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To cite this article: Kaitlyn DeGhetto, Jacob R. Gray & Moses N. Kiggundu (2016) The African Union's Agenda 2063: Aspirations, Challenges, and Opportunities for Management Research, Africa Journal of Management, 2:1, 93-116, DOI: [10.1080/23322373.2015.1127090](https://doi.org/10.1080/23322373.2015.1127090)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/23322373.2015.1127090>



Published online: 25 Feb 2016.



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Insights Article

THE AFRICAN UNION'S AGENDA 2063: ASPIRATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

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As Africa emerges, rises, and begins to forge a more positive outlook ahead, scholars, business executives, community leaders, and policymakers are increasingly calling for concerted efforts to rethink the future and come up with big ideas for the 21st century. Recognizing this, in 2013, African heads of state and government launched the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063. This agenda is an ambitious vision and action plan intended to drive Africa's change, development, and transformation for the next 50 years. The purpose of this *Insights Article* is threefold. First, we present an overview of Agenda 2063, including a summary of the vision and action plans. Second, we discuss opportunities and challenges for the effective implementation of Agenda 2063 for Africa's sustaining development and transformation. Finally, we propose specific areas for future management research related to Agenda 2063.

Keywords: Agenda 2063; Africa; African Union; institutions; regional identity; resource management

INTRODUCTION

Africa is both in a position of emergence and a position of struggle. On a positive note, Africa is emerging as a noteworthy player in the global economy. The region's average gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to rise between 4% and 5% in 2016 and 2017 (World Bank, 2015). And Africa is currently outpacing other regions in terms of foreign direct invest (FDI) growth (Fingar, 2015). Although Africa's attractiveness to foreign investors is on the rise, all countries are not benefiting equally. Certain countries receive a substantial share of FDI (i.e., South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt, Morocco), while others fail to capture investors' attention (Ernst & Young, 2014). Large disparities remain in income, assets, access, and opportunities across countries. Additionally, while progress has been made in resolving open conflicts, recent events in countries such as the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, etc., highlight the continent's continuing challenges of establishing lasting peace and security among its citizens.

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In this state of tension, it is important that the region has a solid, unified vision and plan of action to move Africa in the direction of economic growth and social prosperity. *Agenda 2063*, the region's 50-year roadmap proposed and adopted by African leaders, is intended to provide this much needed direction. More specifically, Agenda 2063 is described as "A global strategy to optimize use of Africa's resources for the benefits of all Africans" and as "an approach to how the continent should effectively learn from lessons of the past, build on the progress now underway and strategically exploit all possible opportunities available in the immediate and medium term, so as to ensure positive socioeconomic transformation within the next 50 years" (<http://agenda2063.au.int/en/vision>). These are commendable objectives. Yet, pervasive instability and disparate institutional environments across countries within the region will continue to create substantial obstacles.

With this *Insights Article*, we first seek to summarize the goals and objectives of Agenda 2063. Africa is a growth region, and multinationals are increasingly considering investment. Thus, it is important for managers to understand the region's roadmap for the next 50 years. Indeed, this agenda will likely have positive impacts on the region and result in important institutional changes. Next, we discuss several key issues with Agenda 2063 that should be considered and addressed by both politicians and practitioners competing in Africa. We note that Agenda 2063 is a very ambitious and potentially transformative vision. As such, it deserves serious attention, debate, and critical analysis, especially as it relates to the potential for socio-economic change and political transformation. Finally, we discuss future research directions related to Agenda 2063. Various scholars have noted that little management research has focused on the African context (e.g., Nkomo, Zoogah, & Acquah, 2015). Yet, the region's increasing position in the global economy and unique context should promote management scholars to further apply and test existing theories, as well as develop new theories, to help stakeholders understand the African business environment. Specifically, research surrounding the successful implementation of Agenda 2063 is an important pursuit.

AGENDA 2063 OVERVIEW

An ambitious, Pan-African people-centered vision and action plan, Agenda 2063 aims to position Africa for growth over the next 50 years, incorporating lessons and experiences from the past. The ultimate goal is to secure three ideals – unity, prosperity, and peace – for all its citizens. It is a global strategic rolling plan with short- (10 years), medium- (10–25 years), and long-term (25–50 years) perspectives. Put simply, Agenda 2063 is aimed at getting Africa to do things differently (people-centered), bigger (scaling and scoping up), and better (governance, performance outcomes, impact on citizens, etc.). Critical success factors for Agenda 2063 include the participation of multiple stakeholder groups at all stages, a results-based approach with measurable objectives, and inculcating the right set of African values in line with the African Renaissance which suggests the transformation of attitudes, values, and mind sets (African Union Commission (AUC), 2015b).

At its core, Agenda 2063 stems from the Constitutive Act, the AU Vision, and the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration, while also building on national, regional, and continental priorities (AUC, 2015a). As both a vision and an action plan, Agenda 2063 boldly calls for Africa's "positive socioeconomic transformation". This is important

because it goes beyond drivers for economic growth or development, and calls for transformational change, open governance, and shared prosperity. This requires, among other things, capacities and competencies for managing longitudinal, multi-level transformational change. Additionally, the architects of Agenda 2063 are challenging themselves and all of us to take stock of and learn from past experiences. Here, learning is not meant as an academic exercise of taking cognizance of the past but as non-reversal and sustaining change of behavior at the individual, group, organizational, institutional, and societal levels. This type of learning is difficult to manage, requiring its own unique combination of capacities and competencies for managing changes within and among all AU member states. Agenda 2063 challenges us to think hard about managing Africa's future, especially managing across generations in terms of politics, business, and society as a whole. Below, we briefly review the vision and action plans.

