AUDA-NEPAD
AFRICAN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

ANNUAL REPORT

2021

Foreword

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Chief Executive Officer
AUDA-NEPAD

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought hardship, disruptions and much pain in our lives. 2021 has been a challenging year, and the costs of this pandemic will be felt for many decades. African development systems will never be the same after COVID-19. They cannot be. We must emerge with greater resilience than ever before to confront and overcome the challenges borne or exacerbated by the pandemic and future crises. It must not be business as usual.

I am proud of and inspired by how the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) has risen to meet these challenges over the last 12 months – with agility, resilience and commitment. As an institution, we have made continuous improvements as a development agency and most importantly, for those we serve.

2021 was also a remarkable year. We expanded our footprint in all AU Member States and moved with speed and scale to respond to the COVID-19 health crisis quickly and efficiently with programmes and resources redirected to face the emergency to save lives. We also dealt with the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 at the community level, nationally and regionally, to preserve lives and secure livelihoods. Our signature solutions aim to respond to the effects of the pandemic and focus on three priority areas: Health Systems, Food Systems and Economic Growth and Jobs. These plans and actions are designed to realise Agenda 2063 and keep on track with the momentum of its Ten-Year Implementation Plan.

2021 was an anniversary year for us – 20 years of NEPAD – and the occasion for retrospection and prospection on Africa's development trajectory. The presence of COVID-19, unwelcome as it is, gives us a fresh impetus to reflect on the vision and values of NEPAD as an engine for regional integration, inclusive growth and shared prosperity in Africa.

A global pandemic such as COVID-19 exposes, in a stark manner, the undeniable interconnectivity of our world and should not cause countries to pull away and revert back into practices of isolationism and xenophobia. Instead, this challenge presents an opportunity for Africa to stand in greater solidarity between African countries and between Africa and the rest of the world. With greater conviction and action than ever before, we must reaffirm our commitment to regional integration and work towards the goals and targets of Agenda 2063.

This year has taught us many valuable lessons, and I am confident that as a development agency we will emerge from this pandemic strengthened. I hope that 2021, albeit challenging, leaves us with positive memories of what we have achieved.

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Acronyms

ABNE	African Biosafety Network of Expertise
AFR100	African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative
AIDA	Accelerated Industrial Development for Africa
ALM	Africa Leadership Meeting
AMA	Africa Medicines Agency
AMRH	African Medicines Regulatory Harmonisation
ARC	African Risk Capacity
ASPYEE	African Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship
ASTII	African Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators
AU	African Union
AU-3S	Africa Union Smart Safety Surveillance
AUC	African Union Commission
AUDA-NEPAD	African Union Development Agency-NEPAD
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CARI	Coalition for African Research and Innovation
CoE	Centre of Excellence
EAC	East Africa Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FTYIP	First Ten-Year Implementation Plan
IFNA	Initiative for Food and Nutrition Security in Africa
IVM	Integrated Vector Management
LAPSSET	Lamu Port South Sudan – Ethiopia Transport
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NDPs	National Development Plans
NAIP	National Agriculture Investment Plan
OSBPs	One Stop Border Posts
PAVM	Partnership for Africa Vaccine Manufacturing
PIDA	Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa
PQL	Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa Quality Label
REC	Regional Economic Community
SAATM	Single African Air Transport Market
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SIFA	Skills Initiative for Africa
TLS	Traffic Lights System
UNFSS	UN Food Systems Summit

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2021
Highlights

2021 has been characterised by unprecedented events stemming from the global outbreak of COVID-19. The pandemic has continued to bring about significant disruptions to the socio-economic landscape of Africa's development systems. This has seen tremendous changes in the focus and outlook of development needs by many AU Member States.

As a direct response, AUDA-NEPAD recalibrated its programme of work to focus on transformational results (medium to long term) while addressing the immediate needs arising from the knock-on effects of COVID-19.

The Agency's multi-year and fit-for-purpose programme aims to ensure implementation of Africa'sAfrica's long-term blueprint - Agenda 2063 - and is focused on three priority areas:

FOOD SYSTEMS
increasing agricultural and food productionand ensuring food and nutrition security

HEALTH SYSTEMS
building capacities in the pharmaceutical and manufacturing sector and improving access to essential health care services

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOBS
strengthening economic recovery through interventions to enhance infrastructure development, trade and markets and productivity-enhancing innovations

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This report highlights the progress in implementing AUDA-NEPAD's overall mandate and select achievements reached in 2021.

Under the Agency's **health portfolio,** AUDA-NEPAD upscaled African home-grown solutions to improve healthcare capacity and reduce the reliance on external medical supplies. In Kenya, through the Pandemic Resilience Accelerator, AUDA-NEPAD supported the Revital Healthcare Manufacturer. Under this initiative, over 40 medical devices were produced for distribution in Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi. This contributes meaningfully to building pandemic resilience during the immediate COVID-19 crisis and over the long term.

In partnership with Mezzanine and Vodacom, AUDA-NEPAD deployed a state-of-the-art vaccine management platform to manage COVID-19 vaccinations in South Africa and baby inoculations in Mozambique, Tanzania and Nigeria. The digital infrastructure has, thus far, supported nine million COVID-19 vaccinations in South Africa.

At the continental level, AUDA-NEPAD pushed forward to accelerate the establishment of the Africa Medicines Agency (AMA), which entered into force on 5 November 2021. This is to enhance the capacity to regulate medical products and ensure access to safe and efficacious medication for Africa's people.

On **Economic Growth and Jobs,** the Agency continued to foster regional integration by fast-tracking 69 cross-border priority projects under the Programme for Infrastructure Development (PIDA). To increase access to climate-smart energy, AUDA-NEPAD piloted a 100-kilowatt solar power photovoltaic (PV) generating solution in Sierra Leone. The pilot project has proved to be a sustainable and cost-effective business model for adaptation and roll-out in other communities.

AUDA-NEPAD also trained more than 18,000 MSMEs from 33 countries on business and entrepreneurship skills and financing. Furthermore, a financing scheme in eight pilot countries has been operationalised to strengthen occupational prospects for young people in Africa.

The Agency continued to promote Africa's interests and worked with stakeholders in shaping a common African position on **food systems.** To this end, AUDA-NEPAD provided technical support to 46 AU Member States to hold national dialogues and facilitated, together with the African Group of Negotiators, Africa's Common Position on Food Systems during the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS).

In 2021, the Agency developed technical guidelines and tools for monitoring the implementation of Agenda 2063. Subsequently, it provided technical support to 38 Member States to prepare the **Second Continental Progress Report on Agenda 2063**. The report is a critical milestone in assessing progress towards achieving Agenda 2063's Ten-Year Implementation Plan – The Africa We Want – and will be launched by the President of Côte d'Ivoire and Agenda 2063 Champion, H.E. Alassane Ouattara, at the AU Summit in February 2022.

For more information, please watch the AUDA-NEPAD 2021 Highlights Video: https://www.nepad.org/galleries/auda-nepad-covid-19-response.

