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WITS SCHOOL OF GOVERNANCE

THE AFRICAN UNION'S POLICY COHERENCE APPROACH FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

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July 2022

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in 50% fulfilment of the Requirement for Masters in Management

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Abstract

During the past decade, concern for promoting good governance has emerged as an imperative engine for socio-economic and political transformation on the African continent, especially with the adoption of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. However, progress towards this aspiration remains sluggish despite many international and regional efforts to galvanise improvements in governance. This exploratory research examines how fit for purpose the institutional arrangements and coordination mechanisms of the African Union Commission, African Peer Review Mechanism and AU Development Agency AUDA-NEPAD are, to ensure policy coherence for achieving this goal, notably through the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063, Aspiration 3 (good governance). One of the main findings of the research is that there is a lack of vertical and horizontal coherence between the three organs to ensure policy coherence and integration for advancing good governance programmes alongside monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for their performance, accountability, and delivery. Another finding speaks to the necessity of enhancing political ownership and commitment of AU member-states (principals) to empower AU organs as agents to have a sense of autonomy during agenda setting and implementing for good governance policies at the continental level.

Declaration

I declare that this report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public Policy) in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.



_____

Sara Hamouda

1 July 2022

Acknowledgement

I would like to seize this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to my work on the AU policy Coherence approach for the promotion of good governance on the continent. Since I started my career at the African Union in 2018, I have wondered why the continent still struggles with conflicts and persistent challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and severe inequality despite its rich resources and vibrant youth. Most books, articles, and even politicians' statements identify bad governance as the reason behind Africa's unresolved socio-economic fatigue and even political instability. But little, though, refers to the role and influence of regional organs, the African Union, in addressing these issues. Even less attention is paid to how these organs, autonomous entities or mechanisms are constructing coherence for implementing the continent's development blueprint, Agenda 2063 (*"The Africa we want"*).

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To my beautiful continent, Africa… I dedicate this work.

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List of Acronyms

AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
ACDEG	African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance
AfCFTA	Africa Continental Free Trade Area
AGA	African Governance Architecture
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development (currently AUDA-NEPAD)
AUDA-NEPAD	AU Development Agency
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
CEPA	United Nations- Committee of Experts on Public Administration
CSAR	Country Self-Assessment Report
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
UN DESA	United Nations - Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DPA	Department of Political Affairs- AU Commission
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
EU	European Union
EUC	European Union Commission

FTYIP	First Ten-year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063
IDA	International Development Association
MAP	UNDP Millennium Partnership for Africa Recovery
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NDP	National Development Plan/Planning
NPoA	National Plan of Action
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PAD	Political Affairs Department – AU Commission
PAP	Pan African Parliament
PCSD	Policy coherence for Sustainable Development
PRC	African Union Permanent Representatives' Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TWG	Agenda 2063 Technical Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WB	World Bank

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Chapter 1: Research introduction, background, and objectives

1.1 Introduction and background

The adoption of Agenda 2063, *'The Africa We Want'* by the African Union (AU), articulates a visible political commitment of the AU and its member-states to promote a regional vision for the continent's socio-economic development. The agenda was declared during the AU Summit in Addis Ababa in 2013, not only as a blueprint for a robust regional economic and political integration but also as a response to a series of economic hardships and political instability within a transitional African context. Agenda 2063 includes seven aspirations that speak to this response as it aims to promote economic, political, and cultural integration on the continent. Precisely, Aspiration 3 seeks to build an Africa where good governance[1], democracy, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law thrive at all levels.

The operationalisation of Agenda 2063 and its aspirations require stronger collaboration among and alignment of the eight AU organs[2] to ensure policy coherence for its implementation and monitoring at the continental level. Inter-institutional coordination among various directorates in each of the AU organs is vital to ensure mutual accountability. In the same vein, a series of governance reforms led by Rwanda was initiated in 2016 to restructure the AU institutions and strengthen its human and institutional capacities. The AU Commission (AUC) was tasked with harmonising all efforts dedicated to achieving the agenda's objectives in collaboration with other AU organs including the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) formerly known as the New Partnership for Africa (NEPAD) – and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) (AU Commission, 2017a).

[1] Aspiration 3 has two goals: "1) Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched, and 2) Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels, building strong institutions for a development state; and facilitating the emergence of development-oriented and visionary leadership in all spheres and at all levels".

[2] AU Commission, Pan-African Parliament, Permanent Representatives Committee, Executive Council, the Court of Justice, the Specialised Technical Committees, the Economic, Social and Cultural Council and the Peace and Security Council.

Against this background, current overall progress towards Agenda 2063 appears to be sluggish as more than half of African countries have been listed as "not on track" to fulfil the execution and reporting on Agenda 2063 (AUC, 2020). This slow progress is alarming since 90% of Agenda 2063 objectives are aligned with Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. This also implies a sedate pace regarding the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were globally adopted in 2015 by the member-states of the United Nations. African countries are facing challenges in achieving development goals, especially those relevant to poverty reduction (SDG1), gender inequality (SDG 5), and building effective and strong institutions and peaceful societies (SDG 16). [3]

The AUC, among other organisations, has a significant role to play in the implementation and monitoring of Agenda 2063. The APRM and AUDA-NEPAD have also been engaged in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of different Agenda aspirations, including Aspiration 3 (good governance). Nevertheless, the progress of the said development agenda has been far less visible despite the AU Assembly Decisions to restructure and revitalise these organs (AUC, 2017b). Most importantly, the accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness of the three organs mentioned above have not been sufficiently scrutinised to ascertain if these organs are accountable, delegated, and autonomous enough to accomplish their assigned roles (Bolaji-Adio, 2015).

Against this backdrop, this study examines the institutional arrangements and coordination mechanisms established by the AUC, APRM, and AUDA-NEPAD to ensure policy coherence in the implementation of Agenda 2063, with a focus on Aspiration 3 related to good governance. The study aims to provide a better understanding of the governance environment of certain AUC sub-bodies/directorates, that are directly related to Aspiration 3 of Agenda 2063. These institutional bodies include the Africa Governance Architecture (AGA)/Secretariat, Agenda 2063 Technical Working Group the APRM, AUDA-NEPAD, and the High-Level Ministerial Committee on Agenda 2063.

[3] SDG 16 meets Aspirations 3 and 4 of Agenda 2063. It serves as a goal and an enabler to implement other SDGs.

The study contributes to the African literature on the role of the AU as a regional actor and its policy coherence to promote good governance on the continent. Although rich literature on the role of supranational institutions in promoting good governance exists, it has been mainly applied to the European or Asian examples of integration. Meanwhile, regional integration in Africa has not been underpinned theoretically (Gibb, 2009). Most of the literature provided on the African integration is descriptive or shows critical analysis of the failure of the African integration case (Michel, 2012). This failure is attributed to the incapacity of the Organisation of African Unity – the predecessor of the AU – to address several continental challenges including the proliferation of corruption and territorial and civil conflicts in Africa, due to the principle of non-intervention in the domestic policies of African countries.

This study utilises the Principal–Agent (PA) theory to examine through qualitative methods how institutional settings and, in particular, how political and coordination mechanisms, have influenced the AU's policy coherence to promote good governance in Africa since the adoption of Agenda 2063 (2014–2019). It considers these issues through three AU institutions: the AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, and the APRM, given their strong relevance to the mandate of good governance promotion on the continent. The research conceptualises the term "*policy coherence for development"* to examine the vertical, horizontal, and political coherence among these three organs, with the goal of understanding the role of each organ in promoting good governance and crafting recommendations for improving a coherent policy approach towards this goal in Africa.

A set of research methods including interviews and participatory observations are consulted to enrich our understanding on the role of the mentioned organs in good governance promotion. The timeliness of this study is magnified as the African Union remains struggling with improving good governance practices across the continent with an upward trend of conflicts and other socio-economic challenges. The study assists in unpacking policy coherence issue and dynamics within the Union to promote one of the significant Aspirations of the Agenda - good governance - on the continent.

1.2 Research problem

This study's research problem pertains to the lack of policy coherence among AU organs to promote good governance policies and practices on the continent – and the lack of sufficient research on the delivery of policies and programmes of AU organs to promote aspiration three of Agenda 2063 in the continent. Although the three organs (AUC, APRM, and AUDA-NEPAD) have undergone various institutional changes to work together to improve good governance at the continental level, the first continental report on Agenda 2063 concluded that progress in improving good governance has been slowest among member states – with an achievement rate of only 19 per cent at the continental level (AUC, 2020). This weakness was mainly attributed to a lack of coherence in policy directives of AU organs, among others. It thus becomes imperative to investigate the specific bottlenecks created by lack of policy coherence and coordination in the achievement of Agenda 2063, with a more specific focus on Aspiration 3 (good governance).

The research problem unveils theoretical and empirical gaps regarding research on policy coherence and the role of African regional institutions in promoting good governance (SDG 16) within the African context.

The recognition of good governance as a prerequisite to Africa's renaissance, peace, and sustainable development is enshrined in the AU Constitutive Act and the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic, and Corporate Governance in 2002 (AUC, 2003; NEPAD 2002). However, criticisms have been made concerning the functionality of AU organs, including APRM, AUDA-NEPAD, and AUC, to promote this objective. Sven and George alluded to the lack of coordination among AU organs to promote regional integration and other regional policies (Sven & George 2010). Further, Manby (2013) and Mangu (2014) claimed that the APRM and AUDA-NEPAD are seen as state-centric and -driven organs from inception to conclusion and lacked inclusiveness of non-state actors to assess governance challenges in African countries.

Theoretically, the broader academic debate over poor governance in many African countries and the attendant underdevelopment focused on the analysis of domestic regimes and government approaches at the national level with less emphasis on the actorness of AU. Some of the African literature discussed the failure of good governance and development challenges in Africa inspired by the dependency theory (Muiu &Martin, 2009), post-colonial institutional legacy (Mkandawire, 2001), and the prevalence of weak state structures and foreign interventions (Mathews, 2009). Theories of neo-functionalism, on the other hand, emphasised the role of supranational institutions in promoting regional integration or intergovernmentalism, which asserts the superior role of the national state in managing the integration process, have been applied to regional bodies such as the European Union (EU). A few scholars recently applied these theories to the African Union context and its domestic policy-making process (Aniche, 2015), but have done so from a political economy perspective.

There are also empirical gaps in the research pertaining to insufficient qualitative analysis observed regarding the role of these organs in policy formulation and implementation of good governance or its contribution to regional agendas for development, especially after the AU reforms in 2016. Various organisations focus instead on conducting quantitative analysis to assess good governance and policy coherence for sustainable development at the national level. Various UN organs conduct much of the quantitative analysis work to track SDGs and governance indicators in African countries while disregarding the role of regional institutions (UNDP, 2018; Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2019).

Lastly, the conceptualisation of Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PCSD) is relevant, though still under-tested within the African context. The OECD has been at the forefront of developing the concept and its analytical framework. However, there is no agreement on a specific definition of policy coherence. The OECD suggested eight building blocks for PCSD at the national level, which cover aspects of horizontal and vertical coherence within national governments (OECD, 2016; OECD, 2018). However, these blocks are not sufficiently examined at regional levels, such as Africa. The concept has been broadly tested in the European Union development policy, not in Africa or other regional levels. This study engages the concept of PCSD in

the African context, examining how it can be used at a regional level, focusing precisely on good governance, like how it has been employed at the national level.

1.3 Research purpose and objectives

The primary objective of this study is to **explore how the AUC governance architecture,[4] in collaboration with AUDA-NEPAD and APRM, has contributed to developing a coherent policy to promote good governance in Africa within the context of Agenda 2063.**

The primary research objective is cascaded into secondary objectives as a way of unpacking the primary objective. The secondary objectives are specified as follows:

- Examine how each AU organ – APRM, AUC, AUDA-NEPAD – has formulated specific policies that promote good governance on the continent and the delegated functions to do so;

- Understand the efficiency/appropriateness of the AU existing institutional and coordination mechanisms (AGA-AUC/APRM/AUDA-NEPAD) in promoting policy coherence for good governance in Africa;

- Identify challenges of AUC sub-structures such as AGA, AUDA-NEPAD, and APRM as regards policy coherence for promoting good governance; and

- Determine specific interventions needed to enhance policy coherence among AU organs towards the attainment of Aspiration 3 (good governance).

The research aims to explore the role of these mechanisms in enhancing coordination between AUC, APRM, and AUDA-NEPAD structures and whether their roles can foster policy coherence in good governance policies and practices. This should help

[4] The governance architecture refers to institutional settings, delegated functions, and political and coordination mechanisms among the three AU organs; AU Commission, AUDA-NEPAD, and APRM.

understand the autonomy of each organ and the extent to which the political, horizontal, and vertical policy coherence of the three AU organs is feasible for achieving overall policy coherence for good governance.

The rationale behind focusing on the three abovementioned organs stems from their relevance to the implementation and monitoring of Agenda 2063. Each of the following organs has been delegated tasks to deliver on its mandate. The AUC, under the stewardship of its chairperson, coordinates and facilitates technical issues on the development and review of the Agenda 2063 results framework. It also develops continental frameworks to support the monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 at the continental level.

The following structures are established inside the AUC for this purpose: 1) High-level Ministerial Committee on Agenda 2063, 2) Africa Governance Architecture (AGA) for implementing Aspiration 3 (good governance); 3) Strategic Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation unit; and 4) Technical Working Group (TWG) on Governance and SDGs. On the other hand, AUDA-NEPAD has been assigned the task of implementing various capacity-building programmes on Agenda 2063 implementation at the continental and national levels. The APRM, following its revitalisation process by the AU Assembly in 2017, was designated to act as "*an early warning mechanism for conflicts on the continent"* and to "*play a role in the monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063*'' besides its traditional role as a homegrown African tool for good governance (AUC, 2017).

1.4 Research questions

The main question which the study seeks to answer is: **How fit for purpose are the institutional arrangements and coordination mechanisms of the AUC, APRM and AUDA-NEPAD to ensure policy coherence for the implementation of Agenda 2063, especially Aspiration 3 (good governance)?**

To answer the main research question, four sub-questions are addressed. These questions arise from the background provided by the research objectives:

- How have the AUC, APRM, and AUDA-NEPAD formulated specific policies to promote good governance on the continent? And with what delegated functions?

- How have the existing AU institutional and coordination mechanisms (APRM and AGA) contributed to promoting "policy coherence for good governance" throughout the continent?

- What are the specific challenges that inhibit the efficiency of AUC sub-structures, i.e., AGA, AUDA-NEPAD, and APRM, as regards policy coherence for promoting good governance?

- What are the specific interventions needed to enhance policy coherence among AU organs towards the attainment of Aspiration 3 (good governance)?

Chapter 2: Literature review and analytical framework

The African Union role in the promotion of good governance in Africa

2. Introduction

This chapter examines the literature and debates on the African Union (AU)'s role in promoting good governance in Africa since the transformation from the OAU to the current AU structure[5] in 2001 and then subsequently with the adoption of Agenda 2063 in 2013. Towards this end, it presents common theories developed to assess the influence of regional organisations in enhancing regional integration, including regional policies such as good governance. Two key themes of literature are examined within this inquiry. The first explores what good governance means and how it is operationalised by leading international organisations, i.e., the World Bank and the UNDP, on one hand, and by political scholars on the other. It also deliberates on how good governance is conceptualised from an African perspective.

Second, the chapter deliberates on the common theoretical lenses or grand theories concerned with the role of regional organisations in promoting good governance and regional integration, as well as its application to the AU experience since its institutional transformation in 2002. The second theme further addresses the existing debates on the impact of AU on the promotion of good governance alongside regional coordination in Africa. The chapter likewise presents the theoretical framework of this study, which emanates from the Principal–Agent theory and the conceptual framework that deals with the concept of the policy coherence for the promotion of good governance among regional organisations.

[5] According to Sirte Declaration in 1999, the heads of African states took a decision to transform the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to the current African Union (AU) with eight organs, including the AUC.

2.1 Good governance as a concept

2.1.1 Policy interpretations globally

Governance is a catch-all definition for many organisations and policy-makers. Although the definition has been addressed through political and economic lenses, there is no universal consensus on what governance means (Chibba, 2009). The concept is fraught with fluidity, nebulousness, and complexity and cannot therefore be operationalised objectively (Akokpari, 2004; Cilliers, 2020). This section briefly deliberates on governance and good governance concepts while considering different forms of framing the concept by development organisations and academic points of view, including African conceptualisation of good governance.

The World Bank, historically, is one of the leading institutions to deliberate on governance and good governance concepts to underline the "*litany of Africa's development problems"* by the end of the 1980s. In 1989, the Bank published a common report which alluded to poor governance policies as one of the major reasons for the failure of the international Monetary Fund (IMF)'s structural adjustment programmes in Africa. Governance was initially defined as "*the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs"* (World Bank 1989, p. 61).[6] The Bank argued that the continent fell into a poverty trap from the 1980s until the 1990s with limited progress to address various challenges, i.e., corruption and inequalities.

