

CHALLENGES OF THE IMPLEMENTING THE AFRICA AGENDA 2063: A SYNOPSIS



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Abstract

This article investigates the implementation and practicality of the Africa 2063 agenda, which is seen as Africa's roadmap and grand plan for transforming Africa into a future global superpower. Agenda 2063 includes not just Africa's Future Aspirations, but also critical Flagship Programs that may increase Africa's economic development and growth while also contributing to the continent's rapid change. The African continent is rife with problems that both current and previous governments have failed to solve. To mention a few, these issues include poverty, malnutrition, bad health care systems, low living standards, poor infrastructure, political instability, and weak economies characterized by low economic development. It cannot be contested that the Africa 2063 agenda is a critical strategy embraced by African Leaders to build a better Africa for its residents, and if executed effectively and efficiently, it has the potential to alter the African continent.

1. Introduction

Africa's Agenda 2063 promises a cohesive, integrated, wealthy, and peaceful future for the continent. This vision of Africa as a worldwide driver and dynamic force has been handed to the African people. Pan-Africanism is a philosophical framework that supports African unity, self-sufficiency, integration, and solidarity (African Union, 2013). Africa's political leaders unveiled the AU's Agenda 2063 back in 2013. Over the next 50 years, Africa's transformation, development, and reinvention will be guided by this audacious vision and action plan (DeGhetto, Gray, and Kiggundu, 2016). According to Achieng (2014), the African Union Commission and the Organization of African Unity (OAU, now the African Union) declared their intention to produce a proclamation to serve as a vision for Africa's integration, peace, and prosperity for the next 50 years.

The AU Agenda 2063 initiative has been circulated to all AU member states, and it invites important stakeholders to contribute to its aims of establishing a comprehensive framework for the

continent's future. The integration of Africa is not a recent topic. Back in the 1960s, the Pan African movement sparked it. They stood up for Africans and people of African ancestry in their fight against slavery, colonialism, and other kinds of racist racial oppression, advocating for their liberation and restoration of their dignity. In 1963, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was formed as a result of this ferocity and desire for liberation. The OAU was given the task of promoting the political and economic independence of Africa. International cooperation and regional integration were prioritized above decolonization as well as the growth of peace and security, human rights, democracy, and democratic government. Decolonization, liberalism, and the fight against apartheid dominated its political agenda (Ndizera and Muzee, 2018).

Pan-Africanism and the African Renaissance are central to Agenda 2063. By doing so, it intends to set the framework for correcting past wrongs and making the twenty-first century authentically African. Africans must unite in order to achieve

their renaissance, and the Pan-Africanist movement's appeal is repeated in Agenda 2063. The OAU created this agenda to imply that Africa is looking forward 50 years. The future of Africa can only be viewed clearly by considering the lessons of the past (African Union Commission, 2015). Ndizera and Muzee (2018) indicated that there must be a strong sense of ownership and participation by Africans in continental programs, as well as a strong sense of self-reliance and Africa's ability to finance its own growth, in order to achieve the Agenda's goals. While both island and continental economies confront significant problems, regional economic communities play an important role as building blocks for a more integrated continent.

The African continent has fallen behind the rest of the world in terms of development. Because of this, the African Union and African States have attempted multiple times to boost growth and development in order to catch up to the rest of the world. Africa's Agenda 2063, which was developed by the African Union in effort to improve the continent, is one example of this. It is planned to execute Agenda 2063 in stages. The first 10 years, from 2013 to 2023, are covered under the first phase. By adopting the ten-year plan in June 2015, the Summit established the framework for member states, regional economic communities, and the African Union's organs to prepare their medium-term development plans for the next 50 years (Muigua, 2019).

2. Methodology

This paper seeks to analyse the challenges that may hinder the successful implementation of Africa Agenda 2063 in its quest to develop a better Africa for all. A qualitative research approach was adopted in order to meet the objectives of this paper. In this study, unobtrusive secondary sources were used - this was in the form of articles in academic journals which were screened with the goal of identifying those that focus specifically on the concepts of Africa Agenda 2063 implementation. The ultimate aim was to use these concepts, their components, and their relationships, to reach meaningful findings on the appraisal of challenges affecting the implementation of the Africa Agenda.