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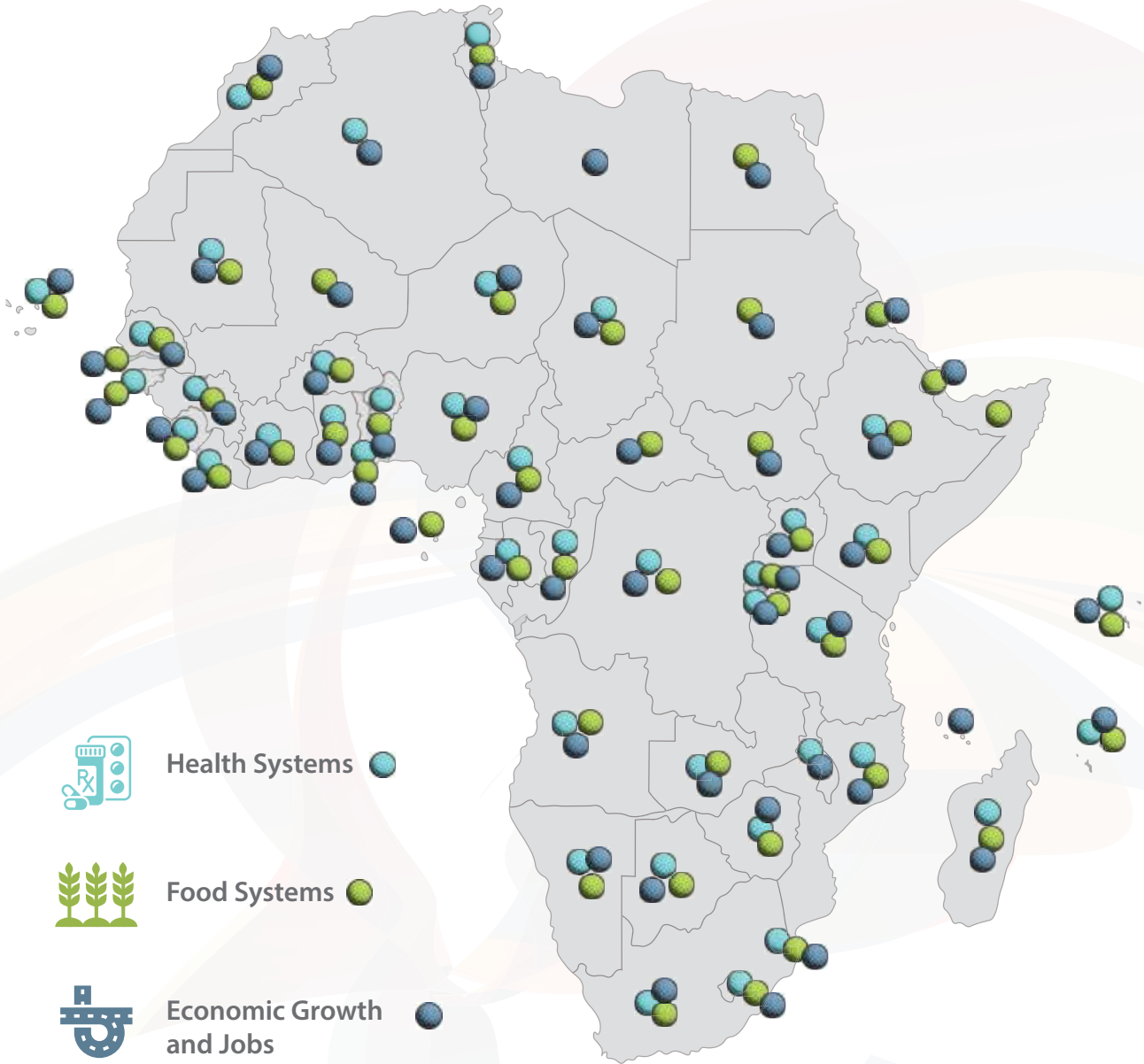# Country
Footprint

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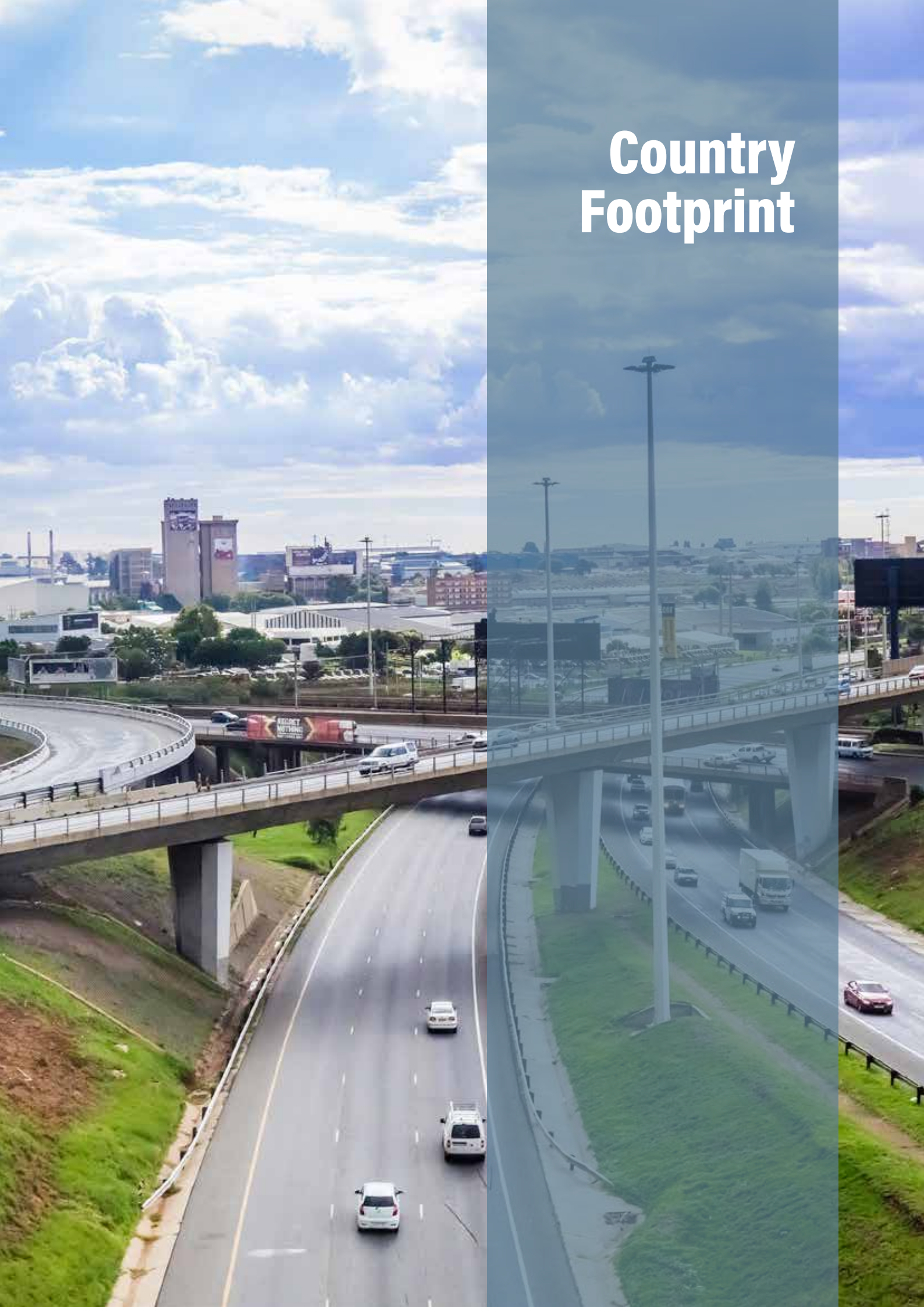
Health Systems

Food Systems

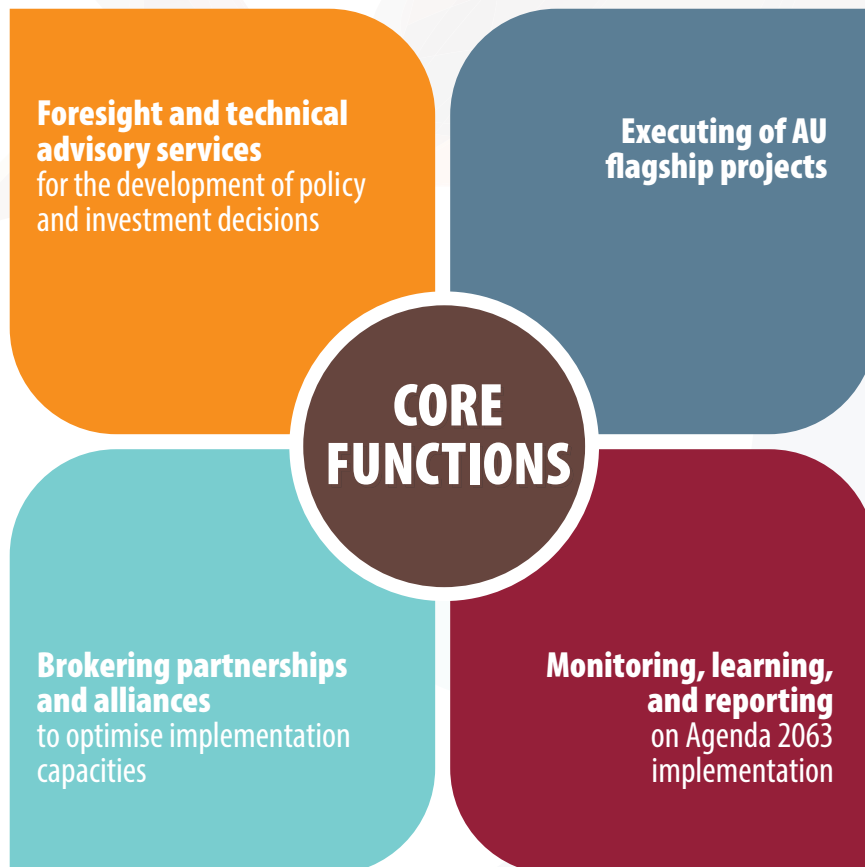Economic Growth
and Jobs

Introduction

Background

The establishment of the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) at the 31st African Union (AU) Summit in 2018 was a critical milestone towards accelerating the implementation of Agenda 2063. As a full-fledged development agency, AUDA-NEPAD is charged primarily with coordinating and executing priority regional and continental projects outlined in Agenda 2063.