Later, its ground-breaking paper provided a further detailed definition of governance as "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development" (World Bank, 1991). To assess the quality of governance, the Bank emphasised four aspects of good governance, namely i) capacity and efficiency of public sector management; (ii) accountability; (iii) predictability and the legal framework for development; and (iv) information and transparency. However, the Bank's approach towards good governance was criticised by scholars such as Leftwich, arguing that it focuses on the technocratic aspect of the definition while ignoring its political dimension and power influence on the development in Africa (Leftwich, 2000).

[6] The IMF Adjustment programmes were inspired by the Washington consensus to promote market-oriented societies including privatisation, macroeconomic stability, and liberalisation.

The Bank's technocratic approach was revised in the late 1990s with the new leadership of President Wolfensohn. He encouraged adopting a holistic approach to address governance through the lens of social policies, including public service, environmental, and sustainability policies, not merely economic or market-oriented policies. (Wolfensohn, 1998). Further, prominent economists such as Stiglitz supported this approach as he emphasised the need for post-Washington consensus thinking and the necessity of developing good governance indicators to assess governance performance in developing countries. He also emphasised governments' significant role in correcting market failures (Stiglitz, 1998).

The UNDP provided a rather comprehensive definition of governance as it refers to "*the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels which comprises mechanisms, processes, and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences*" (UNDP, 1997). It also identified good governance as "*governing systems which are capable, responsive, inclusive, and transparent. All countries developed and developing, need to work continuously towards better governance*" (UNDP, 2011).

The role of good governance in promoting sustainable societies was further emphasised with the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 and later the Post - 2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development - SDG 16. Kofi Annan argued that "*there's no possibility to fight poverty without improving governance in the developing and less developed countries*" (UN, 1998). Further, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) also avowed that "*without progress in governance, all other reforms will have limited impact on the economic development in Africa*" (UNECA, 2001).

To enhance the governance-based performance assessment, the International Development Association (IDA) associated with the WB set specific measures for assessing good governance, including: 1) property rights and rule-based governance; 2) quality

of budgetary and financial management; 3) efficiency of revenue mobilisation; 4) quality of public administration, and 5) transparency, accountability, and corruption in the public sector (IDA, 2008).

Scholars such as Kaufmann defined governance as 'traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised' (Kaufmann et al., 2009, p.5). This definition is operationalised in the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project as it assesses governance upon six aggregate indicators: (1) voice and accountability – "the extent to which a country's citizens can take part in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and free media"; (2) political stability and the absence of violence; (3) government effectiveness; (4) regulatory quality; (5) the rule of law; and (6) control of corruption (World Bank, 2007, p. 2).

Connecting to this, the European Union Commission (EUC) published a white paper on good governance to enhance the Union's functionality in 2001. The Paper highlighted five principles of good governance: openness, accountability, participation, effectiveness, and coherence (EU Commission, 2001a). Further, the European Council concluded that governance deficits correlate to fragility in some African countries, after assessing EU development assistance to some of these countries. Therefore, the EUC added certain measures to assess good governance, including independence of the judiciary, respect for human rights, democratic principles, and free access to elections (European Commission, 2006b). Later, good governance was mainstreamed into the Country Strategy Paper (CSP) between the European Union and various African countries on a bilateral level (European Commission, 2009).

From a political science and political economy perspective, governance is not conceptually understood as the WB or other development organs observe it. Governance is necessary for economic prosperity, but it also has three dimensions; first, institutional dimension, which spells out values of integrity, regulations, and professional responsibility. The second dimension is concerned with the rule of law and human rights, and the third dimension focuses on democracy and political rights. (Addink, 2017). Scholars such as Chabal and Daloz claimed that "*it is impossible to understand the essence*

of governance in African states if one focuses on the formal institutions that may resemble the legal-bureaucratic order of Western polities. Instead, the interests cementing 'informal compacts derived from ethnic, factional, or nepotistic ties of solidarity" (Chabal & Daloz, 1999, p.100).

Hyden and Court identified governance as '*the formation and stewardship of the formal and informal rules that regulate the public realm, the arena in which state, as well as economic and societal actors, interact to make decisions*' (Hyden, & Court, 2002, p. 13). Based on their understanding, governance represents a meta-level process that influences outcomes (Hout, 2010a). In their view, governance is a political activity which is different from policy-making or public management, which works as instruments to organise societies. They thus introduced six functional dimensions of good governance and their institutional arenas, as explained in the table below.

Table 1 Functional dimensions of good governance

Socialising	Civil society	To shape the way citizens become aware of and raise issues in public
Aggregation	Political society	To shape the way issues are combined into policy by political institutions
Executive	Government	To shape the way policies are made by government institutions
Managerial	Bureaucracy	To shape the way policies are administered and implemented by public servants
Regulatory	Economic society	To shape the way state and market interact to promote development
Adjudicatory	Judicial system	To shape the setting for the resolution of disputes and conflict

(*Source: Hout, 2010*)

Chibba argued that governance, in principle, provides two overlapping dimensions; the first one refers to "*the institutions, policies, laws, regulations, processes and oversight mechanisms that govern a society*" while the second dimension refers to "*the values, cultural and ideological mechanisms that may control how governance functions*" (Chibba, 2009, p. 3–6). Scholars such as Julius Court, Simon, and Maxwell emphasised the narrative between institutional frameworks and the successful socio-economic policies. Therefore, aid can only work effectively in countries with good governance and sound policies (Court & Maxwell, 2005, p.721 cited in Hout, 2010, p.10). Hout also argued that governance could not be treated only from an economic or technocratic perspective, but also through a political lens. He claimed that governance is

the "*arena where different interests collide, all of which wish to influence the rules of the game in such a way that the arrangements would benefit them*" (Hout, 2010b, p. 14).

Political analyst Francis Fukuyama defines governance as "*the government's ability to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services, regardless of whether or not that government is democratic*" (Fukuyama, 2013, p. 3). In contrast to the international development community's orthodoxy, which argued that democracy and good governance are supportive of each other, he argued that "*governance is pertinent to execution and thus, an authoritarian regime can be well governed, just as a democracy can be mal-administered*" (Fukuyama, 2013b, p.4) To assess good governance or "quality of governance", Fukuyama recommended four measures to enhance good governance in societies including procedural measures, input measures, output measures, and measures of bureaucratic autonomy.

Gisselquist (2012) criticised the donors/development organs' attempts to define good governance. She argued that the definition is not specific enough, notwithstanding the constant emphasis on the correlation between donors' evidence-based policies and the progress of good governance in recipient countries. She recommended disaggregating the concept into specific components rather than treating it as an "*ad hoc macro concept*" (Keefer, 2009) if donors and development experts are keen to measure the quality of governance adequately as well as designing evidence-based policies to improve it (Gisselquist, 2012, pp 14–15). Gisselquist identified seven components of the concept that should be analysed if the donors are keen to assess their policy interventions accurately and produce evidence-based decisions. These components are 1) democracy and representation; 2) human rights; 3) the rule of law; 4) efficient and effective public management; 5) transparency and accountability; 6) developmentalist objectives, and 7) a varying range of specific economic and political policies, programmes, and institutions.

In summary, it could therefore be said that the World Bank and a few other international organisations have pursued the concept of governance with technical frameworks to address governance and the related challenges it poses. It addressed the concept from technocratic and economic perspectives, including management, corruption, transparency, accountability, public sector, and decentralisation. However, it should

be emphasised that good governance and its associated principles are adopted by different institutions and from different perspectives according to their mandates dealing with either economic, political, or macroeconomic policies alongside its vision for achieving development, such as the case of the UNDP or other UN organs. Moreover, academic scholars addressed good governance through a political lens, focusing specially on aspects of interests, struggle, conflict, power, and recently fragile states. Thus, it is imperative to understand how the concept is perceived by the African Union and African scholars as discussed in the following section.

2.1.2 AU conceptualisations of good governance and adopted instruments

The AU understanding and adoption of good governance as one of the Union's objectives was triggered by early continental and international initiatives adopted in the 1990s. Various continental plans urged African countries to improve good governance practices to address inequalities and the upward trend of conflicts across the continent. These plans and recommendations include the Kampala outcome document, which resulted from the 1991 Conference on Security, Stability, Development, and Cooperation (CSSDCA) , the UNDP/UNECA Millennium Partnership for Africa Recovery (MAP)-2001 which emphasised that African countries must adhere to good governance and rule of law practices.[7] The 36th African Assembly Summit, held in Togo in 2000, indicated that good governance is a prerequisite for conflict resolution, sustaining peace and development, providing no definition of the concept.

The UNECA Compact for African Recovery (CAR) adopted in 2001 is recognised as introducing the good governance concept to the continent (Akopari, 2004) especially with the failure of the OAU to incorporate good governance as one of its objectives or activities (Tawfic, 2005). Although the Compact mainly addressed Africa's economic challenges and emphasised the necessity for following liberal economic policies, good governance was mentioned as a prerequisite to achieving such an economic transformation. In the same vein, UNECA identified four indicators of good governance in the Compact: "*representation of non-state actors in decision making, institutional efficiency, the rule of law, and economic management*." The Compact also advocated for

[7] See Annex II. It provides further details on the mentioned plans.

creating an African mechanism to encourage good governance practices among African countries to ensure Africa's ownership of the response to its challenges (UNECA, 2001).

As a more advanced step, the AU Constitutive Act (2002) signed by 53 African heads of State and the AUDA-NEPAD base document displays essential cornerstones for incorporating good governance into the AU mandate and objectives. Article 3 of the Constitutive Act stipulates that one of the AU objectives shall be to "*promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance"* (AUC, 2002f, p. 5).

Further, the base document of AUDA-NEPAD and the Declaration on democracy, political and economic governance[8] (July 2002) alludes to the necessity for building political systems in African countries, which are based on principles of democracy, transparency, accountability, respect for human rights, and the rule of law. The same Declaration called for the foundation of the APRM and provided specific definitions of good governance. The AUDA-NEPAD initiative emphasised African countries' responsibility for respecting good governance practices and rules.

Founded in 2003 as one of NEPAD's flagship programmes to embrace good governance practices on the continent, the APRM represents a milestone in Africa's understanding and political commitment to promote good governance at the continental level (NEPAD, 2003). As an African tool to develop voluntary peer-learning and monitoring on governance performance among AU member-states, the APRM was seen as the first institutional mechanism founded to ensure countries' compliance with the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic, and Corporate Governance and to raise African ownership of introducing solutions for the continent (Chukwumerije, 2006*).*

The APRM identified four areas of focus to tackle governance challenges: political governance, economic governance, corporate governance, and socio-economic governance. This classification, though, led scholars to argue that African Union member-states distinguish between the four areas of governance and that African leaders are

[8] The declaration was adopted during the sixth Summit of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee held in Abuja, Nigeria on 9 March 2003.

selective in treating the good governance concept, in contrast to the holistic way the concept was treated globally by many organs (Akopari, 2004), the World Bank for instance.

Against these efforts to place good governance among AU objectives, African countries have not had a unified vision or definition of good governance since the restructuring of the AU in 2002 (Tawfic, 2003). Rawia Tawfic believes NEPAD regarded the concept as having been initiated by international development organs globally with clear assessment criteria, not as a concept that necessitates an African conceptualisation or other indicators. Good governance was also not perceived as a goal to be pursued but as an enabler to achieve sustainable and economic development on the continent. The creation of NEPAD itself represented a "*moral contract between AU countries and G8 to undertake political reforms and market-friendly policies in Africa*", as she concluded.

Another reason for the AU to consider good governance as one of the Union's main objectives besides the establishment of necessary institutional mechanisms i.e., NEPAD and later APRM as institutional mechanisms to nurture such a goal emanates from international donors' pressure, such as the European Union, to incorporate good governance reforms as a condition for the continued release of official development assistance (ODA) to Africa countries (Curtis, 2013). Discussions on good governance reforms between the EU and African countries occurred during the negotiations phase of the renewal of the Cotonou Partnership framework in 2000.

Refusal from African countries to meet the EU request to incorporate good governance programmes into the development assistance packages was due to the latter's emphasis on achieving adequate progress on political governance. African presidents realised later that having a peer-learning institutional mechanism to promote good governance, which was later knowns as the APRM, will earn African countries some political credibility and guarantee the flow of ODA to the continent (Bond, 2003; Akopari, 2004), even if they do not sufficiently support it subsequently.

Alongside the foundation of the APRM and its "Modus Operandi" which we will discuss later, the AU Commission set up a vital instrument to ensure the adherence of the

member-states to good governance. The African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (ACDEG) – which was adopted in 2007 – established basic criteria for adherence to transformative leadership, democratic rules, and good governance practices. Member-states were also called on to respect the core values of the APRM and NEPAD as per Article 36 of the ACDEG (AUC, 2007). However, member-states have been reluctant in many ways to sign or ratify this charter to date.

African scholars such as Cilliers argue that good governance is a complex term to be operationalised objectively (Cilliers, 2020, p. 251), yet it is usually used in conjunction with the notion of democracy. The idea of good governance, like democracy, cannot precede economic development. Rather, it accompanies and follows the adoption of certain development policies. In the eyes of donors and public opinion in Africa, the three are interrelated and should be pursued simultaneously, even though historical developments in other regions refute this assumption. Examples are provided from South-East Asia or even African examples such as Rwanda and Ethiopia, where economic growth is high despite low governance performances in these countries.

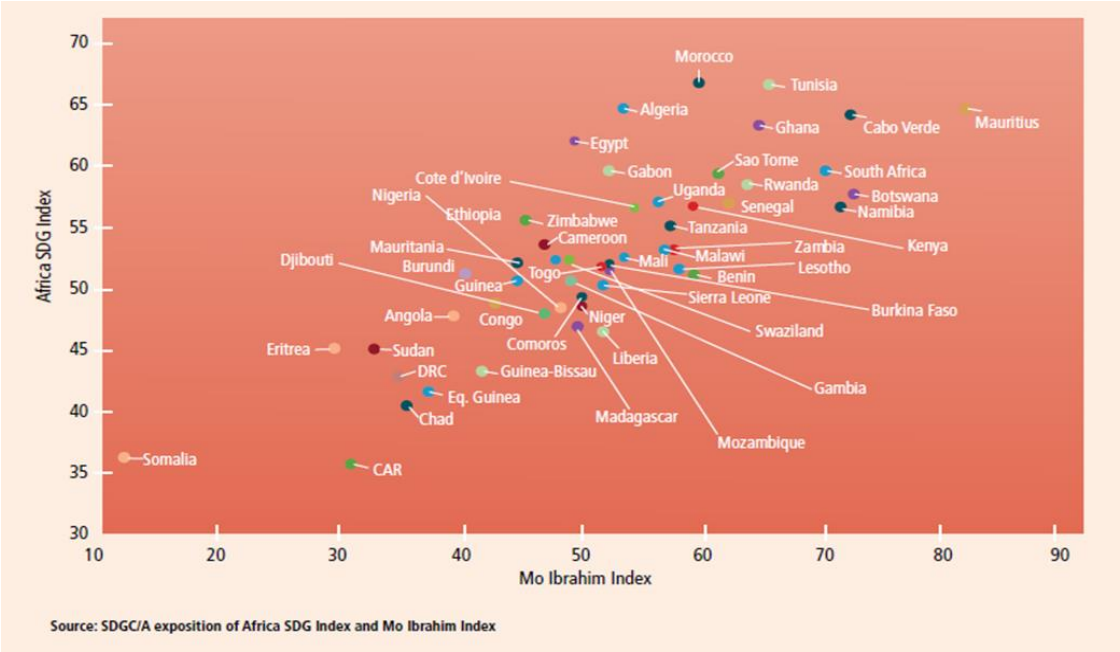
Cilliers argues that good governance serves as a force multiplier for access to development. If countries have powerful institutions or better governance indicators, they will do better in terms of economic transformation or government effectiveness, as is the case in Senegal and Botswana. Against this backdrop, introducing economic liberalism or a competitive political system to an existing weak institutional setting may end up turning the country into a fragile state or into a post-conflict fragile state (as the cases of Somalia, Chad, Libya, or Iraq show – while considering the different context or external factors on leading to this fragility).

A further significant step towards conceptualisation of good governance in AU objectives and regional programmes is the adoption of Agenda 2063 “The Africa we want” in 2013. The agenda was adopted in response to the lessons learnt from MDGs and is based on the vision of the previous AUC Chairperson, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. It is a blueprint with identified programmes to address the continent’s development challenges, including good governance. The Common Africa Position on the post-2015 development agenda, which reinforced good governance as a priority for the human development and security in Africa, has strongly fed into the agenda (AUC, 2013).

Also, the adoption of SDGs afterwards in 2015 included SDG 16 which serves as a goal and enabler for implementing other goals. SDG 16 aims to "*Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels*" (UN, 2015).

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation also defines governance as "*the provision of political, social and economic public goods and services that every citizen has the right to expect from their state, and that the state has a responsibility to its citizens*" (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2018). Further, the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) which covers various indices and indicators on cross-cutting governance issues and policies (education, health, free election and freedoms, Anti-corruption, and service delivery…etc) concluded that developing nations with low scores of governance correlatedly achieve sluggish progress in implementing both agendas; 2030 for sustainable development and Agenda 2063 for Africa (See figure below). The correlation coefficient between governance and sustainable development is 0.82, which reveals the centrality of governance performance to achieve the targets and goals of these development agendas. Accordingly, to enhance the legitimacy of governments and regimes, national progress on SDGs should be improved (Mo Ibrahim, 2019).

