

Chapter 1

Africa, 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063: The Imperative of Transnational Governance

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ABSTRACT

The hierarchical state-led model of governance that is used to address global policy issues has proved to be wanting on sustainable development. This chapter discusses the concept of transnational governance of sustainable development, focusing on the United Nations 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in Africa. The premise is that implementation of the two agendas represents an enormous challenge to African governments in terms of resources, extent, and urgency. The chapter will make a reasonable case that transnational governance is required for active engagement of non-state actors and relevant institutions to mobilize resources to support the effective implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in Africa.

INTRODUCTION

The link between governance and development is a two-way street in Africa. The quality and characteristics of governance shape the level of development. The World Bank used the term “crisis in governance” for the first time in 1989 to sum up the litany of Africa’s development problems (World Bank, 1989). The challenges besetting the continent of Africa are numerous, multifaceted and complex—ranging from poverty to climate change, food insecurity, energy insecurity, loss of biodiversity, lack of portable water, unemployment, rapid urbanization, gender inequality, violent conflict and over-exploitation (Osabohien et al, 2020; Osabuohien, 2020a). It therefore behooves on us to explore how to improve the governance of sustainable development on the continent.

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This chapter focuses on a specific governance approach: the concept of transnational governance. In conceptualizing this chapter, transnational governance is defined as the transboundary institutional arrangements emerging from the interaction among private actors or between private and public actors that steer actors' behaviors in an issue-specific area (Falkner, 2003).

In 2013, the African Union endorsed the 2063 Agenda, the continent's shared strategic framework for inclusive growth and sustainable development. Two years later, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, popularly called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development acknowledges the importance of the African Union Agenda 2063 and considers it an integral part of it. African countries have shown their commitments to both the Agenda 2030 and the Agenda 2063 (Osabuohien, 2020b).

Agendas 2030 and 2063 continue and reinforce the vision of the 1980s for sustainable development. They offer eminent platforms for African countries for setting a common course aimed at attaining sustainable development at national and continental levels. The relatability of sustainable development to human development goals has led to it becoming the ground norm of evaluating private and public, national and regional resource utilization. To achieve this, targets on socially and/or environmentally practices have been set at multi-national, national and regional levels (Pomare, 2018), making sustainable development a core concept within global development policy and agenda (Abubakar, 2017; Cerin, 2006).

There is need to reform governance in Africa to realize the aspirations stated in both 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The large remit of the two Agendas demands that countries formulate good policy foundations; both in respect of individual goals and overall trajectories (for example, development plans). Most importantly, achieving the goals and targets in the Agendas will demand thorough implementation, monitoring, accountability and sustained long-term attention. In addition, they both recognize the importance of getting the governance dimensions right. From this perspective, this chapter presents transnational governance as innovation mechanisms to confront the challenges of governance in Africa towards the achievement of 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in the continent.

GOVERNANCE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Governance is the various institutionalized modes of social coordination to produce and implement collectively binding rules, or to provide collective goods. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest (Commission on Global Governance, 1995). Governance consists of both structure and process. As a structure, it relates to institutions and actor constellations. Governance as process pinpoints the modes of social coordination by which actors engage in rulemaking and implementation and in the provision of collective goods (Börzel & Risse, 2010). In the words of Keping (2018), governance identifies the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues, which are key elements of sustainable development.

Although definitions abound with respect to sustainable development, the most often cited definition of the concept is the one proposed by the Brundtland Commission Report. It defines a development to be sustainable when "it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development [WCED], 1987: p.8). Since the Brundtland Report brought the concept of sustainable development into public consciousness,

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