The Agency is also mandated to mobilise the full range of resources required for the effective implementation of priority projects and to provide knowledge-based advisory services and technical assistance to AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). Furthermore, AUDA-NEPAD monitors and evaluates the implementation of programmes and projects and serves as the Continent's technical interface on policy development recommendation and implementation with partners and stakeholders.

Strategic Context

The operations of the Agency are delivered through two strategic objectives –programmatic interventions and organisational excellence – as articulated in the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. The strategic objectives are actioned through eleven core functions, summarised into four, as follows:

Foresight and technical advisory services for the development of policy and investment decisions

Executing of AU flagship projects

CORE FUNCTIONS

Brokering partnerships and alliances to optimise implementation capacities

Monitoring, learning, and reporting on Agenda 2063 implementation

Governance Structure

The configuration of the governance mechanism and the organisational structure is informed by assessing development patterns, stakeholder needs, staffing, and funding in the institution. The figure below provides a visual representation of the governance bodies and their roles and responsibilities.

AFRICAN UNION ASSEMBLY

- Highest decision-making body
- AUDA-NEPAD reports to Assembly annually

Strategic Governance

HSGOC

- Key accountability body
- Chair makes recommendations to Assembly

AUDA-NEPAD Steering Committee

- Provides strategic direction for the organisation

AUDA-NEPAD Senior Leadership

- Senior management drives strategy design and implementation (with a proper strategic framework)

Management Committees

Internal Budget	Knowledge & Communication	Programmes & Risk Management	Publication	Investment	Grants & Sub. delegation

- Enable internal accountability and drive performance
- Ensure standard operating procedures are designed and adhered to
- Primary decision-making bodies

Programme Coordination

Economic Integration	Industrialisation	Environmental Sustainability	Human Capital & Institutions Development	Science, Technology and Digitisation	Knowledge Management

- Programmes to be rationalised for streamlined delivery and knowledge exchange
- Projects under each Programme link to continental, regional and national development priorities

Project Management

Centres of Excellence & Programme Evaluation

- Strengthen project closure procedures for results to be effectively measured and best practices to be consolidated using results data

Support Functions

- Enable seamless delivery on the organisational mandate

Operational & Programme Governance

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Integrated Delivery Model

The AU, RECs and Member States have the primary responsibility for implementing development policies, strategies, and programmes for continental integration and a positive impact on the livelihood and well-being of all Africans. Therefore, appropriate policies, strategies, and instruments must be established to ensure equitable access to development opportunities in furtherance of Agenda 2063.

Through the thematic priority areas, AUDA-NEPAD:

- Leverages the demonstrated strengths of AUDA-NEPAD with an enhanced operating model and clear mandate to sharpen its delivery capacity in complete alignment with continental and national priorities.

- Ensures that policies and decisions are implemented in continental, regional and national spheres with a sound results-based approach.

- Plays a catalytic role to support capacity development of Member States and RECs.

- Mobilises resources for the accelerated and expanded implementation of development programmes across the Continent to achieve Agenda 2063.

- Ensures horizontal linkages between RECs and Member States and vertical connections between stakeholders at continental, regional and national levels.

The Agency's business and operating model is based on flexibility, autonomy and efficiency to develop a more precise division of labour between the African Union Commission (AUC), RECs and pan-African institutions.

Integrated Delivery Model

Functional Level \ Entity	African Union Commission	Regional Economic Communities	Member States	AUDA-NEPAD
Continental	Supervises implementation of Agenda 2063 FTYIP	Provide feedback on intra regional integration progress	Report on progress towards achievement of targets of the FTYIP at national level	Serves as the Continent's technical interface
Regional	Supervises inter-regional integration progress	Translate continental policies into regional dimension	Implement regional strategies and report progress on FTYIP implementation	Coordinates and Executes priority regional and continental projects
National	Engages on implementation of STC decisions	Harmonise regional and intra regional policies and protocols	Execute for Transformative Results	Strengthens capacity of MS and RECs Advances knowledge-based advisory support Undertakes the full range of resource mobilisation

Progress made in Focus Areas

This section outlines the results achieved in the three focus areas in 2021 under the AUDA-NEPAD mandate, in line with Agenda 2063 goals and targets using a results-driven and evidence-based approach.

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Strengthening national health systems

The COVID-19 pandemic is stretching already resource-limited national health systems, with knock-on effects on many vital health services. This is undoing many gains achieved in improving access to health services and outcomes. Under its health portfolio, AUDA-NEPAD devised several signature projects to strengthen national health systems and pandemic resilience.

Pandemic Resilience Accelerator

AUDA-NEPAD established the Pandemic Resilience Accelerator for African health-related businesses. This initiative aims to accelerate African home-grown solutions that improve pandemic resilience. It provides hands-on, tailored acceleration support to growth and mature-stage African health-related companies that enhance healthcare capacity or reduce reliance on external medical supply chains. Following a call for applications in December 2020, the pilot Accelerator was launched in the East African Community (EAC).

After a rigorous assessment process, the Accelerator successfully directed the first cohort of five businesses in 2021, selected from a highly competitive pool of applicants. One mature-stage medical equipment manufacturer received USD 4 million to upscale the sale of medical devices, including vaccine syringes. In Kenya, AUDA-NEPAD supported the Revital Healthcare Manufacturer to strengthen healthcare capacity and local supply chains. Over 40 medical devices were produced to distribute in Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi. This contributes meaningfully to building pandemic resilience during the immediate COVID-19 crisis and the longer term.

mVacciNation – State-of-the-Art Vaccine Management Platform

Under a unique Public-Private Partnership, AUDA-NEPAD partnered with Vodacom-Mezzanine to build a state-of-the-art vaccine management platform across all AU member states through the AUDA-NEPAD Centre of Excellence on Science, Technology and Innovation. This follows the successful roll-out to manage COVID-19 vaccinations in South Africa and baby inoculations in Mozambique, Tanzania and Nigeria.

The mVacciNation digital solution directly tackles logistics problems by tracking vaccines' administration at clinics and vaccine stock levels, optimising the supply chain. So far, the digital infrastructure has supported the management of nine million COVID-19 vaccinations in South Africa.

AUDA-NEPAD Primary Health Care Programme

The role of frontline health workers has become critical in the fight against COVID-19, especially in countries with less resilient health systems. To this end, AUDA-NEPAD worked directly with the Africa Centres for Disease Control (Africa CDC) to provide field support using its network and coordinate medical personnel training.

The Agency made a direct financial contribution of USD 1 million to support Africa CDC. These funds were used to train local healthcare workers and online 'Train Labs Workers'. Rapid Response Teams were also established with these funds. A pharmaceutical resource database was developed, and 2,000 healthcare workers and port of entry staff were trained. The second phase of the AUDA-NEPAD Primary Health Care Programme began in 2021, featuring the training of additional nurses and health workers in occupational health under the Health Training and Education Programme. The training was offered in the ten first-wave countries. However, not all practical training sessions could be provided due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

Africa Medical Agency enters into force

Safe, good quality and affordable medicines are not widely available in many African countries due to non-existent, weak, or outdated legal frameworks and limited capacity. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this state of affairs. AUDA-NEPAD's integrated package of interventions aims to improve access to quality, safe and efficacious medicines by providing an enabling regulatory environment for the pharmaceutical sector in Africa.

At the continental level, AUDA-NEPAD pushed for the accelerated establishment of the Africa Medicines Agency (AMA), which entered into force on 5 November 2021. Among others, AMA enhance the capacity of countries to regulate medical products and ensure access to safe and efficacious medication for Africa's people.