Figure 1 Mo Ibrahim Index on Governance and Development correlation



(Source: SDGs Centre for Africa – p.83)

Agenda 2063 articulates Africa's blueprint for socio-economic integration, emphasising the important role of good governance in promoting sustainable development and inclusive peace for African citizens. There is strong congruence between Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. Therefore, SDG 16 speaks to Aspiration 3 of the said agenda and aims to achieve two objectives; 1) Entrenched Democratic Values, Universal Principles of Human Rights Justice and Rule of Law, and 2) Capable Institutions and Transformative Leadership. Compared to the abovementioned analysis of how AU organs treated the concept; Agenda 2063 further emphasised the political and institutional dimension of good governance. However, the effectiveness of AU interventions to promote such a concept rest on the theoretical lens behind AU integration and competencies provided to the relevant AU organs to operationalise good governance on the continent. Therefore, the following section sheds light on the debates over the Union's role in good governance promotion, among others, integration objectives and theoretical foundations of such a role.

2.2 AU efforts in the promotion of good governance and the impacts for policy coherence

2.2.1 General theories on the role of regional organs in good governance promotion and regional integration

Various scholars emphasise the role of regional institutions in promoting good governance under different disciplines, international development, political science, and public policy. Different theoretical foundations have debated the extent to which a regional organisation can promote regional integration and consequently policies, functionalism, and new functionalism, inter-governmentalism and federalism. However, the application of these theories on African realities has been challenged by the fact that they were primarily developed by western scholars and not sufficiently tested on other forms of integration such as the African Union case. The above theories have been applied to the case of European Union integration from the 1960s to the present date. Although reflecting a different context, these theories can still support the study

of the topic; by providing insight and understanding of the challenges of policy coherence among AU organs, especially given the similarity between the AU and EU regional structures and shared visions for regional integration.

- **Functionalism & neofunctionalism**

  Functionalism and neofunctionalism theories are among the most popular theories consulted on the European integration process. Despite their similarity in titles, there are some distinctions between them. Functionalism underscores the promising role of regional institutions in promoting natural regional integration for mutual socio-economic and political interests among countries. It argues that those countries are political actors that show "*willingness to gradually shift their loyalties and activities towards a new supranational centre over the pre-existing national states*" (Haas, 1958a, pp 14-15).

  Supranationalism of regional institutions is key for their success, as embraced by Haas (Haas, 1958 b, pp 34-35). Supranationalism refers to "*a type of integration in which more power is given than is customary in the case of conventional international organisations, but less than is generally yielded to an emergent federal government"*. The sustainability of such cooperation is reinforced through political and functional "spill over" effects, which infer that the successful integration in one aspect of collaboration shall lead automatically to positive integration in other areas of cooperation (Lindberg, 1970; Hooghe & Marks, 2019).

  Neofunctionalism also recognises the spill-over effects of integration and the reality of the gradual integration process. Nevertheless, it argues for a stronger role for the supranational regional organ than originally assumed by functionalism scholars such as Haas and Lindberg. Supranational institutions, similarly, are also actors capable of developing certain interests and promoting further integration. While the role of citizens is limited, the influence of political elites on international cooperation is greater (cf. Niemann & Schmitter, 2009). Schmitter adds to this the aspect that *"interests, rather than common ideals or identity are the driving force behind the integration process"*. Therefore, interdependence is one of the crucial concepts of neo-functionalism which requires

that "the political actors (states) act collectively to resolve some mutually recognised problem*''* (Niemann et al., 2019, p. 44).

In the same vein, Mattli explained that strong regional integration and the autonomous role of supranational organs lay down certain supply and demand conditions. Among the supply conditions that must exist, is the foundation of committed solid regional institutions, coordination mechanisms to ensure the compliance of member states with the integration rules besides the presence of influential political leaders to defend the continental interests at the Union's level and beyond (Mattli, 1999). Other supply conditions are i) the role of an influential and undisputed political leader who can promote peace and act as a focal point to follow up on implementing actions for further integration; ii) the budget contributions of member-states engaged in this integration; and iii) coordination mechanisms and committed regional institutions to improve the member-states' compliance with the rules of cooperation.

- **Inter-governmentalism and main critiques of both theories**

  Inter-governmentalism scholars, on the other side, have stubbornly defended the state-centred approach in achieving regional integration or specific broad policies, i.e., good governance (Hoffman, 1966). These scholars tend to prioritise national states' interests and inter-state bargains for converging authorities to supranational institutions (Moravcsik, 1998). The empowerment of regional organs arguably benefited from the "permissive consensus" of the European societies' elites in the 1980s and 1990s to promote the Union in advanced stages (Bickerton et al., 2015).

  New Inter-governmentalism theory has offered some flexibility compared to Neo-functionalism. It has supported the new trend of creating "*de novo*" regional bodies, which may work as vehicles for coordinating the regional integration process without further "supranationalism" or act as policy initiators (Puetter, 2015). These "de novo" institutions, such as the European Union External Action Service, have shown more flexibility and autonomy in implementing EU policies without seeking further powers (Morillas, 2020).

Despite the popularity of both theories in explaining the EU regional integration experience, they are criticised, as their arguments are juxtaposed with one another (Hooghe & Marks, 2019). Mattli (1999) argued that neo-functionalism could not sufficiently justify the causes and outcomes of regional integration. Neither could explain why some patterns of EU integration succeed while others fail. Meanwhile, critics of inter-governmentalism alluded to perceiving supranational institutions as dependent variables that function based on the interests of member-states (Gerhing, 1996). The latter theory could not treat regional integration as a development process over time either and disregarded the specificities of supranational institutions to promote the integration process (Tsebelis & Garrett, 2001, pp. 384–385).

It is also worth noting that in the case of the AU, the theories have been used to explain failures rather than successes. Scholars such as Ayittey (2010), Barbarinde (2007), Muchie et al. (2006), Olivier, 2008, Packer and Rurare (2002) and Tieku (2004) cited in Michele,2012, pp13-16) used some theoretical arguments to justify the Union's failure to address regional issues. For instance, Ayietty argued that Pan-Africanism represents a powerful ideology that has been used since the 1950s to strengthen Africa's integration through the OAU. Yet, it remains a dream. Failing to transform ideology into practical steps is a failure to apply neo-functionalism, which is usually inspired by an obvious cause for integration.

Barbarinde, though, emphasised the necessity for stronger influential supranational institutions in Africa to promote integration between African nations. He argues that the new institutional set-up of the African Union since 2002 is very much like the EU, despite significant differences in competences and administrative rules. (Barbarinde, 2007, pp 11–12). Further, both unions started their integration processes at the same time in the 1950s and 60s. African integration is witnessing considerable transformation at all levels of politics, both "high" and "low", and has its roots in the beginning of the twentieth century (Michele, 2012) and progresses to this day after AU institutional reforms in 2016.

However, other African scholars sought to apply different theoretical arguments on the foundation of AU and its failure to promote regional integration. They used the dependency theory to justify the institutional framework in Africa after colonialism at the end of the last century. Muiu and Martin argued that in view of the current challenges facing the African continent, one must look at the African pre-colonial, colonial, and neo-colonial states of Africa (Muju & Martin, 2009). Mkandawire also emphasised the post-colonial institutional legacy to justify the persistence of patrimonial states in Africa since the 1950s (Mkandawire, 2001, 2013) alongside the prevalence of weak state structures and foreign interventions (Mathews, 2009).

Stefan Michele (2012), on the other hand, sought to assess the degree of applicability of the above theories – mainly neofunctionalism and liberal inter-governmentalism to African Union integration and regional influence on African states from the 1960s to 2013. He addressed the question; To what extent can Federalism, Neofunctionalism, and Liberal intergovernmentalism- the EU traditional integration theories - explain regional integration in Africa? He argued that the literature concerning the integration in Africa compared to the European Union is limited, as most of the literature on AU integration development is descriptive. Furthermore, most of the literature underestimated theoretical foundations or dynamics behind the OAU/AU integration, with all its failures and success chapters. Few of the integration theories' assumptions are applied to the African integration model, and thus, their validity becomes questionable.

By analysing the development of the OAU and the AU over almost five decades of progress, (1963–1970), (1970–1991), (1991–2002), (2002–2013), Michele concluded that "*African integration cannot convincingly be analysed by a single theory, but rather by the adoption of a hybrid of theories"* pertinent to regional integration. For instance, the influence of federalism theory–which advocates the role of ideology and political elite in adopting regional cooperation and foundation of regional organisations on shaping the Union's rationale and foundation in the early 1950s was strongly visible. However, it is interesting to note that although the OAU was led by strong elite influence and ideology, Pan Africanism, the outcome ended with the establishment of a regional organ with few competencies and represented by Heads of State and Government who have the supreme decision-making power. Thus, it is close to an intergovernmental structure (Michele, 2012).

Further to the argument presented above, Olivier (2012) argued that the African Union follows a state-centric form of integration, contrary to the EU model of supranational institutions with clear divisions, mandates, and competencies at the Union's level. This form of integration, as she explained, is characterised by the inability to take enforceable decisions by the regional organs and accordingly prevents the establishment of the regional legal system through institutional actions. Olivier concluded that a glance at the jurisdictions of AU organs, including the Assembly of Presidents (AU Assembly), AU Executive council, Pan African Parliament (PAP), Court of justice, Committee of Permanent Representatives (PRC), and specialised technical committees, indicated that they do not embrace binding decisions and thus "*their powers do not endow them with law-making capacities"*. Exceptionally, the AU Assembly – heads of state – is seen as the supreme structure with powers that may lead to legal consequences among the Union organs.

That said, the OAU transformation into the current AU institutional setting since 2002, with associate organs and a Constitutive Act, represents a further progressive step towards supranationalism (Olivier, 2015). The transformation into the AU brought a shift of continental priorities to the unity of Africa through increased regional integration. The AU Constitutive Act represented a constitution-like treaty and paved the way for creating similar organs to the EU – more like neofunctionalism and gradual process of integration Specific articles in the Act oblige member states to comply with certain community rules pertinent to the promotion of good governance. For instance, article 23 provided for "sanctions in case of unconstitutional changes of government" or regulations relevant to preserving peace and security issues at the continental level.

Fagbayibo (2013), from another perspective, argued that the AU has embraced various supranational impulses responding to strategic needs that have influenced norms and principles and have been established since the AU transformation in 2002, including promoting good governance. He listed some of the following decisions taken by the AU Assembly which bestow supranationalism on AU organs:

1. The decision of the establishment of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to examine the standards of governance in member-states.

2. The 2009 decision to transform the AU Commission (AUC) into the AU Authority, with powers to initiate policies on good governance, movement of persons, foreign and defence policy, international trade and negotiation, transnational crime, and peace and security.

3. The power of the AU Assembly to determine common policies, monitor implementation of these policies, and ensure compliance by member states.

4. The jurisdiction and the binding effect of the judgments of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights (ACJ&HR) over matters relating to interpreting the constitutive Act, disputes between states, acts, and functions of the organs of the AU.

5. The AU's right to intervene in member-states under the following conditions: war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity, and, through a 2003 amendment, "a serious threat to legitimate order".

6. The establishment of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP), and the intention to bestow on it full legislative powers.

7. The provision mandates the AU to "coordinate and harmonise the policies between the existing and future RECs for the gradual attainment of the Union's objectives."

Borzel sought to revisit the grand EU theories on integration of other regional groupings eg: in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. She concluded that while recognising the significance of these integration theories, the elite efforts combined with diffusion of institutional settings may justify the sub-Saharan Africa case of integration. Regardless, she explained that "this institutional diffusion does not imply institutional convergence". The rationale of establishing regional organisations varies differently as "*It is one thing for states to set up regional institutions and another how much authority is pooled and/or delegated"* (Borzel and Risse, 2019, p. 6-7). Based on the specific regional context, a certain institutional design/model can be adapted or localised selectively (Acharya, 2004).

Further, functional factors, rather than economic interdependence, may control the demand for regional institutions that pool and delegate authorities. These factors are security interdependence, as well as the quest for regime stability. This functional demand does not automatically translate into the supply of strong regional institutions. In conclusion, regional integration requires elites with pro-regional identities to engage in community-building that resonates with citizens' identities and generates public support for integration beyond intergovernmental cooperation.

With the above review in mind, a few key points can be highlighted.

- First, the common theories on the role of regional organs in promoting regional integration policies, including good governance, cannot be applied to explain each aspect or historical phase of integration or the development of regional institutions.

- Second, and building on this first point, the EU theories on integration cannot be used as a blueprint to justify other regional models, i.e., the African Union, especially if the triggers for integration or promoting regional policies are different from a continent to another. For instance, Europe was totally devastated after the Second World War and commenced a small integration project by the 1950s to promote economic collaboration, continental reconstruction and sustain peace among fighting powers. Meanwhile, the end of colonialism, securing the sovereignty of African countries and territories alongside pursuing Pan-Africanism ideology, urged African politicians and leaders to create the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in the same decade and seek further political integration.

- Third, there is a clear theoretical gap in understanding how regional policies/initiatives are conceived in the AU era and how AU organs are entrusted or empowered to implement these policies through specific mandates and functions. Moreover, the structure, rationale, and working methods of regional AU organs may differ according to design and continental priorities. A thorough analysis of AU organs, the extent of delegation to its structures, and their working methods remains vital to understand the applicability and validity of integration theories

on any aspect of AU regional cooperation, i.e., promotion of good governance is imperative.

- ***The Principal–Agent theory: Relevance to the AU case?***

  The Principal–Agent theory was introduced to address the shortcomings of both neo-functionalism and inter-governmentalism theories (Kassim & Menon, 2003). The theory prioritises delegation, as Borzel asserted, as an important element of empowering regional organs. The theory further deliberates on the autonomy of supranational institutions. It aims to understand the "*modus operandi"* of EU institutions by identifying the best conditions under which a regional institution can practise autonomy and hence contribute to the promotion of regional strategies such as good governance.

  Pollack argued that the autonomy of supranational institutions can be pursued with specific conditions. First, regional institutions support member-states with necessary information pertinent to different fields. Second, the institutions possess capacity to initiate creative policies within the scope of functions delegated by the principals (the states), Agenda 2063, for instance. Thirdly, the regional institutions are able to lobby within the principal's territory – through sub-national entities, i.e., civil society and the private sector. These conditions may assist regional institutions in leveraging their competencies and pursuing more significant autonomy. The principals may also practise restrictive measures on the delegated organs to preserve their commitment to implement the delegated functions. (Pollack, 1997).

  Principal–Agent theory remains a valuable theory to consider in the case of the AU, as it is a theory of incentives and can link different stages of the policy-making cycle Given that different stages commonly involve different actors, they are usually studied separately. PA offers the possibility of studying them together. In PA, agenda setters and policy formulators think forward to the future consequences of different options at the implementation and evaluation stages and then reason backward to select the agent, or the incentive scheme, which best serves their interests (Karagiannis & Guidi, 2017). It is, therefore, beneficial to consult such a theory in the context of AU organs to draw lessons

from the reality of the three AU organs, their governance environment, and policies for the promotion of good governance.

Concerning the autonomy of regional organisations, coordination mechanisms, including customs, mandates, and resources, are determinant for regional organisations in fulfilling their delegated functions effectively (Cappellaro & Mele, 2013). The efficacy of regional organisations, to be sustained, is grounded in the institutional arrangements which manage interactions and institutional settings, legal order, human capital, and the rule of law (Pose, 2013). Therefore, I believe that the theory offers a bridge between delegation, autonomy, and policy coherence.

2.2.2 African Union role in promoting good governance in Africa

As mentioned earlier, good governance has been incorporated into the AU continental agenda for enhancing free market policies, sustaining peace, and stabilising the continent alongside securing donors' support for the continent. This has also been inspired by the Union's eagerness to play a stronger role in the member states. Debating the Union's role in regional integration and nurturing democratic practices on the continent has been at stake for many reasons. The role of African regional organisations such as the AU, and its predecessor (OAU), in promoting regional integration and policies, i.e., good governance, has been perceived with scepticism for a myriad of reasons, that include:

- First, the resilience of patrimonial African states and continuity of patron-client relations in the society contributed to categorising African states among the least democratically progressing states. In addition, the nature of governing elites and their hegemony on economic growth and how male institutions function derailed hopes of survival for supranational institutions (Cilliers, 2020; Mkandawire, 2013).

- Second, although the AU portrayed itself as a "regional player" with an international legal personality, the AU's capacity to compel member states and citizens was uneven in the face of many crises, particularly conflicts and power

transitions (Olivier, 2015). The Union lacks clear principles of supranationalism and a solid legal system (subsidiarity, direct effect, proportionality) with clear exclusive competencies to practice vis-a-vis member-states.

- Third, the absence of consistent enforcement of existing powers by AU organs and non-compliance policies undermined the Union's efficiency to tackle regional crises. These non-compliance practices included non-payment of countries' contributions to the AU budget, lack of political will at the AU assembly to empower AU organs (Boateng, 2017).