3. Findings

3.1. Poor Infrastructure

There is a lack of development in the African continent's roads, railway lines, information and communication technologies, and other vital infrastructure for growth, which is crucial for achieving the Africa 2063 agenda's goals. The Agenda 2063 is in its ninth year, and the status of Africa's infrastructure development has made little progress, limiting the agenda's viability. According to Bond (2016), Africa has the world's poorest infrastructure. It also falls short in terms of consumer infrastructure quality. Infrastructure is expensive, irregular, and

unstable; it is limited. Due to low GDP per capita and population density, poor infrastructure is especially prominent in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Inadequate infrastructure service quality is caused by the sector's ongoing financial weakness (service consumers do not pay full price) and inadequate operational and financial management. Spending requirements are not fulfilled, assets are not maintained, and managerial skill is lacking in the industry. Increasing infrastructure investment alone will not be enough.

New sources of funding and major modifications to infrastructure service delivery are required to manage and maintain Africa's infrastructure cheaply and efficiently. Several factors contribute to poverty in Africa, including a lack of land use and tenure systems; civil war and ongoing political challenges; inadequate infrastructure; diseases; insufficient health facilities; and World Bank and International Monetary Fund policies (IMF). Africa's infrastructure is deplorable. Despite being some of the most significant economic generators, they have subpar roads, railways, and water infrastructure. As a consequence, the majority of the population lives in rural areas that have remained underdeveloped due to the rise of a few towns with superior infrastructure (such as urban districts). Despite their obvious relevance, most African nations' public infrastructure stocks are thought to be well below the capacity necessary to sustain their required levels of output (Kodongo and Ojah, 2016). African economies are growing as the continent becomes an important trading zone with rising wealth and an increasing urban population. Concerns are growing, however, that a lack of suitable logistical transportation infrastructure, such as road and rail networks, airports and seaports, and modern technology, would make trade within Africa and between Africa and the rest of the world difficult (Adewole, 2019).

Adusei (2016) indicated that the region's entrepreneurial performance has been appalling despite the widespread belief that Africa is the world's wealthiest continent in terms of minerals and natural resources. There are many reasons for this dismal performance, but experts point to a lack of price sensitivity in agricultural products, poor infrastructure, a scarcity of skilled labor and financial resources, as well as a lack of high-quality standards, inappropriate trade policies and ineffective human resource management. Mazele and Amoah (2022) alluded that as part of the government's overall mission of delivering basic services to citizens, infrastructure development and management are critical components. However, the development element has received most of the attention and money, while the management and maintenance parts have received far less attention and investment. As a consequence, this raises the issue of how this will affect Africa's socio-economic progress. Dethier (2015)

stated that Africa's infrastructure services are twice as costly as those in other parts of the globe, owing to both diseconomies of scale in manufacturing and huge profit margins induced by a lack of competition in the marketplace.

The energy sector is by far the most significant concern for Africa, with 30 nations out of 54 experiencing frequent power outages and many paying hefty rates for emergency power. Srinivasu and Rao (2013) indicated that Infrastructure investment is a critical driving factor in achieving quick and sustainable economic development. Infrastructure is critical to increasing economic productivity and achieving economic development, thus its significance for the African continent (Dethier, 2015). Agenda 2063 Goals include changed economies, world-class infrastructure projects throughout Africa, and modern agriculture for greater productivity and output. These objectives will not be met unless African nations invest in infrastructure development and restoration. As is obvious, the African continent has the worst infrastructure in comparison to other continents.

3.2. Lack of Regional Integration in Africa

One of the most prominent goals of Africa's 2063 Agenda is a united Africa; however, the issue in achieving this objective is that African nations are not completely connected, and the interests of individual countries are prioritized above the interests of a united African continent. To ensure that the Africa 2063 Agenda is properly implemented, the African Union has a significant role to play in encouraging collaboration and cohesiveness among African nations. Regional integration in Africa has been slowed down by soft and hard infrastructure problems, as well as a lack of industrial output, regulations of origin and regulatory frameworks, and long customs procedures at border posts, which have made it difficult for African countries to trade with each other.