So far, 17 AU Member States (Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritius, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Tunisia and Zimbabwe) have ratified the AMA Treaty and deposited their instrument of ratification to the Commission. One member state, namely Morocco has ratified the Treaty but is yet to deposit the instrument of ratification with the AUC. In total, 26 Member States have signed the Treaty. Furthermore, the Partnership for Africa

Africa Medicines Agency

Countries that have ratified the AMA Treaty and
deposited the instrument of ratification with the Commission
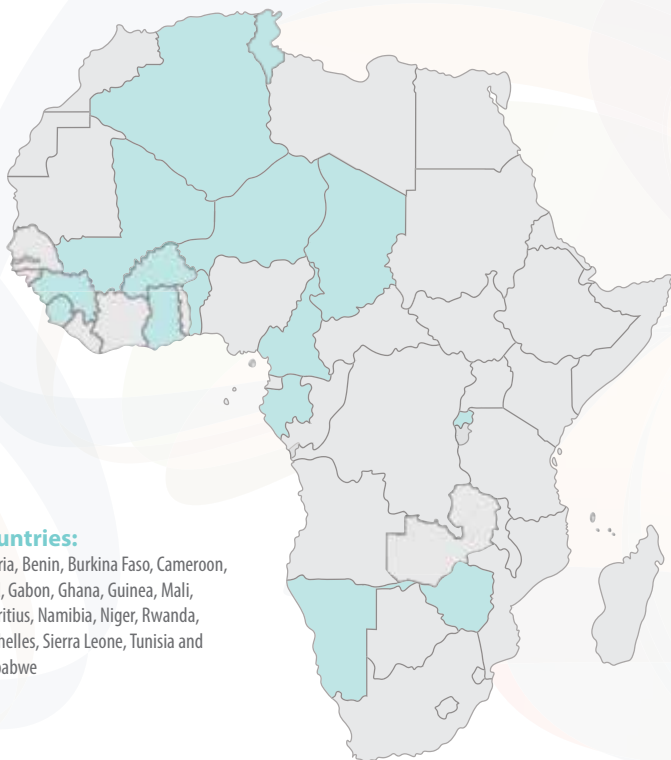
Countries:
Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritius, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Tunisia and Zimbabwe

Vaccine Manufacturing (PAVM) was launched with AUDA-NEPAD providing technical leadership on the regulatory workstream.

AMA will build on the African Medicines Regulatory Harmonisation (AMRH) initiative, led by AUDA-NEPAD. AMRH aims to address weaknesses in national medicines laws. To date, 17 AU Member States have domesticated the model law on medical products regulation resulting in enhanced coordination and speed in the regulation and approval of safe medical products among member states.

AU Smart Safety Surveillance Initiative

AUDA-NEPAD, through its Smart Safety Surveillance Initiative (AU-3S), developed guidelines for harmonising safety and data requirements to monitor COVID-19-related and other priority medical products. These include guidelines for clinical trials registration, pre-approval safety, marketing authorisation and post-approval safety.

The AU-3S programme is a smart continental safety surveillance system (encompassing both passive and active surveillance approaches) for priority products that will support African Union Member States, to safeguard the health of their citizens. The system covers the entire product life cycle from clinical trials through product approval to post-approval monitoring for safety and effectiveness.

AUDA-NEPAD Development Fund for innovative health financing

The AUDA-NEPAD Development Fund for innovative health financing was conceptualised and designed to support innovative financing of high-impact projects in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has a five-year implementation roadmap, a governance structure and standard operating procedures.

Several meetings were held with the Champion's Office (Rwanda), Pilot Regions (EAC and SADC), Tracker, Scorecard, Private Sector Engagement, Advocacy and Communication Sub-committees of the Africa Leadership Meeting (ALM) initiative to ensure coherence in the conceptualisation and design of regional health financing hubs.

The Agency also mobilised partners through the Coalition for African Research and Innovation (CARI) to support some critical sectors of the vaccine manufacturing value chain. Furthermore, there are ongoing engagements with RECs and MSs on the operationalisation of the AU Framework on Private Sector Engagement in Health.

Continental response for occupational health and safety

The impact of COVID-19 on the working population is significant, especially to those most likely to transmit the virus due to the nature of their work. These include workers in the health, food supply, retail, logistics, and public transportation industries.

To this end, AUDA-NEPAD, the African Union Commission (AUC), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and other partners developed the COVID-19/Occupational Health and Safety guidelines for specific workplaces. The guidelines cover thematic areas such as occupational health, safety and wellness of health workers and clinical occupational health. They serve as key technical reference instruments for all stakeholders – including national and sub-national governments, regional bodies, civil society, academia and development partners – to work in a coordinated and coherent manner to address occupational safety and health at workplaces in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2021, AUDA-NEPAD trained 14 doctors on the ILO classification of radiographs and 16 nurses on the fundamentals of occupational health. The Agency also provided technical support to the Government of Lesotho in drafting the National Occupational Health Policy Framework.

In addition, AUDA-NEPAD is championing efforts to ensure the sustainability of occupational health centres. It has also overseen the development of the Africa Post-COVID-19 occupational health regional curriculum data and information systems modules. Having begun in Zambia, the systems and modules will be deployed to national health institutes in all AU Member States.

Eradication of Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) remains a significant public health concern in Southern Africa, with a substantial economic impact. Despite global progress in tackling the disease, the burden is still unacceptably high in Southern Africa. The region has one of the highest TB per capita burden in the world. Lesotho and Mozambique bear the brunt of the disease, with one of the world's highest incidences of TB: 665/100,000 in Lesotho and 551/100,000 in Mozambique. The high burden of TB in the region is compounded by the heavy burden of HIV/AIDS and intra-regional movement of people for labour and other economic activities, which facilitate cross-border movement of the disease. Tackling TB in Southern Africa, therefore, requires a regional approach. In this regard, SADC adopted the Declaration on TB in the mining sector to guide its regional approach to eradicating TB.

The AUDA-NEPAD Southern Africa Tuberculosis and Health Systems Support (SATBHSS) project is a collaborative initiative with two partner institutions – ECSA-HC and the World Bank – and implemented in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia with regional benefits for the whole SADC region.

In 2021, AUDA-NEPAD established and piloted a cross-border referral system and cross-border disease surveillance zones in SADC, operational along the shared borders of Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Eleven occupational health service centres have been established to support the diagnosis of occupational lung disease for treatment and compensation. A total of 58,146 prioritised persons have been screened for TB and occupational lung diseases at the different centres. Furthermore, 2,500 health workers across the Continent have been trained to prevent, diagnose, and treat TB and occupational lung diseases. Legislative and regulatory reforms on occupational safety and health have been initiated in six countries (Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zambia).

Integrated vector management to eliminate Malaria

Africa has a troubling high burden of vector-borne diseases, primarily Malaria, yellow fever, chikungunya, dengue and schistosomiasis. Malaria is the most devastating vector-borne disease on the Continent, causing an estimated 400,000 deaths annually, especially in children under the age of five. It is estimated that USD 12 billion are lost every year due to Malaria. In response to the increasing threat and burden of vector-borne diseases, African leaders tasked AUDA-NEPAD to establish the Integrated Vector Management (IVM) Programme. The IVM Programme has been established to support the development, regulation and deployment of gene-drive technology with an initial focus on the elimination of Malaria.

It provides a continental platform for regulating gene drive technologies to build capacities and partnerships for the effective and responsible control of vector-borne diseases. To this end, AUDA-NEPAD offered technical assistance to

gene drive initiatives on Malaria elimination in Burkina Faso, Mali and Uganda on vector control, therapies, and trials on new products for prevention or treatment of the disease. The IVM Programme will use Malaria as a pathfinder disease for developing its platform to control other vector-borne diseases.

Lastly, the 5th Calestous Juma Executive Dialogue featured best practices in harnessing innovations and emerging technologies. Relatedly, the Agency organised webinars and provided capacity strengthening support to 75 experts on effectively handling the dual burden of Malaria and COVID-19 through an integrated vector management approach. Furthermore, work on drafting the 3rd set of technologies for the African Panel on Emerging Technologies commenced.

Building resilient food and nutrition systems

During the period under review, the Continent dealt with the ripple effects of COVID-19 on trade, including global and regional supply chains for essential goods such as food products. This created multiple repercussions to already strained food and agriculture systems. The Continent also dealt with a devastating desert locust outbreak and extreme weather. To this end, AUDA-NEPAD prioritised agricultural transformation and food and nutrition security as essential factors in promoting rural transformation and empowerment of rural economies. AUDA-NEPAD's responses included a mix of short- and long-term strategies towards building resilient food systems at the continental, regional and national levels.

Food and Nutrition Security

In 2021, ten countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan) were given technical and financial support to implement country nutrition action plans under the Initiative for Food and Nutrition Security in Africa (IFNA). To this end, AUDA-NEPAD, the Coordinating Agency and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) developed the IFNA training tool. The tool uses a nutrition-based approach for improved dietary diversity to tackle nutrition issues such as anaemia.