- Fourth, state-centrism in Africa and the African countries' eagerness to preserve national sovereignty rather than delegating jurisdictions to empower regional organs to help implement development visions (Mkandawire, 2001; Muiu &Martin, 2009). The current AU was designed to safeguard these new sovereign countries as Article 3 of the Constitutive Act stipulates (AUC, 2003).

- Fifth, Africa's experiment in regionalism was initiated as a mechanism, not only for economic development but also for political independence or a "*united Africa"* Despite the noble nature of such an objective, it raises overly optimistic expectations, especially as regional cooperation transcends low political boundaries (Kühnhardt, 2010). Therefore, regional cooperation has been understood as a gradual integration, akin to the case of the EU.

- Sixth, the lack of complementarity and coordination between the AU and its affiliated organs on one hand and the sub-regional bodies, i.e., Regional Economic Communities, on the other. The foundation of different economic entities (RECs) with multiple memberships, besides the lack of complementarity among African economies, could not spur the expected economic/political outcomes of Africa's economic integration (Akonor, K. 2009). Further, the lack of unity of response, duplication of efforts, and confusion between AU Commission and these RECs to apply policies and principles, such as "*Right to Protect"* during human or political crises (Abatan & Spies, 2016). This comes

against the broad mandate accorded to the AU on peace, security, and governance issues, which embraces an interventionist approach to protect African citizens.

- Seventh, the OAU's adherence to the "non-interference" principle for decades prevented the AU from dealing with the continent's challenges and African citizens' concerns about their regimes, especially with the reluctance of AU countries to share elements of sovereignty voluntarily with the AU (Akokapari, 2009).

- Eighth, the Eurocentric model of regional integration – which pursued advantageous economic benefits – provides a falsely conceptualised image of the regional integration formula that Africa should imitate (Gibb, 2009).

- Ninth, the role of the bureaucrats of AU organisations and their inputs on agenda-setting can be limited. Further, the opacity of discussing agenda items adequately because of the length of heavy debates which exacerbates proper discussion of the AU's strategic affairs. The lack of experienced AU staff and qualified experts underestimate the organs' relevance, effectiveness, and ownership (Tieku, 2016). On the other hand, the hegemony of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) in setting the agenda for AU Assembly without adequate knowledge of the AU system is linked to the dysfunctionality of the AU Commission and its fragile management system (Lisakafu, 2016).

- Finally, African national governments and institutions have been accused of corruption, authoritarianism, and lack of institutional capacities to implement development agendas (Collier 1998; Riddle, 2007; Acemoglu & Robinson, 2008; Baland, Moene & Robison 2009, Mbeche, 2004). Besides, there is abundant scholarship on the post-colonial state in Africa and on how formal national institutions manage societies in a coercive manner, especially with the existing different ethnicities and racial differences (Mamdani, 2005).

Despite these arguments, the academic literature on the role of African regional bodies, their working mechanisms, and coordination efforts in tackling the continent's challenges despite visible AU transformation since 2013 is short. Alongside the above-mentioned justifications, scholars emphasised the pitfalls of the African Union to promote good governance because of the institutional weaknesses among its designated structure to promote this goal i.e., AUDA-NEPAD, AGA, and APRM. The following section will shed light on the impact of the AU on policy coordination and the coherence subtheme.

2.2.3 On regional coordination and policy coherence

2.2.3.1 Policy coherence and coordination

Policy coherence and coordination are extremely significant for the success of any organisation to deliver on its vision and achieve specific objectives. The concept has gained prominence since the 1990s under the public policy/administration domain as it goes back to the rational choice decision making. It has been also addressed under the coordination concept. Coordination is thus seen as a prerequisite for policy coherence and alignment within and among organisations (UN DESA, 2019). However, both concepts are perceived as costly rather than beneficial for organisations (Bouckaert, Peters & Verhoest, 2010).

The OECD is among the forerunners in the development of the concept of policy coherence for achieving sustainable development. The concept was initially defined as "*working to ensure that the objectives and results of a government's development policy are not undermined by other policies of that same government which impact on developing countries and that these other policies support development objectives where feasible"* (OECD, 2004, p. 5). Thus far, PCD has been perceived as a political statement rather than a tool or policy framework for sustainable development.

The OECD has introduced building blocks for PCD as a policy framework which include (1) Political commitment and leadership, (2) policy integration, (3) long-term vision and planning horizons, (4) analysis and assessments of potential policy effects, (5) policy and institutional coordination, (6) subnational and local involvement, (7) stakeholder engagement, and (8) monitoring and reporting (OECD, 2016, p.19). The

concept has been strongly applied to different EU countries to assess their national policies and priorities' alignment with development strategies.

Policy coherence basically begins at all levels of decision-making, starting from agenda framing, goal setting to policy instrument design and implementation, follow up and evaluation. The concept posits a fundamental premise of mutual dependencies and synergies between policies and outputs. Achieving progress on one target may boost another target or make it more difficult to be achieved. The recent definition of the concept is provided as "*the process of policy making that systematically considers the pursuit of multiple policy goals in a coordinated way, minimising trade off and contradictions and maximising synergies." (UN CEPA, 2021, p. 2).*

It should also be emphasised that policy coherence is a lengthy learning process that ensures the creation of synergies between different domains and creates strategic interests. Accordingly, Policy coherence as an objective is not primarily associated with a specific achievement. Rather, coherence of policy-making usually expects enhancement of policy impact.

Coherent policy-making in further detail constitutes an international and systematic linking of objectives, goals, actors, procedures, and joint decision-making. It is also approached by collaborative and non-adversarial relationships vertically – across organisational levels or horizontally between sectors in policy domains or administrative bodies. Policy coherence spells out an ambition either to avoid contradictions, create synergies among organs and plans or pursue joint strategies towards a common vision or policy objectives (Stead & Meijers, 2009). This ambition, to a large extent, depends on the institutional settings and context of involved organisations, institutional and coordination mechanisms found to embrace policy coherence on specific themes.

Acknowledging the above, scholars also claimed that conflicting mandates or interests, insufficient coordination and lack of financial resources lead to fragmentation, compartmentalisation, policy mixes and incoherent objectives (Candel & Biesbrock, 2016). Accordingly, this leads to incoherence of policy and delivery. Inspired by these challenges, experts and UN organs developed some frameworks to assess policy coherence.

For instance, the UN Environment Fund (UNEF) recommended a set of indicators[9] to assess policy coherence, including: 1) Institutionalised political commitment; 2) Long-term considerations; 3) Inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral coordination; 4) Participatory processes; 5) Integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, assessment of policy effects and inter-linkages; 6) Consultations and coordination across government levels; 7) Monitoring and reporting for policy coherence; and 8) Financial resources and tools.

Policy coherence can also be tracked through the process of inputs, outputs/performance, and the process in between. The process in between anticipates the type of coordination, joint meetings, policy briefs and decisions, consultations with stakeholders (Nilsson, 2021). At the national level Metcalfe initiated a scale for policy coherence. There are nine levels to the diagnostic coherence scale to be considered as exhibited in the following box. This scale can also assist in assessing policy coherence at the regional level, such as in AU organisations.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the concept is even becoming a special target of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, (SDG 17.14: Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development). It has emphasised in different pieces of UN literature, i.e., the Committee of Experts on Public Administration, which argued that coherent policy-making is a topic that permeates the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a whole (CEPA, 2019).

[9] For further information, please refer to https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/sustainable-development-goals/why-do-sustainable-development-goals-matter/goal-17-1.

Box 1. Metcalfe scale for policy coherence (1994)

9. Unified government strategy
8. Setting common priorities
7. Establishing common parameters
6. Arbitration of trade-offs & conflicts
5. Search for policy consensus.
4. Avoiding policy divergences.
3. Consultations among ministers (key players)
2. Exchange of information.
1. Ministers manage independently within their own jurisdictions

Note: The scale is arranged from the highest to the lowest level for policy coherence. It is designed in a cumulative way which means that higher levels of coherence (unified strategy, setting common priorities and common parameters) depend on the effectiveness of other lower levels on the scale.

The initiated set of indicators to assess the policy coherence target, according to the SDGs global indicators framework, are very comparable to Metcalfe's scale and the OECD building blocks on policy coherence for sustainable development. Yet, it does not have a fixed hierarchy. The OECD building blocks for PCSD are as follows:

1. Institutionalisation of political commitment.

2. Long-term consideration in decision-making.

3. Inter-ministerial and cross sectoral coordination.

4. Participatory process.

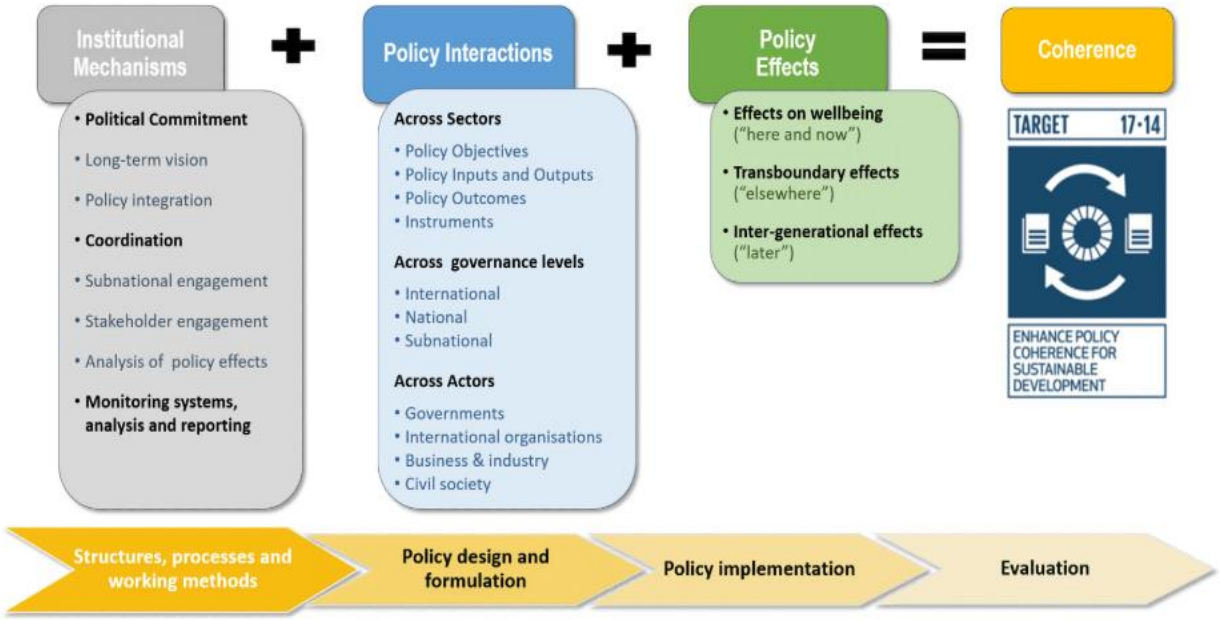
5. Policy linkages.

6. Alignment across the government.

7. Monitoring and reporting for policy coherence; and

8. Financing for policy coherence.

Figure 2 Policy Coherence Cycle for Sustainable Development



(Source: OECD, 2015)

Although the concept was broadly consulted at the national level, the policy coherence issue at the AU level was recently introduced to the Union within the institutional reforms in 2016. Intra-institutional coherence and inter-institutional policy orientation are strongly based on proper coordination mechanisms among the different AU organs. Nevertheless, the coordination among AU organs was displayed as unequal even after its introduction in 2002 and its associated institutional transformations as discussed in the following section.

2.2.3.2 AU impact on policy coordination and coherence for promoting good governance

In principle, scholars have argued that the AU has been an "improvement over the OAU' from an institutional and scope of work perspective alongside raising the collective responsibility to address crucial continental matters (Tawfic, 2005; Melber, 2006). The foundation of clear organs, scope of implementation on key strategic issues i.e., peace and security and economic integration, vision, and institutional mechanisms to tackle continental agendas i.e., good governance echoed a sense of optimism for the role of AU organs as a rising continental player (Fagbayibo, 2017; Kingebiel, 2005).

Regardless, the coordination among AU organs has been historically characterised as weak (Sven & George, 2010). The intra- and inter-institutional coordination among AU organs and divisions lack synergies on strategic priorities and programmes by either policy practitioners or scholars (Murithi & Karbo, 2017).

In terms of regional coordination to promote good governance, since its inception in 2003, the APRM has been considered Africa's indigenous institutional mechanism responsible for addressing good governance issues on the continent by promoting the concept of peer learning among heads of state and government and national structures (NEPAD, 2003;, AUC,: 2019).Further, the creation of the Africa Governance Architecture in 2011 as a coordination mechanism to coordinate efforts for the promotion of dialogue on good governance strengthened the Union's commitment to nurturing good governance practices on the continent. Yet, both bodies were heavily criticised for technical and functional reasons.

Numerous other criticisms were levelled at the APRM from legal, institutional, and technical aspects. Legally speaking, the APRM has been a voluntary-membership mechanism for member-states that wish to enhance the peer-learning notion on good governance issues. Although this voluntary approach denotes a sense of autonomy among the mechanism's members and provides a good example of a multi-speed integration model "where a club within the convoy forges close links towards members for others to follow" (Kelly, 2010. p.19), the APRM rules introduced by NEPAD lacks essential features including political leadership by African leaders to show commitment to and compliance with the implementation of APRM Governance Assessment's Recommendations (Botaeng, 2017).

Accordingly, the APRM was not sufficiently entrusted with competencies to play an effective role in ensuring countries' adherence to AU standards and codes. The mechanism was used by its signatories for show without achieving substantive reforms (Deme, 2005; Ndayi, 2009). Until 2017, the membership of APRM did not even cover half of the continent. Approximately 22 member-states were engaged but few accepted the regularly mandated governance assessments or reviews.

On a technical level, good governance, as per official documents of NEPAD focused more on the economic aspect of governance with reluctance to discuss internal political affairs in African countries. It was believed that good governance was presented and promoted by the AU organs at that time to guarantee donors' support rather than examined to address shortcomings on the continent. The APRM methodology on governance assessments thus did not include clear indicators in the conduct of the peer review studies, especially those pertinent to democratic and political governance issues (power rotation or peaceful transfer of power. etc.). The indicators and indices developed to assess political governance were seen as too generic or strictly pertinent to assess member-states adherence to laws and procedures (Tawfic, 2005).

Other criticisms touch on the lack of APRM visibility on the continent and impactful outputs to enhance good governance policies at national levels. Certain doubts continuously exist on the effectiveness of APRM reviews in changing African realities, especially with the absence of obligatory measures on member-states to implement the recommendations/national plans of Action (NPOAs) (Manby, 2013). Further, the mechanism has long been criticised for not engaging non-state actors in the national review process or its national governance councils (Turianskyi. et al, 2018) and underestimating the role of citizens in public policy decisions alongside other internal institutional conflicts among the mechanism's structures (Mangu, 2014). That said, the APRM is still a new initiative that has to pass many challenges to survive on the continent, and the value of the governance process itself is considered higher than concrete results (Tawfic, 2005). It is the only institutional mechanism that leads to assessment on good governance challenges on the continent and thus should be supported.

On the other hand, Gruzd alluded that the APRM, with some variations across the countries, contributed to promoting the democratic space and dialogue practices on governance and policy issues on the continent. Yet, the APRM's work, and reports are not accessible to African citizens. Moreover, the duration of APRM relevance depends on the national periodic reports that ought to implement APRM NPoAs, availability of funds, and to be impactful for improving African citizens' lives (Gruzd, 2014).

The African Governance Architecture (AGA) was launched in Lusaka in June 2012 as a result of the decisions of the 16th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in 2011

under the motto "Towards greater unity and integration through shared values". The Architecture was recommended as a response to various challenges to implement continental initiatives concerned with democratic, governance and human rights in Africa, especially with the persistent disconnection among AU organs in the first decade of 2021 (Wachira, 2017). AGA was founded to deal with two coordination deficits: first, urging member-states to adhere to democratic norms and policies and second, to expand coherence and cooperation among AU organs, institutions, and RECs in implementing AU shared values.

Thus, AGA has been seen as an evolving process which promotes the "overall political and institutional framework for the promotion of democracy, governance and human rights in Africa". It comprises three pillars: (a) a vision underpinned by a governance agenda and norms; (b) a set of governance institutions/actors; and (c) concrete processes/relationships to promote synergies, shared agendas, and greater impact, including the need to create an African platform for governance as a driver for the AGA.
Despite the mandated role of AGA and the assigned mandate of the AUC to work on the pan-African governance agenda under the strategic framework of 2009–2012 to date, various operational challenges faced the Architecture since its foundation. The lack of competences and institutional capacities provided to the AUC – which has been supervising the AGA Secretariat work and activities – to implement the shared values was emphasised among experts and scholars (Tissi & Aggad Clerx, 2014). Institutional tensions between AGA and other similar bodies, i.e., African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), lack of clarity on the role of APRM within the AGA and weak linkages between their policy directives, has been noticed.