While African countries have often stated their commitment to regional economic integration, national concerns frequently take precedence over regional ones. Consequently, progress on fulfilling some of these obligations has often proven difficult, if not impossible (Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Anyanwu and Conceição, 2014). Most Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are primarily concerned with economic integration of their respective areas, with less attention and emphasis placed on an equally vital part of African integration, to be exact political integration of counties and Africa as a whole (Leshoele, 2020). Africa's regional and sub-regional integration is beset by a slew of obstacles. These difficulties have made it almost impossible for these groups to operate efficiently. Inadequate financing is one of the most significant challenges to African regional integration (Eke and Ani, 2017).

African regional integration attempts have been regarded to have made progress, however the results have not reached the aims due to a lack of satisfaction. When regional integration plans do not work as planned, it is typically due to one of two issues. Two variables that must be examined are political commitment and organizational cohesion in government, as well as national support for regional integration. Supply-side restrictions, on the other hand, are a broader concept. Many hurdles to intraregional economic cooperation persist, despite Africa's promise to eliminating trade barriers in order to build a single market based on regional and sub-regional accords (Akinyemi, Efobi, Osabuohien and Alege, 2019). According to Leshoele (2020), the majority of African regional integration accords and declarations aim to make it easier for commodities, services, and money to move between African countries, hence increasing intra-African trade.

Aside from a few rudimentary steps being taken to guarantee that all Africans may travel freely throughout their continent without having to apply for visas, nothing is really done (though much is promised). Unfortunately, regional integration still has a gap when it comes to facilitating the free flow of people as well as trade in goods.

3.3. Public Debt Burden in Africa

Debt levels have risen dramatically globally during the last two decades, owing to the growing demand for capital in most countries, particularly in emerging and transitional economies. For this reason, the debt problem in Africa has been at the forefront of arguments throughout the last several decades. Rising debt is often seen as one of the continent's major economic issues. (Bayale, 2020). A decade and a half after the major debt cancellation, African debt is once again making headlines throughout the world. Since 2013, the region's debt has been growing, with the median debt ratio as a percentage of GDP rising from 31% in 2012 to 53% in 2017. This rising public indebtedness is being pushed not just by domestic debt, but also by foreign debt, which has climbed by roughly ten percentage points.

Because of the recent significant growth in debt load, almost one-third of Sub-Saharan African nations are either in or at high danger of financial distress, including the majority of nations that benefitted from debt relief in the 1990s. These nations' total debt and foreign debt are expected to be \$160 billion and \$90 billion, respectively. To determine whether or not this moment is unique, it is critical to investigate the causes of this debt accumulation, the structure of debt, and the design of debt features (Coulibaly, Gandhian and Senbet, 2019). Abubakar (2020) indicated that the public debt concerns confronting African countries speak to the

region's underlying development issues, which are mostly the result of structural flaws and weak economic policies. Country credit scores in Africa have been significantly affected and are now at record lows, owing mostly to pandemic-related impacts on reserve sufficiency, fiscal issues, and growth – 17 of the 30 nations downgraded in the last year are from Africa.

High levels of foreign debt have been an enticing target for criticism among politicians, professionals, and other economic development agents in recent years. The gravity of this problem, particularly in Africa, has been compounded by the current international economic meltdown and many governments throughout the world's efforts to restructure their economies using borrowed monies. In Africa, the degree of inefficiency and abuse of public finances via corrupt activities along the government investment processes has continued unabated, with negative effects for economic progress (Ighodalo, Omankhanlen, Osagie and Iwiyisi Inua, 2020). The Africa 2063 Agenda declares that Africa must take full responsibility for financing her development goals; the realization of this goal and development of African lies in effective public finance management, public debt management, and public investment; therefore, African countries should work towards achieving these three components for the 2063 Agenda to be realized.