Furthermore, AUDA-NEPAD worked on food safety issues and conducted a survey and consultative meetings in four RECs and four countries (Zambia for COMESA, Gabon for ECCAS, Nigeria for ECOWAS and Botswana for SADC). This led AUDA-NEPAD to develop continental guidelines for harmonising regional food safety standards to accelerate the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Home-Grown School Feeding

The Agency continued to roll out the AUDA-NEPAD Home-Grown School Feeding Programme in 16 countries (Angola, Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania, South Africa, Senegal and Zambia). Specifically, more than 3,400 school feeding implementers (caterers, smallholder farmers, nutritionists and teachers) were trained to help control food quality and improve school menus in Ghana, Botswana and Nigeria. These interventions aim to boost the income of smallholder farmers by linking their agricultural production to food demand by schools. The School Meals Coalition was launched at the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 pre-summit as a critical instrument for strengthening the networking and coordination of school feeding initiatives in Africa.

Africa common position on food systems

AUDA-NEPAD's programme of work under the food systems portfolio focused on strengthening a common Africa voice and galvanising global support to transform the Continent's food systems. In this regard, the Agency provided technical support to 46 AU Member States to hold national dialogues and facilitated – together with the African Group of Negotiators – Africa's Common Position on Food Systems during the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS). Subsequently, AUDA-NEPAD provided technical leadership in developing the overarching AU Food Systems Programme. The Programme will be critical in advancing Africa's common position for more inclusive, sustainable, healthy and nutritious food systems across the Continent.

Guided by the AU Food Commodities Strategic Framework, SADC provided technical support to establish a food system. COMESA, IGAD, and EAC also developed food systems in line with the UNFSS on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly in 2021.

AUDA-NEPAD provided technical and financial support to national agriculture entities, food security and food storage agencies to build internal capacities in the science of soil, water management, irrigation, and fertilisers. Technical guidelines and tools on pertinent issues such as food storage were deployed to Niger, Sierra Leone and Uganda, and online structured training were delivered via webinars.

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Agriculture Technical Vocational Education and Training

AUDA-NEPAD continued to promote Agricultural Technical Vocational Education and Training (ATVET) in 12 AU member states to transform agriculture and promote employability through skills development. Through competency-based training along agricultural value chains, students are equipped with practical skills to meet the needs of the labour market.

So far, over 16,000 people have been trained, focusing on youth and women. ATVET is anchored in National Agriculture Investment Plans in 6 countries and included in the National Qualifications Framework in 5 others. The Agency developed an approach to strengthen agriculture training institutions by deploying digital management solutions and organisational development support.

Africa Land Governance Model

The Agency helped ten countries set up and manage national land governance helpdesks. Specifically, a dossier of guidance materials and knowledge products were developed and deployed in these countries. Webinars were organised, and one-to-one practical sessions were held with helpdesk managers. These actions aim to strengthen in-country land data repository stewardship and include technical support for maintaining and updating land data indicator performance monitoring and tracking. On a related note, AUDA-NEPAD worked closely with the AUC to steer the validation of the AU Land Governance Strategy and the implementation of its roadmap.

Mitigating climate risks and boosting land restoration

Within the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100) framework, AUDA-NEPAD is working closely with AU Member States to bring 100 million hectares of land in Africa into restoration by 2030. During the period under review, hotspot areas on the Continent received support towards enhancing land and ecosystem restoration. In particular, design, implementation and reporting tools were updated and deployed to AU Member States.

Thus far, 31 countries have made commitments to restore 127 million hectares of degraded landscape. In Nigeria, for example, the government committed to restoring 4 million hectares of land. The Nigerian government is working with AUDA-NEPAD to improve agricultural productivity by strengthening smallholder farmers by providing seedlings, local indigenous crops and fertilisers to improve agricultural productivity. Furthermore, solar power systems were deployed to drive sustainable food systems and reduce post-harvest losses. This is one of several pilot projects ready for replication and upscaling to other countries on a needs basis.

The Agency provided technical guidance to AU Member States at the continental level ahead of their participation in the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to the UNFCCC. In particular, the Agency led efforts to finalise the African Climate Strategy.

Advancing the AU Malabo Declaration on accelerated agricultural growth

AUDA-NEPAD continued to provide financial support, and technical expertise to AU Member States in facilitating small-scale farmers access to machinery and pilot regenerative agriculture practices and precision technology. All this is in line with the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods.

A pilot project was run in Sierra Leone to generate lessons to be shared as best practices across the Continent. This project will be rolled out in other AU Member States in 2022 and beyond. Five countries were given technical and financial support related to Gender Climate Agriculture, designed to accelerate women farmers' access to technology. Through webinars and bilateral training sessions, beneficiary countries (Cameroon, Ghana, Malawi, Niger and Rwanda) were provided with guidelines and tools for planning, implementing and managing Gender Climate Agriculture initiatives.

Consultations are underway to launch the Africa Regional Guarantee Mechanism that will address the handicaps of small-scale farmers in Africa. The outcomes of these consultations will inform the design and operational architecture of the Guarantee Mechanism.

Technical organisational capacity assessments are underway in 15 countries among targeted national commodity agencies. This forms part of the preparations for the disbursement of funds for mobilising private sector investment in national strategic commodities value chains and identifying in-country institutions with the capacity to manage financial disbursements and procure necessary resources. This will help ensure quality results and compliance with AU financial and procurement protocols.

The Agency worked closely with the AUC to formulate a new business plan for the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP). In addition, AUDA-NEPAD made technical inputs into preparing the CAADP Biennial Review Report. Furthermore, and in collaboration with AU-IBAR, AUDA-NEPAD supported establishing the South African Network for Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector.

Leveraging biotechnology for enhanced productivity of agriculture and food systems

AUDA-NEPAD provided 18 AU Member States technical assistance to strengthen national biosafety and biosecurity capacities under the African Biosafety Network of Expertise (ABNE). The support included strengthening capacities of AU Member States on regulatory tools for genome editing and technical advisory support to review biosafety application dossiers and the interpretation of biosafety data and training.

Specific examples include technical support to the Ghana Food and Drugs Authority on guidelines for risk assessment of genetically modified food and feed; the development of a guidance document on Genome Editing in Burkina Faso; biosafety training focused on stacked trait GM in Ethiopia; technical guidance on the development of guidelines for the regulation of stacked trait GM in Nigeria; capacity strengthening and awareness-raising on biosafety and biotechnology on virus-resistant cassava in Kenya; and technical advisory support on biotechnology and biosafety application in Zambia, Burkina Faso and Mali.

The Agency also presented policy options on biosafety for the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework as part of the preparatory support offered to the Africa Group negotiators. Furthermore, AUDA-NEPAD provided technical input and direction on the Global Dialogue on Digital Sequence Information (DSI) to strengthen Africa's negotiation capacities in the context of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Accelerating regional infrastructure and inclusive growth

AUDA-NEPAD continued to foster implementation of ongoing projects under the Programme for Infrastructure Development (PIDA). This includes advancing all frontiers of Africa's infrastructure development, including water, air, road and rail transport, and boosting the ICT and energy sectors. Particular focus was placed on transboundary infrastructure projects that promote Africa's interconnection and integration while ensuring inclusive growth and prosperity.

Enhanced Implementation of Infrastructure and Trade Corridor Development Projects

Moving into the second phase of the continental Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), AUDA-NEPAD fast-tracked the implementation of 69 cross-border priority action projects:

- 28 transport projects
- 18 energy projects
- 12 water projects
- 11 Information and Communications Technology (ICT) projects

These new projects under the second PIDA Priority Action Plan (PIDA PAP 2) will accelerate regional integration while ensuring inclusiveness and sustainability with regard to gender, rural connectivity, and the environment.

During the reporting period, four projects moved through three phases: pre-feasibility, feasibility, and kick-start implementation. These include the Luberizi-Kamanyola-Bukavu Road Project, the Mombasa-Nairobi-Malaba-Kampala road, the Kisian-Busia-Kakira-Malaba segments,

including additional road links and the Noordoewer/ Vioolsdrift Dam.

On the implementation of the High-Speed Train, preparations are well underway for national readiness assessments as part of designing and deploying an African online facilitation compact mechanism to accelerate consultation and agreement. Tools and templates have been prepared and preliminary online contacts made with some AU Member States to pave the way for the assessment exercise.

Furthermore, 42 PIDA PAP II projects were subjected to a triage process, from which 30 were deemed ready for early-stage project preparation support. Accordingly, notification reports detailing project status, gaps and potential support were written, and five regional infrastructure projects selected for feasibility support and project concept memoranda were drafted. In addition, the inception report of the Continental Transmission Masterplan was completed, and technical assistance was mobilised from the European Union. The Masterplan is now awaiting financial resources from the African Development Bank (AfDB).