Acknowledging the above challenges vis-a-vis the APRM and AGA, the adoption of Agenda 2063 and the set of 2016 institutional reforms revealed the eagerness of AU member-states to reach political consent and realign their visions with AU priorities (Chekol.Y, 2020). The APRM and NEPAD accordingly have also been encouraged to live up to this goal (Bolaji-Adio, 2015). However, implementing the said development agenda has been far less fruitful despite countless decisions (AUC, 2017). Therefore, the governance of the new AU organs and the coherence of policy-making, objectives, implementation and evaluation need to be examined, especially as the accountability,

transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness of these coordinating bodies have not yet been sufficiently studied.

Alongside the pitfalls of coordination within and among the AU bodies responsible for promoting good governance on the continent, the concept of policy coherence has not been empirically applied in AU organs. Although a decision has been taken to appoint an advisor for policy coherence in the AU Commission's Chairperson office to ensure proper coordination between its organs, it is not clear how such a role will contribute to enhancing coherence/incoherence between the three organs (AUC/ AUDA-NEPAD, and APRM).

Further, the abovementioned studies and research did not capture the current transformation at the AU strategic policy-making level and implementation of Agenda 2063. It did not empirically understand how the 2016 institutional reforms affected the policy framing and implementation by the AU organs and their delegated functions and programmes to assist AU member-states in developing good governance practices.

The research addresses this knowledge gap on the role of AU organs (AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, and APRM) in implementing and coordinating the operationalisation of aspiration three of Agenda 2063 based on the Principal–Agent theory. The study demonstrates the institutional mandates and delegated functions of each organ and its constituted departments dedicated to playing a role in promoting good governance alongside vertical and political coherence among the three organs (APRM, AUDA-NEPAD, and AUC). Besides examining the role of the APRM as an institutional mechanism in charge of governance assessments in Africa, the study focuses on central directorates, directly delegated to implement Agenda 2063, such as Strategic Planning and Political Affairs departments (AGA) and the technical working group on governance under the AUC. This will help us understand if these institutions are committed, sufficiently delegated, and have the autonomy to fulfil their obligations towards AU member-states or not.

2.3. Theoretical framework

This section offers a theoretical framework to explore how the AUC, in collaboration with AUDA-NEPAD and the APRM, has contributed to developing a coherent policy to promote good governance in Africa within the context of Agenda 2063. As the presented literature acknowledged empirical and theoretical gaps for policy coherence and good governance promotion in Africa, the research applied Principal–Agent theory to examine the research question through the cases of the three AU organs. This entailed defining the mandates, policy directives, and activities after adopting Agenda 2063. The following section explains the Principal–Agent theory's main arguments and its relevance as a theoretical framework to this study.

2.3.1 Theoretical framework

The research is guided by PA theory, which built on other theories such as functionalism and inter-governmentalism to address the shortcomings of decision-making in regional institutions. It offers more justifications for the relevance and significance of regional organs (Agent) – in this case, AU organs in assisting the member-states (Principal) in tackling major issues. PA theory, as proposed, helps underpin how each AU organ – APRM, AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, based on delegated functions – has adopted policies that promote good governance on the continent. Further, it helps concentrate on challenges these organs face (AGA-AUC/APRM/AUDA-NEPAD) as agents of AU countries to promote coherent policy for good governance.

PA theory assumes a *"contractual agreement"* with a second party as the principal delegates certain functions or a set of tasks to the agent to carry out on its behalf (Moe, 1984). It suggests that supranational institutions should be studied as independent causal variables, as they can determine the order of integration and influence the decisions of states (Pollack, 1997) in favour of regional collaboration.

The theory is based on an institutional choice of delegating functions to regional organisations to monitor member-states' compliance with specific regulations and policies. By delegating authorities to regional organs, it assists in solving problems of incomplete contracts and taking necessary regional action (Williamson, 1985), lowering

transaction costs that might prevent cooperation and resolving complex issues such as trade or environmental or even governance issues. The delegated organs can improve the quality of policy-making, especially in technical areas that necessitate specific expertise knowledge (Egan, 1998). Likewise, it can reduce instability in policy implementation and take responsibility for unpopular decisions (Epstein & O'Halloran, 1999) and, most necessary, assist in agenda-setting and policy initiation at the regional level (McKelvey, 1976; Riker, 1980).

The reason for choosing the PA theory is related to its emphasis on the notion of "delegation" and conditions of successful autonomy of regional organs such as the AU organs. Delegation is a crucial concept in the Principal–Agent theory. It is an institutional choice and a decision by the principal - usually the member states - to minimise the transaction costs of implementing certain measures and to overcome regional disputes over collective action from which stakeholders are expected to benefit in the long term. (Keohane, 1984; Shepsle, 1979; Weingast & Marshall, 1988). Scholars have argued that the creation of non-majoritarian technocratic institutions is entirely compatible with democratic decisions if it is assigned specific tasks with narrowly defined functions (Majone, 1993).

The study utilises this theory to empirically explore the delegated functions – granted by the AU member-states to the AUC since its formation in 2002 and, more particularly, after the adoption of Agenda 2063. To pursue that, the research shows the types of designated functions that African states agreed to "delegate" to the AU organs (AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, and APRM) to monitor African countries' commitments to implementing Agenda 2063: Aspiration 3 (good governance).

The research thus explains the control mechanisms adopted by the AU member-states, if they exist, to ensure AUC compliance with oversight of the AU organs' implementation of Agenda 2063, including AUDA-NEPAD and APRM. The comparison between delegated functions (policy formulation, coordination, monitoring, etc.) and control mechanisms help to improve understanding about whether the AUC is endowed with supranational autonomy to carry out its functions or its lack thereof to play such a role in Agenda 2063.

The Principal–Agent theory, as this study argues, helps realise the ability of the institutional and coordination mechanisms, adopted by the AUC, APRM, and AUDA-NEPAD, to pursue vertical and political policy coherence for Agenda 2063: Aspiration 3 (good governance) – which will enrich the debate over the autonomy of these organs. Among the institutional bodies founded under the AUC to promote good governance is AGA in agenda-setting, policy initiation and implementation at the Union level either via the formal procedures or an informal substantive Agenda. In 2013, the High-level Ministerial Committee on Agenda 2063 joined these important institutional mechanisms. Through further exploration of these mechanisms, the study contains conclusions about the effectiveness of these AU institutional layers in contributing to promoting policy coherence for good governance at the regional level, or create further redundancy at the AU policy-making level?

2.3.2 Concepts and analytical framework

The research deliberates on some concepts pertinent to policymaking, policy coherence, and the Principal–Agent theory, including delegation, coordination, and institutions. It introduces an adjusted definition of "regional policy coherence" – see conceptual framework mapping – as Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PSCD) which has been broadly applied at the national level of policy-making, supported by various organisations such as the OECD.

The Policy Coherence concept has evolved to become an SDG in Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development; SDG 17.14: Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development. The UN research groups and committees, such as the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), argued that coherent policymaking becomes a systemic issue that permeates the 2030 Agenda as a whole (CEPA, 2019).

The study, based on the recent literature on policy coherence, introduces an updated definition of regional policy coherence. Regional policy coherence articulates "*the level of communication, coordination, inter-institutional alignment and coordination between official regional institutions to frame policy objectives and instruments for the promotion of regional integration agendas i.e., Agenda 2063."*

In other words, it means the capacity to achieve consensus and mutual accountability among regional organs on policy framing and implementation for key regional priorities(vision), including good governance. This can be achieved through a defined mandate, sufficient financial resources, checks and balances, and coordination mechanisms and the Metcalfe scale of policy coherence.

Policy coherence is, however, related to "Governance Environment*"*, which means the "whole of rules and laws, institutional settings, policy instruments, division of tasks, and role of governments and societal stakeholders within a particular country, boundary, or transboundary unit" (Meuleman, 2015, pp. 6–7).

Institution is also another concept pertinent to this study. The institution has multifaceted characteristics. A standard definition argues that institutions are "complex organisations dominated by many codes of conduct, practices, personal preferences, and human capacities" (Lowndes & Roberts, 2013). As one of the leading paradigms of new institutionalism, historical institutionalism assumes that institutions "create elements of order and predictability…they may fashion, enable, or constrain political actors as they act within a logic of appropriate action… institutions are carriers of identities and roles, and they are markers of a polity's character, history, and visions" (March & Olsen, 2006).

Coordination is also an important concept relevant to policy coherence and institutions. It refers to the capacity of creating consistent decisions, vertically or horizontally, through leveraging managerial capabilities of each agency (Egeberg & Trondal, 2016). It also speaks to the alignment of interdependent activities to pursue a collective organisational task (Jarzabkowski et al., 2012). The analytical framework below conceptualises policy coherence from a continental perspective by leveraging three levels of coherence: political, vertical, and horizontal coherence. The study initiates a definition of regional policy coherence as "*the level of communication, inter-institutional alignment and coordination between official regional institutions to frame policy objectives, programmes and instruments for the promotion of regional integration agendas, i.e., Agenda 2063.*"

The suggested analytical framework (see figure three) seeks to analyse key postulated drivers of policy coherence[10] – political coherence, vertical coherence, horizontal coherence – that subsist among the AUC (including AGA Secretariat), APRM and AUDA-NEPAD:

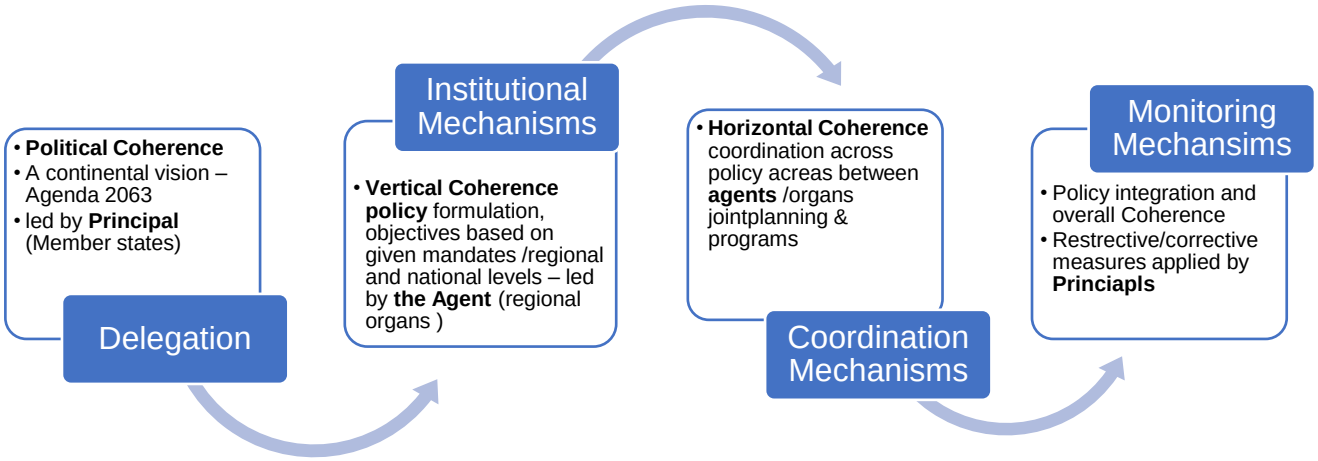
- Political coherence: This refers to a consensus among principals about the region - a vision and political and normative commitments to institutionalise policy coherence. For instance, the adoption of Agenda 2063 as a continental vision and the Common Africa position for the post-2015 development agenda are considered cornerstones and clear commitment from African countries to bring governance to the core of Africa's peace and development nexus.

- Vertical coherence: it refers to coordination on policy objectives, directives at the national/regional level. This type of coherence is extremely pertinent to the organ's mandates, competencies (rules, norms, regulations to steer a community of organs).
- Horizontal coherence: understanding coordination across policy areas (related to good governance). This type of coherence speaks to joint programming and planning[11]. For instance, the AGR initiative between APRM and AGA Secretariat.

The level of coherence, especially the vertical and horizontal coherence, is examined while considering the concept of delegation and delegated functions to the AU organs as an agent. This is consistent with Principal-Agent theory valuing of delegation and the role of agent in policy initiation, facilitation, conflict setting, lobbying. Further, the study examines whether the principal – AU countries enforces control mechanisms: fire-alarm, budget cuts, veto, oversight measures (i.e., hearing sessions) to follow up on the organ delivery.

[10] The analytical framework is inspired by the OECD work on Policy coherence and scholars (Nilsson, 2012 & 2021)
[11] UN CEPA guidance note on policy coherence for sound policy-making.

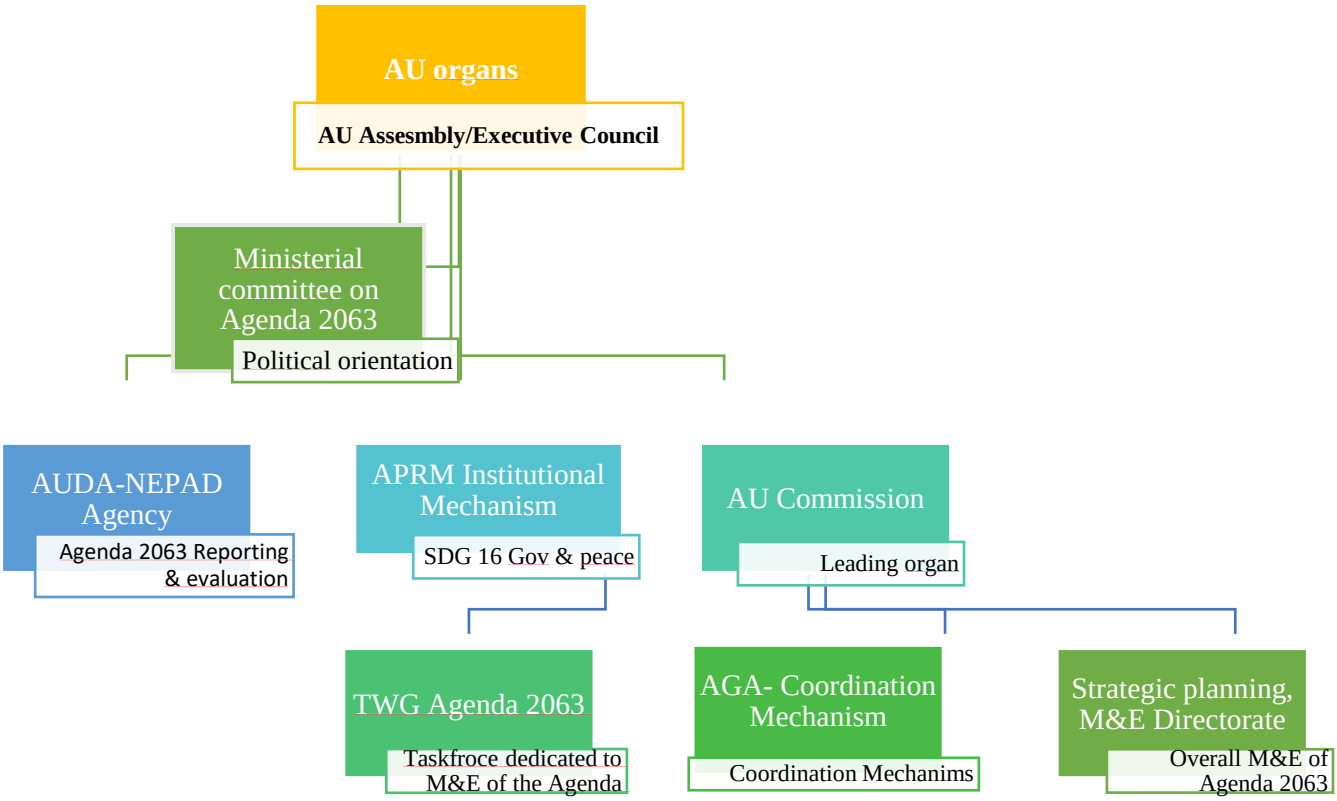
Figure 3 Principal-Agent Approach for Policy Coherence for Good Governance



Source: Author

Note: Three key drivers for policy coherence referred to political, vertical, and horizontal coherence. The figure also highlights institutional and coordination mechanisms for policy coherence

Figure 4 Key organs and autonomous bodies involved in Agenda 2063- Good Governance policy making, implementation and evaluation



Source: Author

Note: The diagram depicts organs and related mandates, as reflected in AU decisions, documents, including the first ten-year implementation plan. (Source: Author)

Chapter 3: Research methodology and methods

3.1 Research methodology and approach

To pursue the study's objectives and answer the suggested questions, we developed evidence-based arguments by adopting an interpretative qualitative analysis. This qualitative inductive analysis assisted in having a better understanding of the working methods, mandates, and delegated functions of three selected AU organs (AUC, APRM, and AUDA-NEPAD) in the promotion of good governance in Africa, agenda setting, policy design, implementation and monitoring at a continental level.

Besides understanding the mandates and delegated functions of each organ, specifically after the institutional reforms in 2016, the study uses the Principal–Agent theoretical lens to gauge the relevance of each AU organ as an agent to the principals (AU member-states) as regards policy initiation, agenda-setting and implementation, and tracking and monitoring of good governance policies at continental and national levels.