The Vision

In 2013, African heads of state and government, celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the founding of the OAU, now the AU, pledged their commitment to progress in eight key priority areas: African identity and renaissance, the continued struggle against colonialism and the right to self-determination, continental integration, social and economic development and transformation, peace and security, democratic governance, determining Africa's destiny, and fostering Africa's place in the world (see AUC, 2014: 6). Further, acknowledging past successes and challenges, Africa's political leadership launched the Continental Agenda 2063. There are seven primary aspirations that comprise Agenda 2063 (see Table 1), which stem from the eight aforementioned priority areas. Derived from these seven aspirations are 18 goals which are further expanded into 44 priority areas and finally expressed as 161 different national-level targets (see Agenda 2063, *The Africa We Want*, Draft Document, May 2014 for the complete national-level results matrix and a regional-level matrix). Agenda 2063's vision is comprehensive, covering issues of identity, self-determination, political independence, and socio-economic development in the context of globalization.

Table 1. The seven aspirations of Agenda 2063.

Agenda 2063 aspirations

1. A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
 2. An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's renaissance
 3. An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law
 4. A peaceful and secure Africa
 5. An Africa with strong cultural identity, common heritage, values, and ethics
 6. An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children
 7. Africa as a strong, united, and influential global player and partner
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Source: *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*, Popular Version, Final Edition, April 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.agenda2063.au.int/en/home>

Note: see [Appendix](#) for further details on the seven aspirations

Towards a Plan of Action

Agenda 2063 is a participatory, people-driven process centered on a series of consultations and “conversations” with various stakeholder groups across sectors and society. Particular attention is paid to youths (who will be the main owners, implementers, beneficiaries, or victims), women (hitherto largely excluded), and Africans in the diaspora. The AUC initially designated 11 multi-stakeholder groups for consultation in the development of the Agenda 2063 framework – Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and all AU organs, technical experts from member states’ ministries of planning and economic development, technical experts from academia and think-tanks, civil society, women and youth, the private sector, faith-based and cultural organizations, Africans in the diaspora, Africa’s eminent persons, former heads of state and government, and “others through web-based consultations” (AUC, 2013: 11).

The questionnaire used by Agenda 2063 to solicit views and opinions from Africans, stakeholders, and other interested persons provides notable insights into the creation of the Agenda 2063 framework (see AUC, 2013). One interesting item in the questionnaire asks the respondents what role they see for themselves. This is exemplary, as it empowers and challenges ordinary Africans to stand up and take responsibility in shaping the process and destiny of their continent. It is the Kennedy equivalent of “ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country”. Africa needs more challenges like this, especially from those who are currently enjoying the fruits of independence and economic development. The information obtained through the consultation process and the way in which it is used to implement Agenda 2063 may well determine which Africa exists in 2063 and beyond. Indeed, proper consideration cannot be given to Agenda 2063’s plan of action without recognizing its true transformative potential.

Ultimately, Agenda 2063 will consist of three integrated parts: the *Strategic Plan* (spelling out the goals of what to do), the *Implementation Plan* (the how, who, when of the agenda), and the *Monitoring and Evaluation Framework* (feedback on progress, outcomes, and impact). At the time of this writing, Agenda 2063 consists of three main documents – the Agenda 2063 Framework document, its popular version (a simpler version), and the first 10-Year Implementation Plan. The Framework document (adopted by AU policy organs in January 2015) introduced 12 flagship projects to be given priority in the execution of Agenda 2063. As one would expect, included are projects such as the establishment of African financial institutions, formulation of a commodities strategy, and even the ending of all wars, civil conflicts, and gender-based violence as these projects are of central importance to any region, country, or continent aiming for growth and development.

Other projects include an integrated high-speed train network connecting all African capitals and commercial centers, an African virtual and e-university offering students guaranteed access from anywhere in the world, and the Africa outer space strategy that aims to use outer space to bolster development in agriculture, disaster management, remote sensing, climate forecast, banking and finance, as well as defense and security. A further look at the 92-page Framework document produces some telling national-level targets that have been set, such as a 100% literacy rate by 2030, universal access to quality health care and services by 2030, annual GDP growth of not less than 7% during the period, 50% of all elected officials at local,

regional, and national levels to be women by 2030, Africa's share in global GDP to be 15% by 2063, Africa's science, technology, and innovation centers to have at least 15% of world patents by 2063, and the proportion of aid in national development budgets to be zero by 2030 (see AUC, 2014). These are just a select few of the more than 160 national-level targets described in the Framework document.

