part of the decision-making system instead of continuously excluded.

- Finally, just simply get on with the work with the resources you've got.

Any closing remarks?

The power of innovative thinking and the power of thinking out of the box to achieve what you want to achieve is very important. There's so much potential in this continent but we don't have the finances or infrastructure. However, we can still use that energy to create the resources we need simply by believing in our own capacity to change our lives and improve society, but we need to take responsibility for the leadership that we elect.

NAYD member Adou Frederic interviews members of his local community

Are you familiar with the SDGs?

Yes, we are familiar with the SDGs.

What do you do in your community to impact change?

We organize many events during students' vacations such as a football tournament or a dance competition in order to pass a message on a given theme we choose to work on in our community.

Do you think this is part of implementing the SDGs?

Yes, because we talk about subjects such as educating girls in our community, eradicating early pregnancy, encouraging entrepreneurship and many other themes.

Do young people in your community actively take part in community activities?

No, they are not really engaged in community activities because for them it does not make sense. They want to do things that will generate money as soon as they do a job. They are not so familiar with the notion of volunteerism.

Denis Onyango, a Ugandan Youth, caring for a herd of cattle in Olel PeK Apac District, Uganda. With these Cattle, Denis intends to achieve SDG's goals of No poverty, Zero Hunger and Qual



 Network of African Youths for Development

 @NAYDinfo

 NAYD International

 help@nayd.org | annetjudy@yahoo.com | paul@geovision.co.uk

 nayd.org