To do so, the study accordingly follows an interpretative paradigm to explore the inter-institutional arrangements and coordination mechanisms adopted by the AU for pursuing policy coherence of Agenda 2063, Aspiration 3. The analytical framework developed for this study is guided by key drivers for coherence: political, vertical, and horizontal coherence. The analytical framework examines the relevance of the three selected organs and affiliated bodies to good governance, policy-making and implementation based on delegated functions and mandates. The analysis includes the following organs and structures: the AU Commission - including the Department of Political Affairs, the AGA Secretariat, APRM Continental Secretariat, and the Agenda 2063 Ministerial and Ambassadorial Committees.

Interpretative qualitative analysis is commonly used in social science research as it seeks to understand human phenomena as experienced by others and not necessarily as the researcher assumes (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012). These phenomena may include regional integration experiences, such as the AU integration experience, as well as human and specific institutional arrangements that have been set based on individual interests or decisions taken by political leaders at a particular time. The significance of interpretive analysis derives from its focus on analysing "persons-in-context" and

thus it provides broad space for African experts or those with a collaborative connection with the AUC – particularly the APRM and AUC-AUDA-NEPAD – to provide a realistic opinion on their performance and policy coherence challenges (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006).

The interpretative paradigm ontologically articulates that social reality can be understood based on individuals' decisions and actions. There could be as many realities as individuals. Epistemologically, it assumes that knowledge is subjective and relevant to human experiences. This approach thus enables examination of the appropriateness of the AU institutional and coordination mechanisms, i.e., the APRM and AGA/AUC Political Affairs, to play a role in good governance. It helps understand the political influences and power balances between the three organs based on the AU member-states' support for each one of them.

Guided by Principal–Agent theory, an interpretative paradigm can capture how experts and member states evaluate the role of these organs and to find out which of these structures is more strategically positioned and serves member states -the Principals- more efficiently. This is supported by official documents, statements by policy makers at high-level meetings and other gatherings where issues of good governance and policy coherence on the continent are discussed.

This paradigm's axiology also prioritises the values to inform the social inquiry (Chilisa & Kawulich, 2012). For instance, Pan-Africanism has been described in Agenda 2063 as a value-oriented principle that articulates the geographical belonging of Africa, which justifies why the interpretative paradigm can properly frame this study. So, for example, Pan-Africanism as an ideology clearly guides all AU policy documents and frameworks. Therefore, the interpretative paradigm's axiology is attuned to the research objectives.

To understand the policy coherence dilemma among AU organs (APRM, AUC, AUDA-NEPAD), the study deductively articulates assumptions guided by the Principal-Agent theory while remaining open, inductively, to what the interviews reveal, bringing both together in the presentation of findings and analysis and conclusions based on observed evidence and insights arising from in-depth interviews.

The reason for this inductive approach is, firstly the lack of literature on recent changes in AU organs since 2016, which requires a better understanding of how these organs are restructured, delegated and function to implement the AU continental agenda. In addition, it is imperative to understand the inter- and intra-institutional coherence and coordination between the organs responsible for initiating good governance, agenda setting, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. The inductive research approach therefore helps to uncover the degree of institutional coherence between the institutions (vertical) and the degree of coherence in their policy orientations (horizontal) through observation and questioning. Policy coherence will be uncovered as the intersection between vertical and horizontal coherence. This will help to achieve the research objectives and answer the research questions.

Secondly, the opacity of theoretical foundations to understand the role of each organ and its association to the principal (member-states) should be underpinned by listening to the voice of African experts from the continent and the recipient of AU organs' programmes (member-states, academia, civil society organs). Linking this with the poor performance of good governance at the continental level as per the Agenda 2063 Continental Report 2019 entails going beyond numbers and indicators to address incoherence problems at the Union level.

Third, the conceptualisation on policy coherence has also been widely tested at the national level or EU example of integration (EU Development Cooperation coherence) with less applications on the AU case as a regional organisation. Given the broader mandate and continental priorities of the Union, including good governance promotion, the interpretative approach shall help in understanding how African policy makers, practitioners and executives perceive the concept with its advantages and trade-offs. It will also provide a chance for African conceptualisation to be reflected in the concept.

3.2 Research methods

To apply the interpretative approach adequately and maintain the rigor of the study, triangulation method of data sources is used, which includes literature review, in-depth interviews findings, and participatory observation. Patton and Cochran (2002) argued that the researcher creates a line of evidence that assists in strengthening the data by

triangulating. With the thematic analysis of data, I tried to find common themes coming up repeatedly from the interviewees and summarise it to generate themes of the study.

3.2.1 Content analysis of official documents

To pilot the research objectives, a survey of official documents, including Agenda 2063 primary documents, notably Aspiration 3 was conducted. Among these official documents are AUC official communications, AU summit reports, policy briefs, and available minutes of meetings from various AU organs, AU Assembly and Executive Council decisions on Agenda 2063. Further, some quantitative studies from the UN, AU, and think tank databases could also be consulted on the progress towards Aspiration 3 to support the research findings, if necessary. Some of the consulted documents are as follows:

1. AU assembly decisions pertinent to Agenda 2063 and institutional reforms 2016

2. Strategic frameworks of the selected organs (APRM, AUDA-NEPAD, AUC-AGA)

3. Rules of procedures of the three organs

4. Agenda 2063 ministerial committee protocols

5. Outcome report of the APRM-AGA regular meetings and official retreats

6. Policy coherence report of AU organs 2019

7. Minutes and conclusions of the technical working group on good governance and Agenda 2063 – AUC

3.2.2 Semi-structured in-depth interviews

Semi-structured in-depth interviews with experts from the three organs (the AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, and APRM) were conducted for data collection alongside voices of African scholars and recipients of AU policies (member-states). These interviews[12] are significant in gathering practical feedback on the autonomous role of the three selected organs vis-a-vis the AU member states for implementation and monitoring of Agenda 2063, particularly Aspiration 3 on good governance programmes.

To disentangle the Principal–Agent theoretical links to our research case and gauge the level of delegation, autonomy and empowerment each of these organs is given, I ask the experts on the relevance of the three organs to the AU continental priorities. I also seek to know whether these organs:

- Assist in agenda-setting and policy initiation at the regional level
- Assist in solving problems of incomplete contracts and taking necessary regional action
- Lower transaction costs that might prevent cooperation and sorting out complex issues such as trade or environmental or even governance issues.
- Assist the principal in improving the quality of policy-making, especially in technical areas that necessitate specific expertise knowledge
- Contribute to reducing instability in policy implementation and take responsibility for unpopular decisions

The above-mentioned aspects cover the main hypotheses of the Principal–Agent theory and by addressing these questions alongside issues of communication, coordination and political commitment of the three organs, I would be able, to a certain extent, to generate certain arguments on the delegation and autonomy of AU organs dedicated

[12] An appendix is attached with suggested questions for these interviews.

to promoting good governance on the continent. It will also help to understand the challenges and aspects of policy coherence, especially political, and vertical coherence, as well as coherence in implementation between the institutions. The in-depth interview questions will also address the challenges associated with the efficiency and effectiveness of the three organs to promote sound policy coherence for good governance on the continent.

The interviewees were selected based on their familiarity with the decision-making process inside the AU and their direct engagement with Agenda 2063 activities and operations. Among the interviewees are executives at the AUC, APRM, AUDA-AUDA-NEPAD, UNDP, UN organs, Permanent Representative Committee, Regional Economic Communities representatives, African academia representatives, and European Union experts on Africa. Detailed and high-quality transcripts of these interviews were produced in a natural way for data presentation and analysis.

3.2.3 Participant observation

A participatory-observation role – "participant as an observer" – is adopted to have a better understanding of the topic. This kind of observation allows the researcher to take part and note some observations with the awareness of a group of people engaging in this study as well as observing the group for his research needs. Observation is commonly used in qualitative research, especially in humanities and public policy domains. It contributes to a great extent to document recent developments – i.e., the current institutional transformation at the Union level and human interactions that a scientific method may fail to quantify during a short period of time. As social sciences are inextricably linked to human behaviour and social attitudes, observation is widely used in this domain.

The reason for following this approach is justified by our professional affiliation with the African Union as a researcher at the APRM Continental Secretariat. But to ensure objectivity, some group members and personalities are not working in the same organisation. These observations are intended to enrich the analysis of the study, especially in the light of the institutional changes that have taken place at Union level over the last three years to reform the structures and mandates of the institutions involved.

The table below summarises the triangulation method applied for data collection and analysis (document review, interviews, and observation) to answer research questions. It also explains the consulted resources for data collection and analysis including interviews with some organs' representatives to enrich the research findings and recommendations.

Table 2 Research Questions, Methods, and sources of data collection

Question	Source	Method	Who
How have the AUC, APRM, and AUDA-NEPAD formulated specific policies to promote good governance on the continent? And with what delegated functions?	Interviews AU official documents Reports AU Assembly decisions and declarations, reports, memos, notes ..etc Official statements	thematic analysis (codes and generated themes) from the Interviews Content analysis of official documents participatory observations	AU officials Academic experts Think tanks AU Partners
How have the existing AUC institutional and coordination mechanisms contributed to promoting "policy coherence for good governance" on the continent?	Official statements Publications on AU organs Published theses and articles on the APRM and AU Field experience	Thematic analysis (codes and generated themes) from the Interviews Content analysis Participant observation	AUC, APRM, AUDA-NEPAD officials UN Experts involved in AU activities
What are the specific challenges that inhibit the efficiency of AUC substructures, i.e., AGA, AUDA-NEPAD, and APRM, as regards policy coherence for promoting good governance?	Officials: Voice of interviewees (experts from the three AU organs, OSAA, UNECA, and academic experts) - Academia	- Interpretative approach (quotes by experts and coding main challenges) - Participant observation - Discourse analysis	Academic publications, Officials from the AU, member states and AU partners

What are the specific interventions needed to enhance policy coherence among AU organs towards the attainment of Aspiration 3 (good governance)?	Officials: Voice of interviewees (experts from the three AU organs) - Academia - representatives of Principals – AU member states	Interpretative approach (quotes by experts and coding main challenges) Discourse analysis	Officials from AU and other stakeholders) + the researcher

3.3 Data presentation and analysis

Based on the information presented in section 3.2, Chapter four includes data presentation, which presented comprehensively the result of the semi-structured interviews. A thematic analysis was adopted to generate certain codes and themes from the analysed responses – interviews (primary data)- to answer the research questions, objectives, and inferences.

Chapter five analyses the drivers of policy coherence among AU organs through the theoretical framework, drivers and mechanisms offered above which focused on political, vertical, and horizontal coherence. Content analysis of AU decisions, reports, observations, and interviewees' quotations are consulted.

3.4 Timeline

Collection of data commenced in the fourth quarter of 2020. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, most semi-structured interviews took place from March to September 2021. The delays were linked to the COVID-19 situation across the continent and difficulty to conduct physical or even virtual interviews with some key experts, especially senior officials as well as postponing crucial fora that could have been beneficial for the participatory observations or interviewing options.

3.5 Trustworthiness of the research

The methods above, while carefully applied, helped ensure the trustworthiness of the conducted research. Trustworthiness articulates four aspects to ensure quality of qualitative research, including credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The four criteria addressed in this research are as follows

- Credibility: the research seeks to generate persistent and prolonged themes and codes drawn from the conducted interviews - the primary data source. Further, the selected interviewees have different experiences and interactions with the AU to ensure accuracy of information provided. Moreover, our own observations from participation in various technical meetings enriched to some extent some of the generated assumptions about the AU organs' approach towards policy coherence for good governance promotion on the continent.

- Transferability: in order to assess quality of judgements and generated codes and themes of analysis, the versions of primary data source (interviews) are maintained in original forms either through thick transcripts or records for some interviewees which were conducted virtually due to COVID-19 lockdowns and difficulty to meet all interviewees in person. This was also considered by providing quotations, when necessary, in the data presentation and analysis chapters.
- Confirmability: The collected data and findings of this research come mainly from the interviews as well as from the content analysis of various reports and resolutions and not from personal arguments on the tasks delegated to AU bodies or their policies to promote good governance.

- Dependability: this refers to the reliability measure, which is achieved by triangulation, and providing ordered trail, that attests to the accuracy of translations from various data sources, allowing for reconstruction of events/issues that led to the conclusions. For instance, in this research, I tried to unpack the impact of institutional reforms in 2016 on the AU level to reorient the mandates of the APRM and other organs to see how far these organs are progressing towards coherent policy for good governance. Also, conceptualisation on policy coherence for sustainable development provides an excellent opportunity to reconstruct the term in such a way that it can be utilised at the regional level as much as at the national one.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Concerning positionality and ethical considerations, I refrained from sharing sensitive information that has been collected through our work at the APRM without the approval of senior management. Further, I ensured the consent of interviewees to conduct the interviews in an ethical manner and refrained from interviewing officials whose participation would have caused consequences for their employment. Interviewees were given full freedom and respect regarding the time, date, and interview questions to be answered.

It is important to emphasise that the observations were compiled thanks to our participation in some AU technical meetings which were neutral and did not go against the confidentiality of work information. Also, most targeted interviewees are affiliated with AUC, academia, and technical experts alongside experts from the APRM and AUDA- AUDA-NEPAD. I received approval letters from the three organs (AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and APRM) to conduct interviews with designated staff. The letters explicitly mentioned that no conflicts of interest related to potential financial gain or familial relations would influence the research results.

3.7 Limitations, feasibility, and positionality

Two significant challenges can be identified in this research. Academically, this is probably one of a few studies which focuses on the AU organs and Agenda 2063 from an institutional governance perspective. Owing to the limited literature on AU integration processes compared to other western regional experiences, the research mostly drew from existing academic literature, from a western viewpoint, on institutions and their role in integration processes. There are recent studies that could be surveyed from an African perspective. From an empirical perspective, political sensitivity, busy schedules (with respect to conducting interviews), and financial costs might be constraints. However, I made efforts to collect some of the primary data online via virtual interviews.

The research feasibility remains essential to the specificity of the African context and the role of regional institutions in developing policy coherence for promoting good governance. The availability of different theories that were consulted for this research problem, though not necessarily examined in the AU context, strengthened the research feasibility. Free access to certain official documents and academic literature related to the policies and positions of each organ (AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, and APRM) assisted us in formulating arguments on policy coherence among the three organs. Lastly, the qualitative methods mentioned above facilitated understanding and filled the knowledge gap in the institutional transformation of the three organs for implementing Agenda 2063.

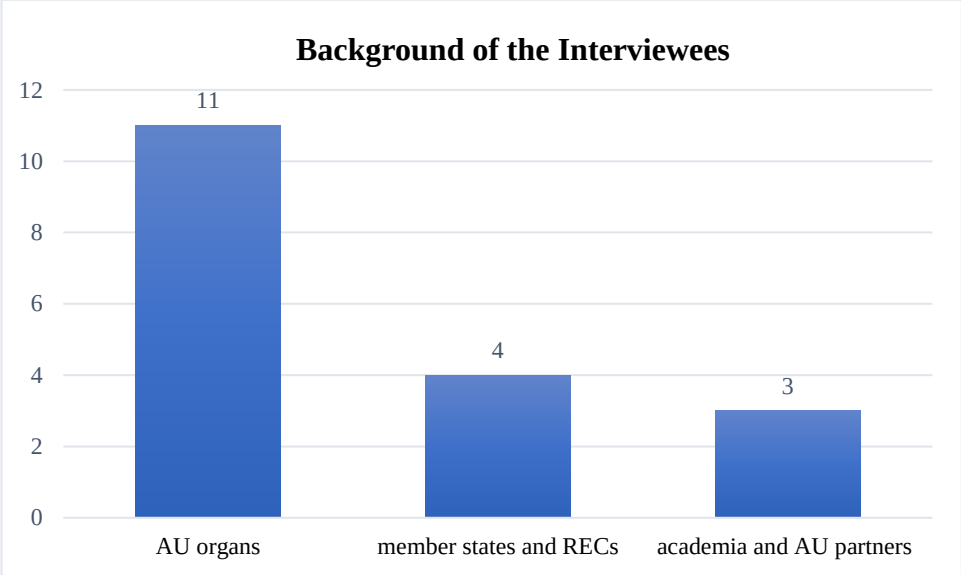
Chapter 4: Presentation of research results

4. Introduction

This chapter presents the main findings from the primary data source, the semi-structured interviews with African experts, in order to answer the study questions relevant to the AU's approach to promoting good governance in Africa. Eighteen interviews were conducted with African experts from different professional groups in 2021. In this research, care was taken to ensure a balance between AU staff, academics, and Member State representatives to ensure the validity and reliability of the data. Due to the restrictive measures emanating from COVID -19, some interviews were conducted online or telephonically while others took place in the field, and sometimes automatic written transcription was used. While there is an analytical framework guiding the study, chapter four presents in an inductive manner the themes that emerged from the interviews, where the codes and themes were generated from the transcripts and quotes of the interviews with key AU institutional actors on good governance. In addition, the questions related to the role of these institutions as 'facilitators' of the interests of the principals - African countries - and whether or not they have contributed meaningfully to the achievement of continental agendas, i.e., Agenda 2063 and related aspirations, such as good governance through coherent policies. Some questions were also used to ascertain the level of coherence among the institutions as well as the political commitment of the principals to enable the institutions to fulfil their mandates. The data collection tool is attached.