The first 10-Year Plan (adopted in June 2015) talks in-depth about financing sources and accompanying facilitation measures, including a resource mobilization strategy (RMS) to support implementation. The RMS identifies financing sources, strategies, and media, programmatic areas, and related instruments. It is expected to account for 75% of the funding needed, with other sources (official development assistance, i.e. foreign aid, and the international financial market) contributing the remaining capital requirements (15% and 10% respectively). Clearly, Agenda 2063 deserves serious focus and attention with substantial effects likely to be experienced by continents, countries, nation states, and individuals around the world. For detailed discussions of the challenges and opportunities of financing and implementing Agenda 2063, including its capacity building imperatives, see El Fassi and Aggad (2014). El Fassi and Aggad suggest that for effective and sustaining implementation and financing, it is better to focus on "demand-driven" rather than "supply-driven" aspects of Agenda 2063.

Aspirations, Goals, Priorities, and Targets

Agenda 2063, unlike previous continental development frameworks such as the Lagos Plan of Action (Bujra, 2004), is more detailed with specific goals, priorities, and targets spelt out for each of the seven aspirations. The appendix provides a sample of the goals, priority areas, and targets for each of the aspirations. The goals are challenging but achievable, the priority areas are relevant to Africa's emerging needs, and the targets are specific and quantified. The appendix illustrates the extent to which Agenda 2063 has been developed from aspirations to specific goals and targets as part of the action plan for effective implementation. The goals, priorities, and targets provide a basis for collecting baseline data, monitoring and evaluating progress across aspirations, regions, sectors, and within countries. It is expected that as various aspects of Agenda 2063 are implemented in different settings, data will be collected to assess progress, draw out lessons of experience, identifying contingencies, and making adjustments to the short-, medium-, and long-term rolling plans.

Information in the appendix is provided in the hope that it will stimulate interesting management research questions both about specific aspects of the African context and core management. For example, the first aspiration, which calls for a prosperous Africa, includes the goals of transformed economies and jobs, modernizing agriculture, and the development of environmentally sustainable communities. These goals raise important research questions such as managing transformations, modernizing agriculture, natural resource and infrastructure development, climate change adaptation and mitigation, capacity building, private-sector engagement, governance, as well as questions of incentives, sociopolitical buy-in, and ownership. In addition, there are other research questions arising within participating countries of the AU at different levels of development, awareness, or commitment to the Agenda 2063 vision and aspirations. For example, big and more developed African economies such as South Africa, Nigeria, and Egypt may see Agenda 2063 differently than small, less developed, or fragile countries like Swaziland, Burundi, or Guinea

Bissau. Agenda 2063's aspirations cover a wide range of human development and therefore call for multidisciplinary approaches and different research methods.

AGENDA 2063 KEY ISSUES

Although the vision and action plans are promising, several key issues related to the implementation of the proposed agenda should be noted and addressed. First, Agenda 2063's authors recognize that new institutional arrangements are required in order to effectively move the agenda toward realized change, development, integration, and transformation. However, the exact nature, structure, and composition of these "institutional arrangements" remains unclear. This is important because, as Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) show in their work on why nations fail, Africa is in need of developing inclusive institutions, both political and economic. It should be noted that although Agenda 2063 calls for inclusive growth and sustainable development, these are not possible without inclusive institutions. As experience elsewhere in developing countries shows, it is not enough just to change "institutional arrangements". Africa must build effective institutions capable of balancing and protecting competing interests without conflict or open warfare while also avoiding state capture or fragility. An area of particular importance is effective governance and management under conditions of revolution. This is because, as de Tocqueville (1840) observed, the most propitious time for revolution is not when conditions are worsening but, as appears to be the case for many African countries, when they start to improve.

Although inclusive institutions are needed to push forward the agenda, there are challenges in treating Africa as a single unit of analysis. In spite of the AU's continental conceptualization, Africa is so diverse that the issues discussed during consultation and implementation mean different things for citizens of different regions (e.g. North Africa vs sub-Sahara Africa), languages, socio-economic systems, and political ideology/regime. Even within the same country, there are likely significant differences in meaning, interpretation, and responses. These differences are likely to complicate the design, implementation, and even monitoring and evaluation of the Agenda 2063 plan of action.

Second, an essential question that Agenda 2063 needs to address is: How can Africa as a whole and the individual economies of AU member states leverage their respective cost advantages, values, and natural and human resources to successfully integrate into the global value chain? Do they have a common understanding and shared roadmap? The challenge for the Agenda 2063 vision is for ordinary citizens to imagine a more positive future while reconciling with past misdeeds and atrocities and simultaneously coping with the hardship realities of the present. This is particularly so for former settler economies (e.g. Zimbabwe, Kenya) and conflict and post-conflict states (DRC, the Sudans), in addition to countries with long-serving regimes (Eritrea, Uganda, Cameroon, etc.). We note, however, that when people are poor and preoccupied with the challenges of meeting immediate and pressing basic daily needs, they are less likely to focus on and imagine a more positive future.

Third, related to the above, African citizens must have a high school education or higher in order for their views and opinions to be captured by the Agenda 2063 stakeholders' questionnaire. This policy excludes many Africans, especially in rural areas and urban *favelas* where completing high school is not the norm. This exclusion may constitute more than 50% of the population in designated groups such as rural

youths, women, and people in isolated, remote, and underserved parts of the continent. Similarly, the agenda and associated documents will be translated into the AU official languages (English, French, Arabic, and Portuguese), but the majority of the citizens of the AU member states may not be fluent in any of these languages and by definition are then excluded as active participants from the consultation process and in developing the plan of action. Agenda 2063's key documents should be translated in select major African languages as well. The potential exclusion of many citizens is unfortunate and undermines the consultative spirit of the agenda. Although the aspirations of Agenda 2063 provide a rare window into the collective mind set, African priorities, and the world view of African heads of state and government, this approach may fail to adequately represent the masses.