3.4. Corruption in Africa as a Hindrance to Development

The influence of corruption on economic growth in African nations is a key source of worry in the region's development. Corruption is a big worry for developing nations because it may have a negative impact on economic growth and social well-being. (d'Agostino, Dunne and Pieroni, 2016). Africa's development challenges, which range from assistance misuse and corruption to low economic growth, are commonly blamed on "bad governance." Corruption in African countries is frequently attributed to the greed of public officials who abuse their discretionary powers for self-interest; consequently, anti-corruption initiatives should protect property and contractual rights (Hopper, 2017).

A common problem in African countries is corruption because of weak institutions and poor governance. Corruption, among other things, prevents funds from being spent on essential public goods and services, which are essential for long-term economic development (Hope, 2020). According to Songwe (2018) it is estimated that around 25 percent of Africa's average GDP gets sucked out of the continent via different corrupt activities. This is why corruption is a major hindrance to achieving and sustaining economic growth in Africa. Large-scale corruption in Africa stifles economic growth and increases poverty, depriving the

most vulnerable groups of equal access to basic services such as health care, education, and clean water and sanitation. (Hope, 2020). African nations' efforts to escape the cycle of underdevelopment have been hampered by the continent's high degree of corruption. Africa is wealthy in natural resources, yet the earnings from the selling of these resources to other nations are squandered by corrupt African politicians. Former World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz stated that Nigerian governmental officials had swindled more than \$300 billion from the country's budget over the last four decades (Awojobi, 2014).

Corruption has a wide range of negative repercussions, from the rise of small groups of economically powerful people controlling political institutions to environmental and budgetary catastrophes and increasing inequality. Millions of people are claimed to be trapped in poverty because of corruption, which also lowers the potential pace of economic progress and unevenly distributes its advantages. It is widely believed that corruption is weakening the public and commercial institutions that have traditionally served as engines for poverty reduction and economic growth in developing countries (MacWilliam and Rafferty, 2017).

One of the goals of the Africa 2063 Agenda is to provide a high standard of living, quality of life, and well-being for all citizens; however, high corruption in the public sector is a detriment to this goal; thus, citizens' well-being is dependent on the availability of public funds; thus, the majority of the population in Africa is dependent on the government. The African government must devise strategies to enhance the responsible public sector, and the AU must spearhead such a program in Africa.

3.5. Energy Insecurity

Africa's Agenda 2063 refers to energy security as one of the key goals that the continent seeks to achieve. This goal is specifically related to the following 2063 Agenda vision aspirations: "A Prosperous Africa, based on Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development". Broadly, and importantly, this aspiration is further linked to one of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), goal number 7: "Ensure access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy for all". Energy security is defined as "the availability of local and imported resources to meet, over time and at reasonable prices, the growing demand for energy" (Khatib, 2000). However, due to the lack of accessibility or even availability, (although available in the African context can be a bit challenging to argue against) of energy resources, the concept of energy insecurity has over time emerged in most political, economic, social, and scholarly arguments.

Energy insecurity has been characterized as an existential danger to energy security, according to Le, Chang, Taghizadeh-Hesary,

and Yoshino (2019), and procedures should be put in place to attain energy security objectives, as well as how these measures are executed. The challenge of energy (un)securities has become more complicated throughout Africa in recent years. Sub-Saharan Africa has been and continues to be a key concern in the development of dependable and inexpensive energy, particularly electricity. Africa may be separated into three main energy areas, as shown in Figure 1. North Africa is nearly completely electrified, and most families have access to clean cooking. In South Africa, which is mostly electrified, the scenario is similar. Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), on the other hand, has 600 million people without access to electricity and relies instead on cooking with solid biomass (wood and organic waste) (780 million).

In Africa, where the bulk of the population lacks access to electricity and safe cooking methods, energy poverty is a serious hindrance to development. Despite the continent's abundance of resources, most governments have significant hurdles in recruiting major investments and maintaining ethical small businesses, both of which are critical to winning the race to provide universal access to modern energy.