Given the extensive contributions of the eighteen interviewees, chapter four reproduces in full the voice of the experts involved in this research, with a few comments on some parts of the data analysis. The participant observation and content analysis of AU decisions and some reports are explained in more detail in chapter five to complement the findings of the interviews and the themes generated. This also serves to ensure the trustworthiness of the research, especially in the areas of credibility and confirmability.

Figure 5 Background of the interviewees



Source: Author

4.1 The themes of analysis

Interviews were conducted on specific topics relevant to the research - the AU approach to policy coherence in promoting good governance. The questions were underpinned and guided by the assumptions of the principal-agent theory to explore the extent to which the AU's institutional and coordinating mechanisms are appropriate for the development of coherent policies to promote good governance. The following table lists the main codes and themes that emerged from the data analysis of the research data tool. The themes are grouped into three main categories:

1. Policy initiation, implementation, evaluation of Agenda 2063- Aspiration 3

2. Policy coherence and coordination between the organs (vertical, horizontal, and political)

3. Political Commitment of AU Member states for Agenda 2063 and restrictive mechanisms on the organs

Table 3 Themes of Data Analysis

Categories	Generated themes	Codes
Policy initiation, implementation, and evaluation of Agenda 2063 – Aspiration 3	Delegated functions are clearly articulated in AU decisions, but the mandates are interpretated differently by the institutions	• The importance of AU decisions in defining the mandates and roles of organs • The centrality of Agenda 2063 in the work plan and thematic orientation of the organs • The importance e of the institutional reforms in 2016 in fostering cooperation among the organs • The AU Commission plays a central role in the policy initiation, formulation, domestication, resource mobilisation, and overall assessment of Agenda 2063 • AUDA-NEPAD has a specific commitment to the continental framework of Agenda 2063, technical support for specific sectors • AUDA-NEPAD is responsible for overall evaluation of Agenda 2063 with the Commission • Hierarchical relationship between AUC and AUDA-NEPAD is different from the relationship between APRM-AUC and AUDA • Discrepancy between the mandates and the functions performed by the AU bodies • The Discrepancy arises because the delegation is not objective • Lack of translation of the broad mandate into concrete work processes and focus areas • The mandate setting was politicised and therefore some mandates were left with vague functions • Difficulties in evaluating the implementation of the mandates
	Revitalisation of the APRM is necessary but the ability to fulfil its mandate remains unsorted	• The added value and relevance of the APRM as an institutional and implementing mechanism to promote good governance is crucial • The revival of the APRM represents a turning point for the reform of the institution • APRM remains the AU's main body for formulating good governance policies under AU oversight • APRM, under the expanded mandate, is responsible for reporting on governance and developing indicators developing indicators on Agenda 2063. • The vagueness of the expanded mandate is highlighted

		• Different views on the nature of the mechanism among other organs or autonomous bodies are noted • Confusing terminology of the APRM, either it is an organ, an autonomous body, or an institution • The revision of the APRM mandate was useful to increase the capacity of national structures • The APRM's ability to lobby at national level is linked to the political will of member states • The quality, credibility, and neutrality of APRM reports are questioned and uncertain
	Empowerment and autonomy of the organs have setbacks	• AUC is preferentially empowered compared to other organs especially after the institutional reforms in 2016 • Presence of Agenda 2063 champion from principals leverages political position of AUC • The empowerment of the Commission has setbacks with the limited financial and human resources, Interference of principals into daily business of the commission • Hesitance of member states to delegate organs sufficiently to play their role as regional agents • Commission's ability to domesticate Agenda 2063 is linked to the political will of member states • Preference of member states to handle hard issues i.e., political and security issues while leaving soft spots for the organs • AUDA-NEPAD is empowered for resource mobilization, beyond implementing agenda 2063 projects • Overall empowerment of organs is weak • Lack a common platform for self-assessment or a robust revision of the organ's activities • Influence of member states to derail the organs' autonomy exists
Policy coherence and coordination between the organs	Weak coordination and vertical coherence between mechanisms dedicated to good governance promotion	• Lack of interlinkages between type of activities conducted on good governance promotion on the continent • Coordination mechanisms on good governance, human rights and rule of law are quite a loss • Recommendations of African court of human rights are not taken seriously either by other organs or principals • The role of APRM, APSA, and AGA is confusing • Vertical coherence is weak because of lack of adequate communications between the organs is noted

		• Systematic communication between AUDA-NEPAD and AUC exists • Intra-division communications inside the Commission are weak and not systematic • Reporting on key achievements or milestones are though maintained between APRM, AUDA-NEPAD and AUC • Sluggish role of the coordination mechanisms dedicated to the promotion of good governance in the continent (APSA/AGA) • Mechanisms are seen ‘’failed’’ because they were not initially empowered • Creating a new structure or mechanism is not the ideal solution. • Necessity to rationalize structures to avoid duplications • Codes and standards of AU are not assessed by these mechanisms as was. • African citizens lack awareness on their rights and the union’s role to protect them • APRM lacks communication strategy to explain its role to stakeholders • Designating APRM to act as “early warning mechanism’’ is positive to enhance vertical coherence on issues related to governance-peace-development nexus
	Institutional deficits stand behind horizontal incoherence between AU organs and mechanisms	• Operationalisation of AGA was negatively affected by the dominance of political affairs department • A distinction between AGA secretariat and AUC • APRM-AGA planning and collaboration has improved • Autonomous bodies or sub-organs are more responsive to the commission, but not vice versa • Coherence is generally weak because of the absence of a platform to review and assess the outcomes of planned programmes or strategies of each organ. • The absence of framework or parameters to measure coherence or boundaries for coherence/incoherence. • The lack of synergies and soil- based organs approach followed by AU organs at different levels • Competition over financial resources. • Competition over the political patronage – who’s the best agent’ among other organs

		• Lack on institutional continuity and regularity of participation in meetings alongside relevance of some positions • Lack of inclusivity of some organs in the high-level meetings i.e., ministerial, and ambassadorial committees on agenda 2063 • Absence of reporting mechanism to member states on the organs' outcomes • AGA Secretariat failed to strengthen the tripartite coordination between the three organs: APRM, AUDA-NEPAD and AUC
	Fragile coordination between the AU selected organs (APRM, AUC/AGA & AUDA-NEPAD) persists	• Overlapping of the implemented activities • Lack of joint planning, budgeting, and programming The lack of institutional memory • Existence of patronage networks • Competition between organs over funding resources • Bargaining and negotiations are also quite problematic • Energy and efforts dedicated to enhancing coordination compared to the outcome had disparity
	Lack of awareness and applicability of the policy coherence scale's levels inside/among organs	• Overall lack of understanding or knowledge of policy coherence measurability or aspects • Political vision, common priorities exist, but rest of scale levels are controversial • Intra-institutional incoherence between the commission division • Lack of alignment of plans among the three organs • Lack of information exchange among the organs • Search for policy consensus is weak • Political sentiments influence executives to work independently
Political commitment of principals and restrictive measures on the organs	Reasonable official commitment of principals for Agenda 2063, but lacks political national ownership	▪ Eagerness to domesticate and recognise Agenda 2063 as an important framework for integration in the continent. • Institutional alignment for domesticating the agenda at national level • Official approvals and adoption of decisions pertinent to Agenda 2063 are given to AU organs • Engagement of member states (principals) in the meetings of ambassadorial and executive committees of Agenda 2063. • Synergise efforts and ensure proper implementation and reporting on the agenda

		• National ownership is seen as poor to implement the agenda at national level • Countries are different in perceiving Agenda 2063 aspirations and relevance • Lack of awareness on Agenda 2063 compared to agenda 2030 at national levels. • Fragility and conflict influence on countries' readiness to implement regional vision i.e., Agenda 2063 • Principals don not fulfil their commitments to finance Agenda 2063 • Competition between principals to owe regional programs without actual actions • Lack of political commitment and capacities • Reporting fatigue on Agenda 2063 • Lack of overall progress is thus visible among most Agenda aspirations, and particularly aspiration three - good governance
	Lack of agreement on the Accountability and restrictive measures applied by the principals	• Audit and performance assessment are applied on all organs • Political positions are though lack accountability assessment • The permanent representatives Committee (PRC) applies non-inclusive practices which derails accountability of the organs • PRC tends to create micromanagement arm inside AUC • Creation of sub-committees inside the Commission to dominate decision making by the principals • Interference of principals in HR and recruitment of AU staff • Rules of procedures manage the functionality of the organs on paper • member states do not enjoy veto power to block decisions • Interventions of principals are seen in the budget allocations for some projects • Create duplicated structures or similar organs to conduct and implement programmes i.e., APSA and AGA or APRM • Lengthy of procedures and delay of ratification and accession to AU standards, codes, and values • Lack of support for any supranational privileges and member states' intervention in the organ's modus operandi

		• Incoherent approach towards access to information

Source: Author[13]

4.1.1 Delegated functions are clearly articulated in AU decisions, but mandates are interpretated varyingly between the organs

The majority of interviewees emphasised the important role of the three organisations: AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and APRM in the implementation of some of the Agenda 2063 goals, as well as in the overall monitoring and evaluation of the Agenda, including Aspiration three - good governance. They referred to the first ten-year plan for the implementation of the Agenda (FTYIP) (2014-2023) and the report on the implementation of the January 2017 decision on the institutional reform of the African Union as references to these mandates and the role of each organ.

Interviewee 1, for example, argued, that "*delegated functions to these organs as per AU documents i.e., FTYIP and even AU decisions initially aim to create synergies between the organs' mandates and engaging all the organs in the decision-making process*." The same interviewee resumed "*AUC is the secretariat of AU to coordinate the oversight functions for the implementation of Agenda 2063. The role of AUDA-NEPAD of implementation support and monitoring and evaluation is also mentioned. APRM is designated a similar mandate to AUDA-NEPAD but focuses more on good governance."*

AUDA-NEPAD, as the interviewee explained "*is involved in the implementation of continental frameworks of the agenda in specific sectors like infrastructure, food and security, social programs, and basic education support. So, some organs involved in implementation, while APRM is concerned about the implementation of the governance component of Agenda 2063*."

[13] The suggested codes and themes are generated based on the inputs from interviewees

Interviewee 13 further explained that Agenda 2063 has generated specified mandates and thematic focus for each of the organs to ensure providing continental support to AU member states. Collaboration with the sub-regional organs, such as Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to assist in implementing the agenda efficiently was also highlighted in the FTYIP. The same interviewee also referred to key institutional reform areas highlighted in the Jan 2017 Institutional Reform Decision (Assembly/AU/Dec/635(XXVIII).

The reforms initiated by the latter decision paved the way for the current mandates of some AU organs including APRM and AUDA-NEPAD. The Recommendations were highlighted as follows: 1) focusing on *continental priorities shall be guided by good governance practices 2) Realign AU institutions by reviewing mandates and strengthen functionality of organs i.e., AUDA-NEPAD, APRM; 3) ensuring managing AU effectively and efficiently 4) sustainable finance for the AU programmes; and 5) improving AU connection with African citizens to ensure human interconnectivity and engagement on non-state actors.*

Eleven AU officials spoke on the role of AUC, APRM, AUDA-NEPAD in agenda setting, initiation and policy formulation at the Union level and provided insights on the issue. The AU Commission is seen by most interviewees as the key player in the implementation of Agenda 2063. The Commission led the initiation and drafting phase of this continental vision among other continental projects. The political initiation and consultation on Agenda 2063 were mainly led by the AUC. The Commission, as interviewee 8 noted, also plays an important role in *"providing capacity building to member states on the domestication[14] of Agenda 2063 with all goals, including aspiration three on good governance."* Further, the Commission, as interviewee 7 argued, *"plays a strategic role in the reporting on the agenda."*. The same interviewee commented that, *"given that role, the Commission, in partnership with other organs and partners, developed an M&E indicators framework to be circulated among member states to report on Agenda 2063 on an annual basis."*

[14] Domestication refers to engaging national stakeholders and supporting them to incorporate continental or global agenda and indicators into national goals and plans).

As respondents stated, the Commission has helped to develop a resource mobilisation strategy for Agenda 2063 to support Member States in implementing the Agenda and mobilising continental resources to support the Agenda, indicating wise management and tapping of resources. However, interviewees largely agreed that the implementation of the agenda depends more on the political will of Member States than on AU bodies. They also argued that Agenda 2063 is focused and streamlined within the national vision of AU countries. The vision was set during the preparatory stages with inputs from other AU bodies.

AUDA -NEPAD, according to some respondents, was incorporated as part of the Commission even though it operates from a different location (South Africa). Accordingly, the collaboration between the latter agency and the AUC is only rhetorically strong. Interviewee 13 emphasised that "*AUDA-NEPAD provides implementation support and monitoring and evaluation component to support the overall implementation of the agenda including flagship projects such as infrastructure or agriculture and food security, social programmes, education, and basic schools' support."*

The same interviewee further noted that AUDA-NEPAD has three main roles: 1) to provide technical support to AU member states to enhance capacity to implement global continental, regional and national development plans; 2) to act as an interface for continental discussions and accelerate regional integration; 3) to ensure that countries are on track to achieve Agenda 2063 through the spill over effect of knowledge and technology; and 4) the role of coordination and execution of plans; collective review, monitoring and evaluation.

Although delegated functions are listed in AU documents and decisions, interviewees agreed to some extent that there is a discrepancy between the mandate and the functions in some organs, including the APRM. Interviewee 2 claimed that "*there's a temptation by AU organs to forget the mandates although it is very clear. The problem of different interpretations of mandates assigned by member states is quite challenging*." The same interviewee observed that *"Individuals or AU officials also misinterpret the understanding of mandate. Further, member states remain hesitant to delegate these organs sufficiently as regards the implementation of Agenda 2063 programmes*."

Interviewee 3 accentuated that *"discrepancy occurs because the process of delegation itself is not precisely objective…Delegation highly depends on voting, political emphasis for each country and relative support to each organ. Translating mandates to concrete functions thus has been weakened."* The same interviewee added that "*there are no proper checks and balances from the Principal-Member states on how mandates are operationalised*."

The same interviewee also tended to argue that *"the process of drafting the mandates has been politicised which already left functions quietly not very clear and heavily overlapping. The three organs, accordingly, ended up with functions that are not necessarily or effectively positioned to deliver the intended purpose."* The interviewee concluded: *"These are the functions that are difficult to assess and would not give value for money."* In the same vein, interviewee one argued that *"the functions among these three organs (APRM, AUDA-NEPAD, AUC) have not been properly scrutinised."*

Interviewee 15 disagreed with the previous interviewees and argued that both the APRM and AUDA-NEPAD have a clear role to play in implementing aspects of Agenda 2063. The interviewee assumed that governance is a cross-cutting issue and therefore "*the role of APRM becomes imperative in all aspects of the agenda either implementing governance programs or tracking governance performance on the continent."* The interviewee also claimed that *"APRM has a bigger role to play for M&E of Agenda 2063 and thus none of the organs shall jump into APRM role, because it will lead to further confusion and take them out of radar to focus on."*

4.1.2 Revitalisation of APRM is needed but the capacity to deliver on its mandate remains unsorted

The APRM, as most interviewees said, received a specific mandate as part of its revitalisation in 2017 related to the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the governance component of Agenda 2063, Aspiration 3. Interviewee 6 commented directly on the APRM's specific mandate by referring to the following AU decisions:

1. The decision of Institutional Reform of the AU of January 2017. One of the recommendations emphasised that *"the APRM mandate needs to be extended to include tracking of the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the continent's key governance areas, specifically Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"*. Therefore, [AU Assembly/AU/Draft/Dec.10 (XXVIII) decision on the Revitalisation[15] of the APRM] was issued on 30 January 2017 to empower the continental Secretariat to play a role in *"tracking governance indicators pertinent to Agenda 2063, not the entire agenda."*

2. In January 2018, the AU Assembly welcomed "*steps taken to position the APRM as an early warning tool for conflict prevention on the continent, in harmony and synergy between the APRM, the African Peace and Security Architecture, and the African Governance Architecture*" [Assembly/AU/Dec.686(XXX) on the Report of the APRM January 2018].

3. At the January 2019 AU Assembly, two decisions were made regarding APRM development of National Governance Reports and the Africa Governance Report to address governance challenges in Africa.

4. The Assembly urged *"Member States to develop national governance reports as a self-assessment tool, for promoting good governance, in line with the recommendations of the Report"* and further requested that the APRM Secretariat *"provide technical support to MSs in developing Country Self-Assessment Reports (CSAR) on Governance."*

Respondents had mixed views on the mandate, performance, and contribution of the APRM to promoting good governance in the continent. Some interviewees, particularly representatives of member states and the Commission, believed in the importance and added value of APRM as an institutional and implementational mechanism for promoting good governance on the continent. Others criticised the functioning within the organs as discussed below.

[15] Revitalisation of APRM took place after several financial and administrative challenges faced the organ from 2014-2016.