Fourth, similar to the exclusion of some citizens, several struggling countries may also be left behind. The various phases of the proposed plan of action give some early indications of the capacity implications of Agenda 2063. There is an implicit assumption that member states have the requisite capacities to receive, understand, plan, work with, communicate, and effectively implement country-specific parts of the agenda. Although the AUC recognizes that Agenda 2063's implementation will require country-specific actions due to different levels of countries' development, resource endowments, and priorities (see AUC, 2014: 52–54), the proposed plan of action does not include steps for working with those member states that may need assistance. This is a serious omission given the wide range of development capacities exhibited by different member states (for example, see ACBF's Africa Capacity Reports, 2011–2014, <http://www.acbf-pact.org/knowledge-learning/africa-capacity-report>).

Finally, an important question of interest not addressed in the proposed plan of action is: Who owns Agenda 2063? Is it the AUC and its organs, the heads of states and governments who originated the idea, the AU member states, the regional bureaucrats and technocrats (New Economic Partnership for Africa (NEPAD); African Development Bank (AfDB); United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)), the people and societies of Africa and her diaspora, or some combination of the above? Indeed, the AUC asserts that prior continental frameworks (e.g. Lagos Plan of Action, Abuja Treaty) demonstrate that the citizens of Africa must own the process and outcome of Agenda 2063, but the question of *ownership* needs to be further clarified because it has significant implications for buy-in, commitment, resourcing, monitoring, and effective and sustaining implementation.

In conclusion, all of these considerations have wide implications and are critical to the implementation and management of Agenda 2063. Now, we turn to future research directions.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Agenda 2063 needs the backing of management theories, frameworks, concepts, methods, and tools for its effective and sustaining implementation (Zoogah, Zoogah, & Dalaba-Roohi, 2015). Thus, related to the previously outlined goals and issues, we present several future research directions. Our hope is that addressing these challenging research questions will help to resolve the main obstacles associated with the agenda, as well as further move the region toward economic and social prosperity. First, as discussed in the “Key Issues” section, it has been suggested that Agenda 2063 cannot succeed until Africa develops sustainable, strong, and inclusive

political and economic institutions (Kiggundu, 2002). These institutions must be responsive to the emerging needs of the economy and society as a whole, as well as external global opportunities and threats. One way to achieve inclusive institutions at a regional level is to foster economic, and potentially political, integration within Africa.

Currently, Africa's existing free trade areas – the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) – are working to join forces and create the region's largest free trade area, called the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA). This is a step toward creating inclusive economic institutions needed to successfully implement Agenda 2063. Indeed, African leaders have long called for increased intra-regional trade as a main requirement of growing the region's economy. Further, uniting to attract FDI from outside Africa is essential to achieving economic, as well as, social prosperity. Yet, the 26-country proposed TFTA agreement includes less than half of the countries in the AU. The fear is that the countries left out of this and other trade agreements may fall even further behind.

Further, although there are benefits to regional integration, there are also challenges. It can increase complexity, hurt small businesses, benefit developed over developing countries, and limit trade with other regions (Bowen & Wiersema, 2005; Chin et al., 2014; Feils & Rahman, 2008; Fratianni & Oh, 2009). If integration is not managed correctly, these issues may be detrimental to some of Africa's already fragile economies. For these reasons, we encourage scholars to further study the firm- and country-level effects of Africa's existing free-trade agreements. This is increasingly important because limited studies focus on the effects of regional integration in the African context (Kiggundu & DeGhetto, 2015). Doing so can help us to learn from the past and better develop truly inclusive institutions. Also, scholars should study the successes and failures of other large regional integration areas, such as the European Union (EU), to better understand how the African region should move forward. Indeed, by joining together, the EU is collectively the largest economy in the world. And through their efforts, the EU has worked to integrate post-communist, less-developed countries (i.e. Estonia, Poland, Romania) with successful, developed nations (i.e. Finland, Germany, Austria, Denmark). Addressing research questions related to economic and political integration between countries with varying levels of development may serve to inform African integration and the development of regional economic and political institutions. Other than the formal aspects of integrating multiple countries, social aspects are imperative but more difficult to achieve. Thus, it is important for scholars to address not only economic benefits (e.g. entrepreneurship, firm growth, innovation, intra-regional trade, inter-regional trade) but also social and environmental benefits (costs) of regional integration.

Second, the above suggestions deal with developing regional institutions. However, we also believe it is important to study country-specific institutions. With any relationship, it is difficult to get two or more parties to work toward a common goal if they do not have their individual issues resolved. More specifically, understanding how various institutional variables affect growth and stability, as well as how they can be transformed, are important pursuits. In general, prior research highlights the negative implications of corruption and political instability (e.g. Collier, 2002; Delios & Hensz, 2003; Demirbag, Glaister, & Tatoglu, 2007; Mauro, 1995). And many of the African nations are at the bottom of the list, in terms institutional risk (see

Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index). Yet, limited extant research evaluates how this institutional risk (e.g. corruption, political risk) affects FDI into African nations, including entry mode choices (Asiedu, 2006). We believe this is an important place to start. Both intra- and inter-regional investment should be assessed.