The PIDA Quality Label (PQL) was endorsed as a standard for project preparation excellence for infrastructure projects. The PQL is a mark of quality conferred by the AUDA-

NEPAD Service Delivery Mechanism (SDM). It is awarded to initiatives that excel in the preparation phase of PIDA projects. This goal is achieved by shortening the period needed to reach the feasibility and bankability stages, identifying project preparation bottlenecks and advising project owners on how to bridge these and certifying excellence in project preparation with the recognition of relevant PIDA stakeholders. Two regional projects were awarded the PQL status, and project feasibility and bankability studies were secured for funding.

Furthermore, enhancements were made on the PIDA Job Creation Toolkit and the SDM PIDA Quality Label Methodology. The development of the Job Creation Maximisation Strategy was completed.

Project Notification Reports were produced for 11 PIDA PAP 2 projects, and one project concept memorandum was developed for the LAPSSET Rail Project. Furthermore, the AUDA-NEPAD Online Infrastructure Projects Public Procurement System was finalised. The system is designed to integrate Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in the PIDA Project implementation process and increase their access to regional infrastructure projects procurement opportunities. A call for proposals for small- and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) was launched, and 61 applications were received to provide SMEs with business development and market access support. Relatedly, the PIDA implementation guidelines were drafted, taking into account SMEs, job creation and public procurement.

Tackling trade and supply chain bottlenecks

Trade has been a significant driver of Africa's economic growth and receives increasing emphasis in regional and national development plans. The demand for high-performing corridors that reduce cost and time spent on transport and logistics and increase the reliability and predictability of the corridors has increased significantly. AUDA-NEPAD's Move Africa Initiative aims to strengthen the development and operations of One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) in each of the five regions to tackle trade and supply chain bottlenecks.

In 2021, AUDA-NEPAD ran capacity-building activities in the SADC and ECOWAS regions to strengthen the operational effectiveness of OSBPs as well as the development of integrated corridors. The Agency developed specific guidelines on customs clearance. Furthermore, online training of trainers responsible for the design and construction of OSBPs was undertaken in the East African Community. In ECOWAS, AUDA-NEPAD provided technical support for the adaptation and integration of a Traffic Lights System (TLS), which measures the performance of OSBPs for incorporation in the ECOWAS Trade Informal Cross-Border Framework.

Increased access to electricity and water through climate-smart technologies in rural communities

AUDA-NEPAD supported governments to increase access to climate-smart and cost-effective energy. AUDA-NEPAD's interventions included designing and deploying mini-grid solutions technologies (photovoltaic modules) that are customised for rural electrification. The Agency installed a 100-Kilowatt solar power generating solution at Njala University in Sierra Leone to promote renewable energy. The project provides safe solar-powered drinking water to more than 1,500 households to boost food production and productivity through irrigation and increased access to essential health services through climate-smart technology.

Demonstrating the successful deployment of locally managed systems for improved access to affordable and clean energy, this pilot business model is ready for adaptation in 12 countries. A review of regulatory frameworks for renewable energy has already commenced in five countries: Chad, Malawi, Niger, Uganda and Sierra Leone.

Furthermore, technical solutions on water management were designed to increase access to clean water and improve water allocation strategies for inclusive growth. Following the end of technical preparations in Sierra Leone, technical solutions on water management were deployed, including scenario planning and developing training materials and user manuals.

A desk study identified and benchmarked best practices in hygiene and sanitation. Subsequently, a portfolio of plausible strategies and accompanying tools for improving hygiene and sanitation among vulnerable communities was developed. This served as the basis for offering tangible, practical support to Sierra Leoneans.

Work began on the next set of reports under the African Union High-level Panel on Emerging Technologies (APET). The reports will focus water management and water purification.

100,000 SMEs Initiative

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses has been significant, with wide-ranging consequences. These include loss of business due to reduced operational capacity, a fall in demand and suppressed markets with direct and widespread adverse impact on jobs and entrepreneurship. In addition, many small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) and large numbers of people, including self-employed entrepreneurs, are losing their source of income.

Within this framework, AUDA-NEPAD reinforced and reoriented the 100,000 SMEs programme to accelerate African economic transformation and build resilience against economic shocks triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The 100,000 SMEs initiative seeks to strengthen the capacity of 100,000 SMEs in Africa through training on entrepreneurial and business skills to improve their access to finance and new markets. The Agency is also establishing networks for support and incubation to bolster their success.

Training was given to 18,000 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in 33 countries to cushion economic shocks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Agency worked closely with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to support AU Member States to protect the job market and provided policy advisory services to support MSMEs during the outbreak. Furthermore, the 100,000 SMEs platform was launched in partnership with the Ecobank Group and McKinsey.

The Agency set out to establish 15 value chain partnership agreements (agreements between government, small and medium-size enterprises, multinationals and farmers platforms) to increase small-scale farmers' access to national and regional commodities markets. In this regard, an inventory of potential service providers was compiled, which informed the technical organisational capacity assessment conducted to identify appropriate national commodity agencies that will receive financial and technical support in this process.

Furthermore, a USD 2 million Ecobank loan facility has been extended to MSMEs in 8 countries: Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Togo.

During 2021 training curricula were developed to build capacity among rural youth in Cameroon, Mozambique and Zambia on rural enterprises and agricultural entrepreneurship. In addition, backstopping support was provided to develop National Action Plans for Rural Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship in Mali, Mozambique and Zambia.

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Skills Initiative for Africa

The Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) is an initiative of the AUC and AUDA-NEPAD, supported by the German Government and the European Union. SIFA promotes the occupational prospects of young Africans through the support of innovative skills development programmes and close cooperation with the private sector as an integral key stakeholder in job creation. SIFA consists of two components: a finance facility and a technical component.

Under the EUR 101 million financing facility, 14 implementation agreements have been finalised concerning five projects to the value of EUR 13,644,617. They are already being contracted and are at the inception phase.

Under the technical facility, SIFA undertook a mapping exercise of African national qualification systems and knowledge transfer activities to create a network of 80 African practitioners. The network is developing the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF) and supporting guidelines and documents. The ACQF is a vital policy initiative of the African Union, built to enhance transparency and portability of qualifications of all sub-systems and levels of education and training. It will complement national and regional qualifications frameworks and contribute to the continental integration agenda of AfCFTA, making cross-border comparison of qualifications possible.

Furthermore, the African Skills Portal for Youth Employment has been established as a continental knowledge-sharing platform that enables practitioners and policymakers across the African Continent to share, collaborate and engage with each other. The portal provides a platform to promote African-owned, innovative approaches derived from field experience and research.

Accelerated Industrial Development for Africa

AUDA-NEPAD developed an institutional Industrialisation Strategy following comprehensive consultations with various stakeholders. Within the framework of strengthening the capacities of RECs in industrialisation, AUDA-NEPAD provided online and backstopping support to five RECs (ECCAS, ECOWAS, SADC, IGAD, UMA), specifically in the deployment of the industrialisation baseline analytical tool. Plans are currently underway to deploy industrialisation experts to five RECs to deepen the deployment of the industrialisation baseline analytical tool.

In collaboration with the AUC, the Agency participated in reviewing the Accelerated Industrial Development for Africa (AIDA) initiative and developed proposals for the African Union Industrialisation Support Programme (AUISP). In a related development, the two AU bodies developed a paper titled 'What key actions are required to place each and every African Country on a path of 7-10% annual GDP growth sustained over a period of thirty years – 2022-2052.' Furthermore, the AUDA-NEPAD

industrialisation programme strategy was finalised, and socialisation among all stakeholders began. The Agency provided technical support to the Industrialisation Summit and made technical inputs into the work of the Steering Committee of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III).

The Agency provided support to AfCFTA initiatives and the Secretariat. The support included sharing various knowledge resources for guiding implementation, reporting and resource mobilisation strategies such as the Service Delivery Mechanism and VPiC. These knowledge resources will inform the development of training materials for the Africa Trade Facilitation and Industrialisation Leadership Training Programme. AUDA-NEPAD is working with ARSO and UNIDO to foster and align national policies and manufacturing standards in industrialisation. A technical concept note has been developed and a roadmap defined to establish the Africa public-private transnational/regional platform.

Establishment of AUDA-NEPAD centres of excellence

AUDA-NEPAD is establishing five Centres of Excellence (CoEs), one for each of the five regions (Central Africa, East Africa, North Africa, Southern Africa and West Africa). The CoEs play a catalytic role in enabling the effective implementation of National Development Plans (NDPs) and strategies for regional bodies. More specifically, they serve as knowledge and research nodes for the enhanced use and adoption of data and new emerging technologies.