Energy security is critical for the African continent's socio-economic progress. Without appropriate, accessible, and sustainable energy to address the continent's pressing energy demands, Africa will be unable to offer significant development to its rising population. However, Graceva and Zeniewski (2014); Lee, Glick, and Lee (2020) are of the view that there are a number of barriers on the continent that contribute to energy insecurity. These barriers as mentioned by Alemzero, Sun, Mohsin, Iqbal, Nadeem, and Vinh (2021) are as follows:

1. The rising economic prosperity after years of slow growth, coupled with fast population expansion, resulted in increased energy consumption.
2. The rising energy import costs are a major impediment to the continent's economic development.
3. Energy infrastructure in Africa is lacking, as are local laws that favor subsidies, creating an unequal playing field versus alternative energy sources, and the continent's inability to transmit energy between energy-rich and energy-poor nations.
4. The continent's limited transportation network to enable seamless intra-trade of energy between nations with surpluses and deficits; and
5. To meet their own needs, most African nations import, placing them at risk of price volatility. (Trotta 2020; Guo, van Dam, Touhami, Nguyen, Delval, Jamieson and Shah, 2020).

In addition, the World Energy Council (2019) noted that higher expenses, a trade imbalance, increasing inflation, and the depletion of hard currencies hit the continent's net importers the most. In view of these issues, there is a pressing need to investigate this complex topic of energy security in Africa. The other two are economics and environmental sustainability. It is the criterion by which a country's energy security is assessed. There are various variations on the trilemma notion, but they have been narrowed down to economics, politics, and the environment (Heffron, McCauley and Sovacool, 2015; Baloch, Tan, Iqbal, Mohsin, Abbas, Iqbal, and Chaudhry, 2020). It is difficult to strike the correct balance between these key aspects. Despite the fact that the continent faces such issues, it is critical that a variety of solutions to these challenges be adopted at both the national and regional levels. Finally, the goal of a thriving Africa based on Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development will be realized.

3.6. National Insecurity: Failed and Incapable State Institutions

Africa is still a continent full of opportunities and difficulties. Many African nations are losing the ability to provide security to their citizens, and in certain circumstances, governments have become unsafe themselves. The security landscape in Africa is quickly evolving, with more multidimensional, dynamic, interrelated, and complex security challenges. The repercussions of global megatrends intensely displayed in Africa aggravate the prevalence, intensity, and duration of these security concerns (Kuol and Amegboh, 2021). Despite the rising security concerns, the idea of security is developing away from state and regime-centric approaches and toward human security. Despite these dynamics and changes in the security scene, many African countries continue to respond to security concerns using old methods.

According to Onyema (2019), Africa has always had severe security problems, which have impeded peace and stunted development throughout the continent. While Africa does not produce many guns, it is awash with illegally imported small arms and light weapons, which inflame or exacerbate conflicts and tensions, killing people and endangering the continent's future. Africa is not just the continent with the greatest danger of humanitarian catastrophe, but it is also the world's poorest continent, with millions of people living on less than a dollar a day and millions more dying of starvation and famine and in dire need of assistance. The international community has also raised its concerns about the national or state insecurity in Africa.

This was evident through the UNSC's emphasis to African leaders that "the task of building a conflict-free Africa essentially rests upon them, their people, and their institutions thereby

advocating African solutions to African problems”. Despite the African Union introducing the “Silencing the Guns in Africa by the Year 2020” initiative, the increasing rate of poverty, unemployment, inequality, terrorism, and extremism across Africa, all of which have contributed in no small measure to the propagation of conflicts across the continent is still evident. This makes it hard for the Africa Agenda 2063 vision aspiration, “An Africa of Good Governance, Democracy, Respect for Human Rights, Justice and the Rule of Law” to be achieved. In fact, it makes the issue of national insecurity - which is experienced even in countries that are not at war, such as South Africa and Botswana, to be the biggest obstacle to attaining Agenda 2063. Weak and incapable institutions have been identified as one of the key challenges to the consistent challenge to national security in Africa (Onyema, 2019).