Further, scholars should work to understand the most effective means to correct or change the institutions causing institutional risk. For example, the United States (US) regulates corruption with the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, and China has recently deterred corruption by banning excessive, or lavish, activities and products (e.g. golf) for government officials. Working to understand how to change institutions in various contexts and then implementing these practices are important pursuits. Also, studying emerging FDI hotspots, such as Ghana, Zambia, and Mozambique (Ernst & Young, 2014) may shed light on what steps these countries have taken at the firm, industry, and country level to gain success.

Beyond understanding investment, future research should evaluate how various institutions in African nations are affecting entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship, and the ease of starting a business, are key signs of a strong institutional environment (Manolova, Eunni, & Gyoshev, 2008; World Bank Group, 2015). However, we know that the informal economy is prevalent in many parts of Africa due to the difficulty of starting and running a legitimate business (Neuwirth, 2012), and many of the African nations remain at the bottom of the World Bank's ease of doing business ranking. Understanding how formal and informal institutions are driving the informal economy and deterring legitimate business in specific African nations and regions is an important first step to changing these institutions and growing these economies (Verick, 2006). In sum, we believe that understanding and strengthening both country-level and regional institutions is a main challenge that must be addressed before the aspirations of Agenda 2063 can be achieved (e.g. a prosperous Africa, a peaceful and secure Africa).

Third, in addition to building institutions that can support the objectives outlined in Agenda 2063, it is important to build a strong identity among citizens toward Africa and in support of the agenda. As noted in the "Key Issues" section, having a shared understanding of the agenda's roadmap and receiving buy-in from the masses is important for successful implementation. Going forward, we encourage research to build from the current organizational identity literature, including self-categorization theory and social identity theory, to understand and address this issue. Considering the vast diversity within and across nations, it is important to develop a shared "internalized cognitive structure of what the [region] stands for and where it intends to go" (Albert, Ashforth, & Dutton, 2000: 13). This literature can help to answer questions such as: (1) How should Africa manage multiple country-level identities?, (2) How can Africa change its regional identity in the eyes of citizens as well as other stakeholders?, and (3) How can African leaders encourage citizens of all nations to identify with Agenda 2063?

Fourth, in addition to establishing strong institutions and a regional identity, Africa needs to gain a comparative advantage. As described under the "Key Issues" section, Africa and the AU member states need to leverage their existing resources and exploit their current cost advantages. The region has valuable resources at its disposal; leaders in the public and private sector need to focus on strengthening how these resources are organized and utilized within and across national borders. A recent Ernst

& Young report describes how “Africa has the resources and the comparative advantage to position itself as the next manufacturing hub. Labor costs are low ... Africa also has abundant natural resources, which can be used as raw materials for light manufacturing” (Ernst & Young, 2014: 33). In order to answer research questions about how these resources can be effectively managed, we encourage scholars to turn to the resource management literature. Resource management is especially important in economies that are emerging and resource constrained (DeGhetto, Sutton, Holcomb, & Holmes, 2015). Resource management deals with structuring, bundling, and leveraging resources (Sirmon, Hitt, & Ireland, 2007). As previously mentioned, Africa is primarily equipped with the appropriate manufacturing resources, now research needs to address questions on how those resources may be effectively bundled and leveraged. This will require coordination across countries, industries, and sectors (i.e. public and private) and relates to the idea of the hybrid value chain – collaborative arrangements across sectors to achieve a common goal.

Going along with this, there should be increased focus on cluster development, such as capacity building for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), tax incentives, and facilitating access to enterprise financing. Evidence from Africa and other parts of the world suggests that cluster development is an important driver for economic and industrial transformation. Yet, the results show that the African region as a whole performs poorly on measures of the state of cluster development. The cluster includes firms providing parts, components, and services at different value chain activities of other firms, including specialized inputs (e.g. raw materials, skilled labor, management), machinery, specialized infrastructure (e.g. storage, transportation), research and development (R&D), training, and commercialization. Clusters promote industrial development and transformation by enhancing business productivity, technological readiness, innovation, competitiveness, development, and restructuring of new firms or closure of nonperforming businesses. As Porter and others have pointed out (Porter, 1991; Rugman & D’Cruz, 1993; Rugman & Verbeke, 1993), the national and regional “diamond” of supporting factors – including demand, factor markets, and supporting industries – provide a home region advantage to firms with specific capabilities. Further understanding how the African nations can come together to develop a strong cluster, or diamond, is an important pursuit.