The AUDA-NEPAD Centre of Excellence in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) is one of the five AUDA-NEPAD Centres of Excellence. The CoE was established at Stellenbosch University (SU) in South Africa in cooperation with the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

Over 40 knowledge-based innovations have been identified, which could potentially be upscaled and implemented. These innovations have emerged from long-running programmes between SU and CSIR and represent widely-tested and proven technologies or practices. They are ready for packaging and domesticating across Africa. The innovations cover a broad spectrum of solutions. These include screening technologies for application in

drug discovery, epidemiological modelling, initiatives around climate change studies, water-energy-food security innovations, training in e-learning, e-infrastructure, payment systems, and governance and security.

In addition to the Centre of Excellence in Science, Technology and Innovation (Stellenbosch, South Africa), AUDA-NEPAD has operationalised three other CoEs: Human Capital and Institution Development (Nairobi, Kenya), Rural Resources and Food Systems (Dakar, Senegal), and Climate Change (Cairo, Egypt).

The Centre of Excellence on Rural Resources and Food Systems focuses on strengthening Africa's food systems by using rural resources in an integrated, efficient, productive and sustainable manner. It furthermore promotes the nexus of food systems with other domains such as climate, land, energy, water systems, STI and trade. AUDA-NEPAD has leveraged the human resources, systems and office structures of its Africa Biosafety Network (ABNE) to enable the Centre's operations to begin.

The Centre of Excellence on Climate Change will focus on generating knowledge and solutions to enable countries to mitigate and respond/adapt to the effects of climate change and adverse weather conditions.

Institutional and Technical Capacities in Science, Technology and Innovation

In light of the global trends and transitions that position technological advancements among the key recovery and development drivers, a high-level policy forum was held on leveraging technology for enhanced citizens participation in development.

The Agency also commenced with the implementation of the Data-Cipation project. Follow-up support on implementing the Science, Technology and Innovations Strategy for Africa (STISA 2024) was provided to Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Furthermore, Malawi received technical assistance and development for its STI Policy.

One of the critical milestones realised during the reporting period was the establishment of the AUDA-NEPAD Centres of Excellence on Science, Technology, and Innovation. The Centre is housed at Stellenbosch University in the Cape. Detailed programming, multi-year planning and operational and administrative arrangements were finalised, including staffing and hosting arrangements. Relatedly, a catalogue of innovations in STI in Africa was developed.

Progress on Agenda 2063 Implementation

During the period under review, AUDA-NEPAD and the AUC developed an evidence-based methodology to guide AU Member States and RECs to prepare their second progress reports on Agenda 2063. The methodology encompasses a set of tools and templates for data entry, analysis and standardised reporting based on the goals and targets in Agenda 2063's First Ten-Year Implementation Plan. Furthermore, a data analytics dashboard on the performance against goals and strategic priorities was developed.

Following the launch of the first Continental Progress Report on Agenda 2063 Implementation at the AU Summit in 2020, the second progress report is an empirical assessment of country-level performance reports submitted by 38 AU Member States. The report reveals the progress made in attaining the goals and targets outlined in Agenda 2063's First Ten-Year Implementation Plan. It also highlights emerging results from investments made to spur socio-economic development in prioritised areas of National and Regional Development Plans.

The report features select good practices, case studies and recommendations made by Member States to upscale the implementation of Agenda 2063. In addition, continental, regional and national performance was assessed in the context of the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, an Agenda 2063 Community of Practice (CoP) was developed and is now operational, serving as a helpdesk and a platform for peer learning among AU Member States. The Agency also developed and operationalised the Agenda 2063 Knowledge and Accelerator Hub. The Hub serves as a data repository and key reference point for understanding the development needs of AU Member States in implementing Agenda 2063 and their respective National Development Plans.

The second Continental Progress Report on Agenda 2063 Implementation will be launched at the 35th AU Summit by H.E. Alassane Ouattara, President of Côte d'Ivoire and AU Champion of Agenda 2063.

Country Progress on the Implementation of Agenda 2063
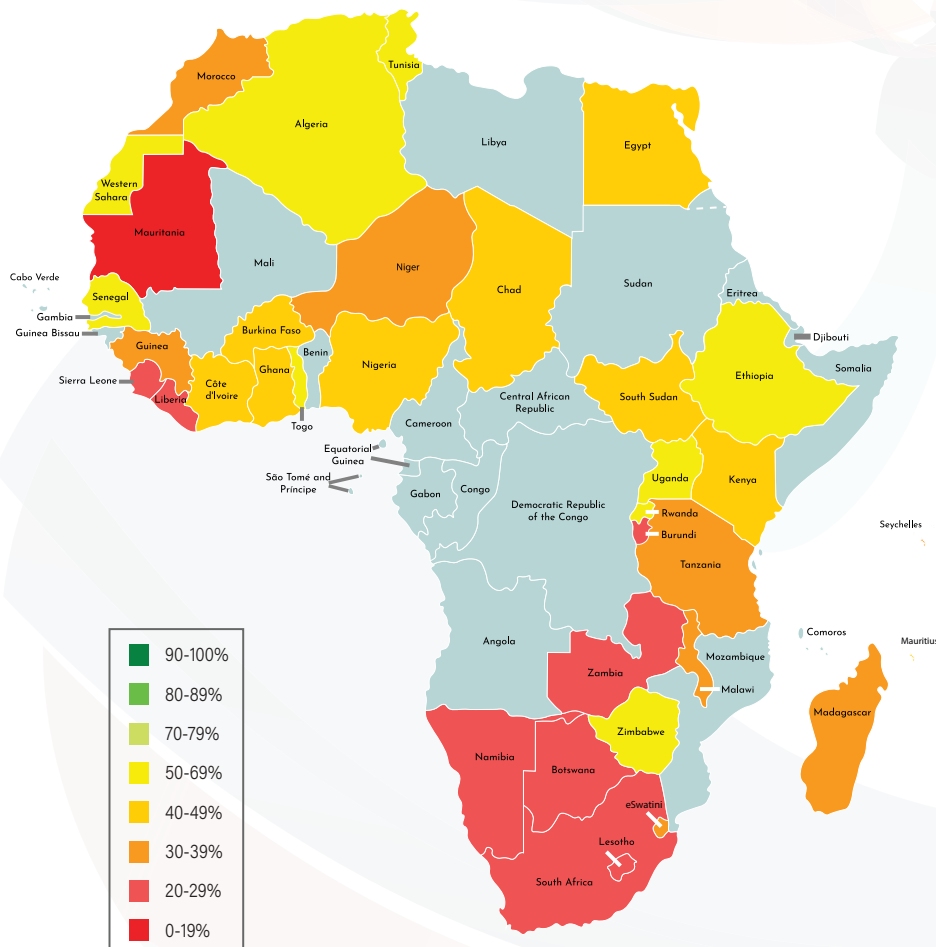
Red, for scores between 0% and 39% and denoting poor performance against 2021 Agenda 2063 country target | Orange, for scores between 40% and 70% and signifying moderately good performance against 2021 Agenda 2063 country target | Green, for scores above 70% and indicating good performance against 2021 Agenda 2063 country target

Resource Mobilisation and Partnerships

In 2021, AUDA-NEPAD developed its institutional-level Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2021-2024 and associated Implementation Action Plan. The Strategy aims to ensure adequate resources are mobilised towards supporting the execution of the AU's programmes and projects. It also aims to secure a funding pipeline that will attract the required resources to execute the core functions and achieve the planned organisational results at all levels. The three-year Action Implementation Plan will mobilise capital of at least USD 100 Million by 2024 and introduce new streams of capital and increase contributions form member states. The new Strategy strengthens:

- Smooth management of renewal of legal frameworks of partnerships

- Clear division of labour and effective coordination of new partnerships

- Internal capacity and expertise transfer in negotiations

- Alignment of AU rules and regulations on partnership engagement

- Alignment to Agenda 2063, AUDA-NEPAD flagship Projects and common priority areas defined by member states and partners

During the period under review, AUDA-NEPAD incepted, negotiated, and managed more than 20 technical and legal frameworks. Several memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and memoranda of cooperation (MoCs) were signed.