These institutions are finding it difficult to address corruption, the prevalence of ‘winner-takes-all’ approaches, the marginalization of certain groups, and the mismanagement of natural resources. Thus, it would be unrealistic to expect the very same institutions to silence the guns in Africa without strong institutions and good governance to address the various critical issues that fuel crises on the continent. Thus, to ameliorate this challenge, African leaders must do more than attending conferences, seek help, denounce assaults, or send armies. Since it is often argued that “peace cannot be achieved without development, and vice versa and neither peace nor development can thrive without human rights and good governance”, a strong commitment to good governance, education, job creation, justice, inclusiveness, infrastructure development, poverty reduction, the development of strong institutions, and the welfare of citizens, particularly security practitioners, is required (both serving and retired).

4. Discussion

The need to ensure Africa's collective development has never been great. Without considerable socio-economic and political change, Africa will fail to reap the benefits of regional integration and The African Continental Free Trade Area. There is ample potential for Africa to collectively develop, but this potential is clouded by the many existing challenges. For Mlambo et al., (2020), the biggest problem in Africa is the lack of political will to ensure Africa’s collective integration. Political will informs development, it allows for processes linked to economic growth to take place and prosper, however when such will is lacking, it becomes impossible to consolidate coherent developmental policies.

According to Aggad-Clerx and El Fassi (2014), Africa recognizes the need to tap into its own resources in order to fund its development objectives, most notably the African Union's

Agenda 2063. Africa is home to a profusion of natural resources, the bulk of which are undeveloped, and if these resources could be obtained from inside Africa, they would be sufficient to fund around 70% of development finance requirements. However, the to 2063 will not be an easy as many economies in Africa are still very fragile, infrastructure development remains low, many economies are still heavily reliant on raw materials, and there has been a lack of political drive to ensure the diversification of their productive structures (Cole, 2017), poverty also remains a major stumbling block and Africa has six of the 10 most unequal nations in the world, according to the United Nations. Many African countries, notably in the Horn region, are still struggling with hunger, despite recent global food crises. This highlights the need for better food security.

As a result, Africa seems to lack the urgency to harness more of its resources—human, ecological, and financial—to invest in the future. (Cole, 2017). Africa must take lesson from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has become a region characterized by manufacturing, economic development, robust policy implementation, and consolidated regional integration and development efforts. This has driven the need to ensure collective development hence decisions taken at a regional level have reflected the developmental needs of each member state such needs, a need underpinned by political will (Sundaram, 2019). In Africa, the same cannot be said, conflict fragmentation of governance, and the fear of supranational institutions are some factors that have hindered integration. It becomes cumbersome to understand how the 2063 agenda will be implemented while Africa is still failing to address these issues.

This paper argues that while the 2063 agenda may be noble in its development, its implementation, however, needs a conducive socio-economic and political environment otherwise it risks suffering the same operational challenges as the “Silencing the Guns by 2020”, The Lagos Plan of Action and The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The abundance of resources in Africa has the potential to position Africa in an ever-changing global environment, there is a need to consolidate political will and good governance in the continent, only then could one foresee the possible success of the AU 2063 agenda.

5. Conclusions

Transformed economies and world-class infrastructure are among the aims of the Africa Agenda 2063. Transforming Africa into a global economic powerhouse would rely on the availability of well-developed infrastructure. The article related to the problem of bad infrastructure in Africa, and African governments are doing little to construct and maintain infrastructures that are critical to economic growth. The Africa Agenda 2063 said that

one of its aims is to integrate Africa, yet the Africa Region is characterized by a lack of regional integration, political instability, and national insecurity, all of which impede attempts to unite Africa. Africa taking responsibility in financing its development is one of Agenda 2063's aspirations, but the way African countries are indebted poses a threat to the well-being of African citizens, so most people in Africa rely on state provisions, and without sufficient revenues, this goal will be a mere dream, and corruption and energy security also have a negative impact on citizens' standard of living Agenda 2063, as a roadmap and grand plan for developing Africa into a future global superpower requires African countries to invest more in infrastructure development, regional integration promotion, corruption elimination in African governments, and strategies to deal with African countries' public debt burden. Africa Agenda 2063 on paper is practicable, but it will need a significant effort from African countries to collaborate to achieve a brighter future for all.

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