Fifth, in Africa, most of the management literature has tended to focus on the social, hierarchical, and humanistic aspects, focusing mainly on public administration, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and foreign multinational firms (e.g. corporate social responsibility, CSR). There is a tendency to focus more on the pro-poor, pro-people, humanistic values and culture in the study of management in Africa (e.g. Jackson, 2004). Most of it is focused on discussions of phenomena rather than theory (developing, testing, validating, etc.). Considering that Africa is working to gain a significant position in the global economy, as outlined in Agenda 2063, academics need to begin to shift their focus from social efforts (i.e. NGOs, CSR) to economic efforts (i.e. financial performance). Although firm-level studies on performance are pervasive in the management literature, limited studies focus on the African context. Developing and testing theory on African firms’ strategies and financial performance, especially during this time of change, is important. Thus, although the social, phenomena-based studies are important, we believe it is time to move toward larger-scale empirical studies focused on economic and financial performance outcomes.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION: MOVING FORWARD

The purpose of this *Insights Article* is to inform both scholars and practitioners interested in Africa about the region's 50-year roadmap and plan for transformation – Agenda 2063. Of course, like any political agenda, the documents and details constituting Agenda 2063 are extensive. Thus, our goal is to provide a concise overview of the primary motivation, main objectives, and scheduled projects. In addition, because Agenda 2063 is in its initial phases, we outline several key issues that should be addressed in order to achieve the region's desired transformation outlined within the agenda. Considering these issues and the dearth of management research on the African context, we suggest research in the areas of: (1) building inclusive regional institutions, (2) strengthening national institutions, (3) developing a strong regional identity amongst the citizens of Africa, (4) leveraging existing resources and building a comparative advantage, and (5) conducting more rigorous management studies on the African context, focused on economic-financial outcomes. We note that there are several additional avenues for research beyond those we suggest. However, we believe that strong institutions, a strong regional identity, and developing a home region advantage based on existing resources are important building blocks to achieve the agenda's objectives of structural transformation, as well as unity, prosperity, and peace for all of Africa's citizens.

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Appendix¹

Aspiration 1. A prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
1 A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens	1.1.1. Increase incomes; provide decent jobs for working-age adults	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Per capita income is at least 10X the 2013 level to average values of USD 17–20,000 2. Unemployment level kept below 6% 3. Reduce working adults holding vulnerable jobs by 75% 4. Reduce youth unemployment to 6% or less
	1.1.2. End poverty and eliminate hunger/malnutrition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. End all forms of poverty by 2035 2. Reduce income disparities by 50% between: urban/rural areas; men/women; and top/bottom 20% 3. Eliminate all forms of food insecurity by 2025 4. Eliminate all forms of malnutrition by 2025
	1.1.3. Affordable social security and protection for all	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All citizens have access to social security 2. All socially disadvantaged/vulnerable/those with disabilities are socially protected by 2030 3. All citizens are free from fear and want 4. All public facilities and services have provisions for people with disabilities
2 Well-educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology, and innovation	1.2.1. Literate, creative, and adaptive citizenry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 100% literacy rate by 2030 2. Universal basic school education with 100% enrolment rate by 2020 3. Universal high school education with 100% enrolment rate by 2025 4. At least 70% of high school graduates go on to tertiary education
	1.2.2. Skills revolution for the 21st century global competitive environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 10% of degrees awarded are in computer science and information technology by 2040 2. 50% of all degrees awarded are in the engineering sciences by 2040 3. 10% of degrees awarded are in the bio/health sciences and biotechnology by 2040 4. All secondary students without access to tertiary education have free access to TVET by 2030

¹Source: The African Union Commission, Agenda 2063, *The Africa We Want*, May 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.nepad.org/system/files/Agenda%202063%20%20English.pdf>.

3	Healthy and well-nourished citizens	1.3.1. Citizens enjoy long and healthy lives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Universal access to quality health care and services by 2030 2. Eliminate all communicable diseases by 2030 3. Reduce to zero deaths from HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB by 2030 4. End maternal and under-five child mortality by 2030 5. Put an end to all neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) in Africa by 2030 6. Life expectancy at birth is 75 years
4	Modern and livable habitats	1.3.2. Acceptable citizen nutrition	1. Eliminate all forms of malnutrition by 2030
		1.4.1. Human settlements are modernized	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All cities are certified sustainable smart or responsive by 2035 2. All cities of two million and above have mass rapid transit system in place by 2035 3. Eradicate city slums by 2035 4. All rural houses meet the minimum standards for habitation in housing policy by 2040
		1.4.2. Shelter delivery improved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least 75% of households have access to decent housing by 2035 and all have access by 2063 2. At least 75% of new housing is delivered through the real estate market
		1.4.3. Every citizen has affordable and sustainable access to quality basic necessities of life	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All households have access to adequate and clean water and sanitation facilities by 2025 2. All households have access to electricity by 2025 3. All citizens have affordable access to transport by 2035 4. Communications improved in rural areas by linking all towns/villages by tarred roads by 2035 5. All citizens have access to a high-speed internet and voice communication facilities by 2025
5	Transformed economies and jobs	1.5.1. Accelerated and inclusive economic growth and macroeconomic stability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual GDP growth of not less than 7% over the period 2. Macroeconomic stability assured through prudent and sound fiscal and monetary policies 3. Contribution to GDP by bottom quintile poor/marginalized/vulnerable is at least 5x 2013 levels 4. Share of indigenous private sector contribution to the GDP not less than 50%

(Continued)