Partner/s	Legal Framework	Area of Cooperation
Commonwealth Secretariat **UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**	Tripartite Agreement	• Framework of collaboration between MSs and RECs on sustainable land and water management aligned to Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)	Renewal of MoC	• Regional Integration • Africa Kaizen Initiative (AKI) for Food and Nutrition Security in Africa (IFNA) • Home Grown Solutions Accelerator • Collaboration between AUDA-NEPAD Policy Bridge Tank and JICA Ogata Research Institute • Institutional Strengthening
UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)	MoU	• Climate Resilience & Governance, • Environmental Sustainability & Natural Resources Management • Sustainable Energy, Nexus Energy-Water-Food & Empowerment of Rural Communities • Knowledge Management and Evaluation • Human and Institutional Development • Science, Technology and Innovation • Economic Integration • Macroeconomics and Governance Policy • Wealth Creation / Industrialisation
AfriExim Bank	MoU	• Cross-border logistics / MoveAfrica Initiative • Integrated border management • Industrialisation • Economic integration through PIDA ICT Projects
COP26	MoU	• Africa Land Initiative

Funding proposals of over USD 25 million are currently under review with the AfDB on PIDA PAP2 tranche negotiations and disbursement; the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) on the African Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (ASTII4) Initiative Phase 4; the European Union Institutional Support; AFREXIM on the three-year programme support; Columbia Cooperation; and UNCCD.

Annual consultations with existing partners were held with the German Government, JICA, Chinese Government through the Chinese Permanent Representation to the African Union as well as AUDA-NEPAD's interaction and participation in the G20 coordinated.

AUDA-NEPAD also strengthened collaboration between the African Union and United Nations aimed at leveraging the regional coordination platform of the AU and UN systems on programme funding and budget.

New emerging partner countries based on their expression of interest or on their international commitments were engaged. These include Belgium, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States.

As part of its efforts to leverage innovative health financing, AUDA-NEPAD's Development Fund received resource mobilisation support from Member States and the European Union to implement the Africa Medicines Agency (AMA). The Fund also facilitated technical cooperation and programme funding for the African Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (ASTII4) Initiative. This is an AUDA-NEPAD Continent-wide programme to improve the quality of STI policies at national, regional and continental levels by strengthening Africa's capacity to develop and use STI indicators.

In 2021, AUDA-NEPAD continued to optimise and adapt its business model and accelerated digital capabilities to ensure effective and efficient service delivery and the implementation of AUDA-NEPAD programmes and projects. Implementation of the Centralised Data Warehouse and the Information Management Project began. To this end, the Agency leveraged digital technologies, built automation capabilities and approached stakeholders using leaner and more agile methodologies. This resulted in the set-up of digital work and management platforms, including a new e-recruitment platform, among others. Most importantly, employees were at the heart of AUDA-NEPAD's recalibrated delivery model and played a crucial role in sustaining operations throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. To this end, a new Future of Work Initiative was rolled-out to focus on staff health and well-being and promote a culture of virtual working and collaboration.

Operational Efficiency

Challenges

The continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Africa's socio-economic landscape, coupled with other occurrences such as severe weather patterns and civil wars in some AU Member States, has occasioned significant changes in the development needs of many countries. Although development priorities are outlined in National Development Plans, the unprecedented occurrences in the recent past have led to significant and unpredictable changes in investment options. AUDA-NEPAD's programmatic plans which were largely informed by National Development Plans have had to be reviewed periodically to realign them with countries' new development needs.

Travel constraints brought about by COVID-19 have hampered the physical delivery of AUDA-NEPAD's services. While online platforms like webinars have been deployed, it is clear that the virtual delivery of services reduces quality effectiveness.

The austerity measures placed on AUDA-NEPAD's budget, explained mainly by the global COVID-19 pandemic, has also impacted the scope and depth of the Agency's interventions. During the year in review, most of the activities were delivered by staff from their desks. In some instances, the scope of the activities had to be trimmed down owing to inadequate resources.

Conclusion
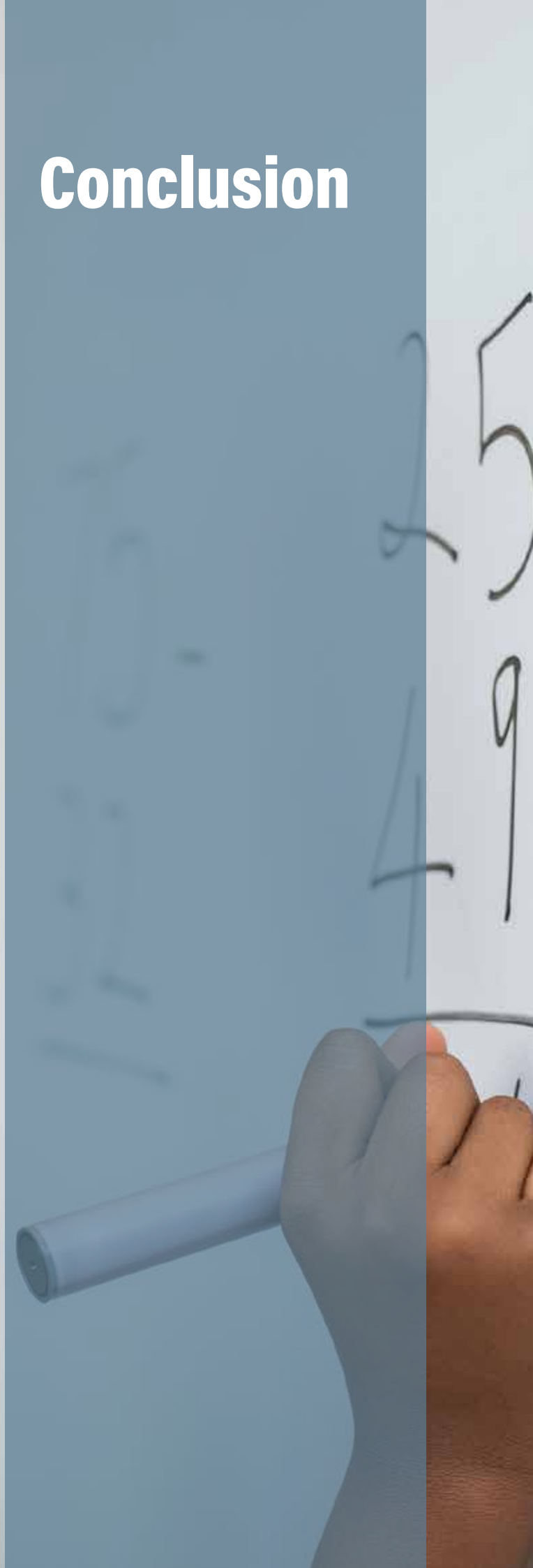
2021 was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused unprecedented disruptions in various processes with a direct bearing on both planning and implementation of socio-economic development policies as well as programmatic activities and service delivery. Travel restrictions significantly constrained the volume and pace of AUDA-NEPAD service delivery to RECs and Member States.

Programmatic challenges - The redirection of resources from other sectors to address emerging and urgent needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic caused a shift in priorities and a recalibrated focus on immediate and short-term responses and measures. This has resulted in reduced attention to long-term development and transformational objectives.

Operational Challenges - Although AUDA-NEPAD has recalibrated its delivery model by using online tools to engage with RECs and Member States, in some instances, this is not as effective as in-person engagement. Programme delivery has also suffered due to the varying levels of digital infrastructure across the Continent, relatively low Internet penetration, limited internet connectivity and infrastructure and elevated financial cost of participating in virtual sessions.

AUDA-NEPAD Budget - The overall reprioritisation of funding in the AU system has brought about significant budget cuts for programme activities. This has impeded the efficacy of the Agency in providing effectual support to AU Member States and RECs. The current budget does not meet the institutional demands for carrying out the AUDA-NEPAD mandate and is currently at pre-AUDA-NEPAD levels when the organisation was the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA). Although AUDA-NEPAD has stepped up its resource mobilisation in response, mobilising sufficient resources is challenging in the current global environment.

Agenda 2063 - As the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 draws to a close and preparations for the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan begin, it is essential to investigate (e.g. foresight studies) what critical interventions may be necessary for Africa especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. These interventions will need to focus on COVID-19 recovery, stabilisation and revitalisation of African economies. The Agency must continue its systematic engagement with Member States, RECs and all AU organs and agencies implicated in Agenda 2063 implementation to ensure coherent and aligned implementation efforts and robust monitoring and reporting.

2022 Priorities - Under the Agency's Health Systems portfolio, AUDA-NEPAD's primary focus will be strengthening medical product manufacturing and building regulatory infrastructure to harness technology choices and transfer. Inclusive access to primary health care systems will be a key priority. On Food Systems, AUDA-NEPAD will continue to build resilient food systems by enhancing productivity in irrigation and the general application of smart agriculture. This will include the agriculture industry through strengthening food production, safety and standards. Economic Growth and Jobs will focus on innovative economic competitiveness and diversification, job creation, entrepreneurship opportunities, and the prioritisation of transboundary infrastructure for regional integration through the implementation of PIDA PAP 2.