Aspiration 1. Continued.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
	1.5.2. Accelerated manufacturing is the generator of decent jobs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2013 manufacturing GDP is increased by 5x and absorbs 50% of new entrants in labor market 2. At least 90% of agricultural cash crops produced is processed locally (value addition) 3. By 2035, the share of labor-intensive manufacturing in total manufacturing output is 80% 4. By 2063 the share of technology driven manufacturing firms in total output is 50%
	1.5.3. Opportunities to transit from vulnerable or informal jobs to formal jobs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rural unemployment rate is reduced by 50% by 2030 and eliminated by 2050 2. Proportion of people holding vulnerable jobs halved by 2030 3. 20% of informal sector ventures graduate into small/medium enterprise annually from 2025
	1.5.4. Expanded ownership, control and value addition (local content) in extractive industries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commodity exchanges in place for all major commodities produced by 2025 2. All firms operating in the sector are listed on the local stock exchange 3. At least 50% of the shares of each firm in the industry are held by locals 4. Small-scale and artisanal mining operators share of the sector output is at least 30% 5. At least 80% value added (local content) is attained
	1.5.5. Diversified economy for increased resilience to external economic shocks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New products generated through knowledge-driven initiatives contribute 30% of GDP by 2040 2. Increase 2013 tourism contribution to GDP at least fivefold 3. 2013 blue economy contribution to GDP increased at least 10 fold 4. 2013 contribution of the creative arts to GDP is increased at least 10 fold 5. Financial services contribute at least 20% of GDP by 2050 6. New ICT platforms created to support the growth of the productive sectors and social connectivity 7. Natural resources managed sustainably to avoid the phenomenon of “boom and bust”
	1.5.6. Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 25% of new businesses emanate from research and innovation outputs

	driven by science/tech/ innovation	2. Per capita expenditure on research, development, and innovation diffusion equal to global average
6	1.6.1. Increased agricultural production	1. At least 90% of all cash crops are processed locally by 2030 2. Increase/make local food crop production competitive to replace 70% of imports by 2040 3. 100% of agricultural GDP is contributed by commercial agricultural producers
	1.6.2. Increased productivity from research infrastructure	1. Increase 2013 per capita agricultural productivity fivefold 2. Reduce 2013 proportion of labor engaged in agriculture by 90% 3. Research outputs increase productivity by at least 10% per year from 2030
7	1.7.1. Societies produce/consume goods/services sustainably	1. All companies are sustainability certificated and report to shareholders on sustainability practices 2. All households/communities/government entities are aware and leading sustainable lifestyles 3. National income accounts reformed to reflect renewable/non-renewable natural resource wealth
	1.7.2. Biodiversity conserved and used sustainably	1. Forest and vegetation cover restored to the 1963 level 2. Reduce and conserve by at least 90% loss of biodiversity and all natural habitats 3. Stop and reverse land degradation and desertification
	1.7.3. Water security for domestic, agricultural, and industrial use assured	1. Agriculture/livestock have all the water needs required on a sustainable and adequate basis 2. Industry has sustainable and adequate water supply 3. At least 90% of waste water is recycled for agricultural and industrial use 4. New technologies in place to enhance water use efficiency/exploitation of new sources of water
	1.7.4. Low-carbon production systems in place	1. All national agricultural practices are certified as climate smart by 2025 2. Reduce to zero emissions arising from biodiversity loss, deforestation, and land degradation 3. Reduce per capita deaths from natural and man-made disasters by 75% by 2040

(Continued)

Aspiration 1. Continued.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
	1.7.5. Renewable energy as main power source for households/businesses/ organizations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Raise the share of renewable energy in total energy production to 50% by 20632. All urban buildings are certified as energy smart.3. All urban mass transport operate on renewable and low emissions fuel by 2025

Aspiration 2. An integrated continent politically united and based on the ideals of Pan Africanism.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
8 United States of Africa	2.1.1. Frameworks and institutions for a United States of Africa in place	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All protocols and treaties for establishment of United States of Africa domesticated by 2050 2. Intra-African Trade is raised from 10.1% in 2012 to 60% by 2063 3. All protocols leading to free movement of persons in each REC domesticated by 2016
9 World class infrastructure	2.2.1. Communications infrastructure connectivity with neighboring states	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ratify domesticate treaties/protocols for regional integration of communications by 2018 2. Complete infrastructure for connectivity by road/air/marine/electronic by 2025; rail by 2040

Aspiration 3. An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
10 Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched	3.1.1. Democratic values and practices are entrenched	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Democratic institutions are independent and operate without fear or favor by 2030 2. Elections at all levels are free, fair, and credible at 2020 3. All citizens are empowered to hold leaders accountable/free from fear of government by 2030 4. Responsible press that informs public of rights/obligations; holds govt accountable by 2025 5. Zero tolerance for undemocratic/unconstitutional changes of government at 2013 6. Full implementation of AU conventions, protocols on good governance by 2025
	3.1.2. Respect for human rights, justice, and rule of law	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent courts/judiciary that dispense/deliver justice without fear or favor by 2030

(Continued)

Aspiration 3. Continued.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Corruption and impunity eliminated 3. Affordable and timely access to justice for all by 2030 4. Adherence to the rule of law and due process is the norm by 2040
11 Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place at all levels	3.2.1. Development management institutions in place and functioning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National govt has capacity to prioritize, design/implement development programs by 2030 2. A competent, professional, neutral bureaucracy in place in state by 2030
	3.2.2. Participation in all aspects of local governance and capacity to manage disasters in place	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Entrenched participatory/inclusive systems in decisions based on long-term vision by 2030 2. Full capacity for management of risks related to natural disasters and conflicts by 2030 3. All local govt has full admin and institutional capacities/appropriate fiscal powers by 2025 4. Local communities have fair cut in exploiting natural resources; using it to benefit all by 2025 5. Culture, values, and local communities are respected and protected

Aspiration 4. A peaceful and secure Africa.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
12 Peace, security, and stability are preserved	4.1.1. Entrenched culture of peace	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eliminate conflicts from ethnic/religious/cultural diversity and social exclusion/marginalizing 2. National mechanisms for prevention and resolution of conflicts in place before 2020

(Continued)

Aspiration 4. Continued.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
		3. Curriculums at all levels integrate culture of peace by 2025
	4.1.2. Security and safety for all citizens are assured	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Silence all guns by 2020 2. Reduce per capita violent crimes by 50% to improve security and create safe/peaceful spaces 3. Capable, professional, and dedicated security services in place by 2030 4. Civilian control of security services in democratic practices/rule of law/due processes by 2025
	4.1.3. Appropriate defenses	1. Security services fully trained in peace building and keeping by 2025

Aspiration 5. Africa with a strong cultural identity – values and ethic.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
13 Pan Africanism is fully entrenched	5.1.1. Values and ideals of Pan Africanism realized	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unity of African People and those of African descent is attained by 2020 2. All nations under colonial domination are free by 2025 3. An agency for diaspora affairs/relations is in place by 2020 4. The diaspora is integrated into the democratic participatory processes by 2030 5. Dual citizenship for the diaspora 2020 6. Encyclopedia Africana completed by 2025
14 African cultural renaissance is preminent	5.2.1. Cultural values respected and practiced by all	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least 25% of the citizenry participate in the creative arts as national pastime 2. At least 75% of tertiary institutions offer language/literature programs of three local languages 3. National languages used as part of the administrative processes of the country 2025 4. Culture for work ethics and reward based on merit is entrenched

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Aspiration 5. Continued.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
		5. Traditional family values (family, community, social cohesion) are respected and entrenched
	5.2.2. Cultural institutions in place to develop capacity for the promotion of culture and micro cultural businesses	1. Technical/vocational training/ education institutions have programs on culture by 2035 2. Creative arts/folklore/language/ literature contribute to growth/ preservation of national culture 3. Identification and preservation of national oral history is completed by 2025 4. Mechanisms in place for intergenerational cultural dialogue by 2020 5. Museum of African Art and Culture is established by 2030 6. All African cultural treasures/ patrimony retrieved by 2025
	5.1.4. Well-informed citizens of past/present	1. High school students have two years exposure to a new major African language by 2035 2. African history is a compulsory/core subject from the secondary to the tertiary level by 2035

Aspiration 6. An Africa whose development is people-driven, especially relying on the potential offered by its youth and women.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
15 Full gender equality in all spheres of life	6.1.2. Empowered women and girls and provide equal access and opportunity in all spheres of life	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Equal economic rights for women by 2025 2. Ensure 90% of rural women have access to productive assets by 2030 3. 50% of all elected officials at local, regional, and national levels are women 2030 4. At least 50% of management positions in government/private sector held by women by 2030
	6.1.1. End all forms of violence and discrimination against women/girls and ensure all their human rights	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce to zero all acts of violence against women and girls in all settings 2. End all harmful social norms and customary practices against women and girls by 2030 3. Eliminate all barriers to quality education, health, and social services for women/girls by 2020 4. End all political/social/economic/legal/administrative discrimination against women by 2020
16 Engaged and empowered youth	6.2.1. Empowered youth and children with access and opportunity in all spheres of life, especially education, health, and employment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce youth unemployment by 25% in 2020; by 50% in 2025; and by 90% in 2050 2. Youth business startups in all startups is: 15% by 2020; 25% in 2030; and 35% in 2063 3. Eliminate all forms of illegal migrations of youth by 2025 4. All youth have access to educational and training opportunities/health services by 2030 5. At least double proportion of youth representation in political office by 2035 6. Full implementation of the African Charter on the Rights of the Child by 2025 7. End all forms of violence against children by 2020 8. End all forms of exploitative child labor by 2020 9. End the phenomena of recruitment of child soldiers by 2020

Aspiration 7. An Africa as a strong and influential global player and partner.

Goal	Priority areas	Targets
17 Africa as a major partner in global affairs and peaceful coexistence	7.1.1. Continental and international treaties, protocols and conventions	1. Full compliance with all regional/continental frameworks, protocols, treaties, that contribute to an increase in Africa's share of global output, trade, and research patents
	7.1.2. Partner in global development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fully implement commitments in global partnerships; scale up partnerships for development 2. Continental/regional/national science/tech/innovation centers have 15% of world patents 3. Africa's share in global GDP is 15% 4. Africa's share in global trade is at least 10% 5. Africa reclaims her rightful share of the global commons (space, terrestrial, oceanic) by 2030
18 Africa takes full responsibility for financing its development	7.2.1. Capital markets fully developed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National sources including capital markets contribute at least 80% of development capital 2. Integrated African capital market is in place by 2030 and funds 30% of development agenda
	7.2.2. Optimal, transparent fiscal systems	1. Tax/non-tax revenues of govt covers 75% of current/development expenditures from 2025
	7.2.3. No aid dependency	1. Proportion of aid in the national development budget is zero by 2030