The whole notion of APRM input is to address *"African problems from an African perspective and provide homegrown solutions"*, as clarified by interviewee 11. Under the expanded mandate, *"APRM is expected to assist the AUC and other organs in reporting on aspiration three of Agenda 2063 and develop necessary governance indicators, in collaboration with the AGA and Political Affairs Department (PAD).", the interviewee emphasised.*

Interviewee one perceived the APRM Expanded mandate *"as quite broad and vague that may confuse other organs."* The interviewee argued that *"the mandate of APRM needs to be more focused on addressing issues of good governance pertinent to Agenda 2063."* The interviewee postulated, from further internal interventions and discussions, that APRM representatives want to dominate different topics and aspects under the new mandate while the mechanism's capacities remain low.

The same interviewee also remarked that *"It remains quite risky for APRM to make a blanket open for this expanded mandate before accomplishing what the organ shall focus on such as Monitoring and evaluation of good governance. Further, the broader the APRM goes with this expanded mandate, the further financial and human capacities shall necessitate which APRM lacks at this stage."*

Interviewee 15 noted that *"the APRM is perceived differently by each organ."* The interviewee then noted that AGA Secretariat, was involved as an observer during the revision of the APRM Mandate. The interviewee explained that *"The AUC looks at APRM as an institution while AUDA-NEPAD is perceived as an Agency; These terminologies matter."* The interviewee continued: *"AGA was the first to warn against the expanded mandate's interpretation and whether APRM is an organ or still an institution. The APRM portrays itself as an organ that entails a bigger sense of empowerment and a broader voice of interpretation of its mandate while AUDA-NEPAD looks at APRM as an institution attached to AU family members limited to a specific area of focus."*

On the performance and outputs of APRM, interviewees alluded to the national presence of APRM at national levels as one of the APRM key strengths compared to other

organs. As interviewee 14 pointed out *"APRM enjoys the presence of national structures including National Governance Council and Secretariat at national levels*[16]*, which can be used to assist AGA and the Commission in domesticating and publicising various good governance codes and charters including monitoring elections at national levels to observe elections in African countries."*

Interviewee 15 remarked that "*the revitalisation of APRM and expanding its mandate was necessary to enhance the capacities of the national bodies of APRM at national" level.* The interview argued that *"The APRM national secretariats and governance councils (NGCs) are seen to enhance synergies and even raise visibility, credibility, and relevance of the African Union at national levels. Thus, universal accession by all countries to APRM remains imperative."*

Interviewee 18 also stated that *"the synergies between continental Secretariat and APRM national structures to deliver on its mandate remains problematic with the lack of financial and human resources to capacitate their national structures. These structures shall contribute to deliver on the mandate and build the bridge between continental structures and member states and even raise APRM visibility."*

On the other hand, interviewees 4, 7 and 9 asked questions about the independence, credibility, and accountability of APRM reporting methods to solve governance issues. Interviewee 7 emphasised that *"APRM is seen as a reflection of the voice of African citizens and should always be seen as independent and its recommendations taken seriously by member states – or what is called the National Plan of Action (NPoA)."* The same interviewee voiced *"I am worried about the credibility of APRM Reports. Unfortunately, all organs dedicated to good governance and human rights issues are struggling to highlight criticism to member states against political governance and human rights. Thus, the voice of these institutions, even when they exist, is weakened, and 'thus African problems will sustain."*

[16] APRM National Governance Council: this national structure is composed of representatives of all key stakeholders in society, as per APRM statute. The Council is responsible for (a) providing strategic policy guidance for the implementation of the APRM; (b) facilitate the establishment of the National Secretariat and oversee its operation; (c) ensure that the review process is technically competent, credible and free from political manipulation; (d) lead sensitisation programmes country-wide and ensure stakeholders participation in the process and own it; and, (e) ensure the National Programme of Action addresses all concerns outlined in country self-assessment and review reports (APRM Statute, Article 16). (Explained in chapter five in a further depth)

Interviewee 4 also argued that APRM *works as "if it takes instructions from member states rather than working as a 'real agent' which provides insightful analysis, information, and factual synthesis on governance issues."* The same interviewee criticised the Member states because *"they are keen to show that they have institutions, but they don't allow them to work independently or to give them autonomy. Thus, a 'paradigm shift' is necessary as APRM should fight more for its independence and inclusivity on governance issues assessment."*

Another issue raised by some interviewees that undermines the APRM's ability to fulfil its mandate concerns related to the quality, credibility, and neutrality of APRM reports. Interviewee 9 commented that *"accountability of African governments must be addressed in the APRM reports. For a long time, APRM ignored non-state actors from the governance-assessment reviews either because of financial resources or the urgency to conduct the review itself."*

Nevertheless, Despite the above, most interviewees agreed that the AU needs to strengthen the APRM and make it a leading institution that addresses issues on good governance and democracy on the continent.

4.1.3. Empowerment and autonomy of the organs have setbacks

Some interviewees tended to agree that the 2016 institutional reforms had strengthened some of the organs, including the AU Commission. The institutional reforms led to a major overhaul of the structures of all the organs to work efficiently. As expressed by interviewee 8; *"the Commission has been designated to act as the executive Secretariat to assist member states at the continental level in domestication, monitoring, and evaluation of Agenda 2063 which already leverages its position among other AU organs."*

Concerning the follow-up on Agenda 2063, interviewee 1 clarified that *"the Commission liaises directly with member states through Ambassadorial and Ministerial committees on Agenda 2063."* Both committees play an oversight role and guidance on the agenda's implementation and monitoring. The Commission also established strong communication with the Agenda 2063 Champion - Ivory Coast, which is imperative to ensure the implementation of the agenda and to get the necessary technical and po-

litical support. Interviewee 13 emphasised that *"Agenda 2063 Champion also encourages other member states and acts as an interlocutor for providing necessary autonomy and political support to the Commission on specific interventions or activities as well as providing member states with capacity building training on the agenda monitoring and evaluation."*

Having said that, interviewees stated few setbacks against the autonomy and empowerment of the Commission. These setbacks include: *"1) lack of financial resources and human capacities; 2) influence of member states in the Commission's management derail are autonomy and accountability, as agreed by many interviewees; 3) Some member states lack institutional memory on certain decisions and thus issue redundant or conflicting decisions, which leads to further incoherence between the organs' mandates."* As interviewee 7 argued; *"the eagerness of member states to protect their sovereignty kills or frustrates many good proposals by the Commission before it starts and leads us to failure."*

Interviewee 16 commented on that; *"The unwillingness of ceding a little bit of sovereignty is an impediment for the African union to flourish. They seek self-sufficiency to some extent. Big contributors and members do not allow ceding sovereignty even if they participate actively in the union. The leadership must come from these countries first."*

Interviewees also doubted the Commission's ability to help implement and follow up on Agenda 2063, including good governance, as this depends on the country's leadership and the political will to commit/invite the Commission to support such a process. Although there are "soft spots" where countries allow the Commission to support them unconditionally, some issues related to peace, security, and good governance remain a challenging topic to discuss, mainly because of political sensitivities. As one interviewee commented, *"member states seem to vest their national interests and benefits rather than believing very much in the continental vision and programmes."*

Connecting to this, some interviewees doubted the real empowerment of the Commission, interviewees 7 and 8 agreed that *"empowerment of the Commission or other organs is not solid with the several interferences by member states into the daily business of the Commission or even other organs."*

Moving to AUDA-NEPAD, interviewees believe that *"AUDA-NEPAD is empowered by the mandate and held responsible for not only supporting the execution of the 2063 agenda but also resource mobilisation and partnering with donors and development partners to co-finance projects."* However, they also agreed that autonomy is a bit tricky, but it is a critical term to emphasise.

Interviewees referred to some factors behind empowering AUDA-NEPAD. First, they agreed on the strong support from AUC and AU leadership to AUDA-NEPAD so the organ can function autonomously. Second, the leadership of AUDA-NEPAD sought to establish a solid interpersonal relationship with other organs and member states to be supported. Third, the clarity on activities and deliverables of AUDA-NEPAD has been emphasised.

As interviewee 3 argued, *"AUDA-NEPAD is empowered by its engagement with all AU sister organs. The mandate is clear, there is a common framework working through obvious results to be achieved, but the question is to what extent AUDA-NEPAD is empowered to deliver."*

Regarding responsibility, interviewees tended to agree that all organs have a sense of responsibility and reliability in carrying out their duties. Nevertheless, they also emphasised that measuring accountability is quite critical, especially for the day to day of these organs. Interviewee 13 argued that *"The organs lack a common platform for self-assessment or a robust revision for their activities. I mean by platform, not just a platform for sharing information and meeting occasionally, but rather to assess performance and overall impact assessment and if they deliver principals' expectations or not. These Mutual accountability platforms between AU organs are necessary."*

4.1.4 Weak coordination and vertical coherence between mechanisms dedicated to good governance promotion

Most interviewees argued, in varying ways, that coordination, in general, is not satisfactory, and more needs to be done to enhance both vertical and horizontal coherence.

With regards to vertical coherence, which refers to the coordination of policy objectives and guidelines on good governance issues either at a national or regional level, interviewees pointed to a myriad of reasons such as lack of consultations between the

AUC and good governance mechanisms on policy objectives, confusion on the nature of activities to be undertaken by the mechanisms, AGA-APRM relations and the inert role of the coordinating mechanisms, i.e., the Africa Governance Architecture (AGA) and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) to address governance, development and peace issues.

Interviewee 1 observed that *"vertical coherence is not scrutinised, and it is relatively weak within some AU organs and mechanisms dedicated to addressing certain issues like good governance"*. For instance, the African Court of Human and People's Rights, the AU Commission for Human and People's Rights, the AUC Department of Political Affairs ((DPA), Africa Governance Architecture (AGA), and the APRM are all organs or mechanisms dedicated to the same policy objectives. Nevertheless, the interviewee added; *"it is unclear how their activities relate to the overall objectives of Agenda 2063. The tripartite is not strong, even if they coordinate on some events, to some extent."*

As the AUC is engaged in reviewing the programmes of these organs to see how they plan to implement the mandates, the interviewee concluded *"a person can see that these coordination mechanisms are quite a loss…Moreover, the organs do not take seriously the recommendations of each other such as the recommendations of the African court of human rights or the Commission."*

Interviewee 2 referred to the confusion between APRM as an institutional mechanism for good governance promotion and other coordination platforms i.e., AGA and APSA[17] as one of the reasons for vertical incoherence. The interviewee argued that *"the idea to provide a regional platform on governance issues due to weak structures or performance of APRM at a certain point in time was not a right decision. Instead of creating a parallel structure, AGA in that case, APRM was supposed to be further empowered."*

Another interviewee alluded to the same problem and how these mechanisms confuse perception and, accordingly, the way they work. Interviewee 14 pointed out that *"AGA perceives APRM as an institution that contributes to implementing AGA programmes.*

[17] APSA was founded in 2003, while AGA was established in 2010. The first aimed to enhance Africa's peaceful dialogue and conflict prevention while the latter aims to promote good governance, democracy, and reinforcing AU protocols on linking African citizens with their regional organs. Nevertheless, conflicts in Africa by today increased from 11 to 18 – According to a recent report published by NEPAD. On the other hand, the progress on governance reforms in the continent is sluggish.

On another hand, AGA provides an alternative platform for policy conversation, strategic discussions, and lessons learned on good governance issues while harmonising efforts collaboratively." Accordingly, "*AGA should have trained the clusters to approach more outcomes so its clarity on who's managing what instead of anybody can do anything."*

Another reason for vertical incoherence in policy objectives and programs is the fact that the AGA, the APRM, and the APSA are often placed on the same level, although the AGA/APSA are coordination frameworks, while the APRM acts as an organ of the Union. Some interviewees assume the APRM will take on more responsibilities at national level that go beyond the tasks of the two frameworks. As interviewee 15 noted *"None of AGA or APSA has national structures such as APRM. APRM is thus expected to help domesticate the AU Charter on democracy and good governance, following up and monitoring civil service reforms and anti-corruption practices and supporting national capacities of PARM offices. Therefore, further alignment and coherence of activities is needed between the AU Commission and APRM."*

Another reason for the vertical incoherence of the policy is the lack of adequate communication between the organs. In principle, interviewees from the three organs (APRM, AUC, AUDA-NEPAD) have noted improved communication between AU organs and mechanisms over the last three years, particularly through the Commission's initiative to establish the Technical Working Group on Agenda 2063. Interviewee 12 confirmed that *"communication on a monthly basis to provide reports and progress briefs on strategic policy planning is taking place regularly."*

However, most interviewees noted that communication between AUC and AUDA-NEPAD seems to be more systematic and influential than communication from APRM-AUC. As AUDA-NEPAD and the Strategic Planning Directorate at the AUC are responsible for monitoring the overall progress of Agenda 2063, the focal points of both organs communicate regularly on a weekly or monthly basis, depending on the urgency.

Interviewee 2 argued that *"intra-division communications inside the Commission itself may not be that systematic or frequent."* while interviewee 4 claimed that *"competition*

and personalities are imperative factors to derail sharing of information between the Commission's divisions". Therefore, AUC departments were found to communicate more efficiently with AUDA-NEPAD and APRM than contacts within the departments.

Representatives from AUDA-NEPAD and APRM stated that they are better at responding to communication with the Commission, but not vice versa. For example, AUDA-NEPAD has frequently informed the AUC about progress on the implementation of Agenda 2063, i.e., MEGA projects in the priority areas of infrastructure, energy, value chain, agricultural policy and legal framework, women, and youth, and cross-border contracts. The APRM also responds very well to the meetings initiated by the Commission on strategic planning, budgeting, and governance-related issues, as noted by one of the interviewees.

Interviewee 10, however criticised the APRM's lack of a communication strategy to be seen. The interviewee argued *"APRM has been doing extra activities but am not very sure if many stakeholders are aware of what APRM is doing."*

The last issue responsible for vertical (in)coherence is the slow role of coordination platforms and structures i.e., AGA and APSA. Interviewees agreed that AGA and APSA are well-designed and address the continent problems with good intentions. However, one of the biggest challenges is the way both are operationalised in the wrong way. As interviewee 12 stated, *"Both structures are not independent enough to practice active role at continental and national levels…both architectures are politically manipulated. Although National peace Councils are there but not indecencies. Also, Peace and observatory missions shall be enriched at national levels."*

Interviewee 10 specifically argued that "*it is unclear if both architectures deliver on their mandates adequately and if the mandate is insufficient to address the continent complex peace-governance challenge or not. Performance assessment should be done to evaluate their contribution. The actions and techniques they took to bring countries together to maintain dialogue on peace and good governance, transformative leadership and stakeholders' engagement in policy making is valuable. Therefore, it is unfair to conclude that they failed to deliver given Africa's unstable context."*

Interviewee 8 explained that *"both are failing mechanisms because they lack evaluation and reporting on their activities beside the issue of financing them to operate."* The interviewee commented *"the main issue is that if you are not financing your mechanisms, they will collapse."*

Interview 9 explicitly argued that *"Reporting on governance, although recommended by AGA and actively led by APRM, has been also weak and this infers to the 'national ownership' issue with African countries."* The same interviewee also referred to the lack of research on the nexus between governance and peace, despite the fact that AGA and APSA were dedicated to work on these issues under the guidance of the same organ– the commissions.

Interviewees 2 and 12 agreed that this new mandate of APRM shall not be perceived as contradictory to the Commission's work on peace and security issues. Interviewee 12 emphasised that *"APRM shall continue looking at insights and conditions behind the scenes on synergies between peace, development, governance and develop a futuristic approach on a systematic way of governance trends in the continent, not occasionally.*" Interviewees, therefore, concluded that the APRM engagement as an early warning mechanism for conflict is a positive step to reasonably consider governance as enabler for stabilisation and peace promotion in Africa.

4.1.5 Institutional deficits stand behind horizontal incoherence between AU organs and mechanisms

With regard to horizontal coherence – i.e., coordination between policies, interviewees pointed to the many deficiencies within institutions that contributed to incoherent policies for good governance on the continent. They also tended to argue that AGA-APRM horizontal coherence in activities was much better than the AGA-AUC coordination on specific issues. The AGA platform used to have an excellent relationship with the Policy Coherence Advisor, but there was a difference between the Commission and AGA.

According to interviewee 15, the AU Commission's DPA strongly dominated the functions and identification of the policy areas and activities of the AGA secretariat and platform. The interviewee tended to claim that *"AGA - as a coordination mechanism for many players - was supposed to practice further autonomy and independence but AGA Secretariat could not function without a clear mandate and regional vision*."

Some interviewees referred to the failure of the AU Commission to establish proper communication channels with other mechanisms such as APRM to enhance horizontal coherence. The interviewees referenced a recent internal report - conducted by an independent consultancy - to assess the coordination between the Commission and other AU organs. The report evidently highlighted the need for adequate leadership by the Commission to examine the current level/state of affairs between the organs and intra-institutional bodies or structures due to weak delivery on their mandates.

In addition to the reasons mentioned above, interviewees gave a variety of reasons for the lack of coherence in the policies of AU organs in general:

- First, **the absence of a platform to review and assess the outcomes of planned programmes** or strategies of each organ. The Union, as interviewee 16 explained, *"does not initiate ideas to assess what has been achieved and what's lagging behind towards Agenda 2063 and good governance issues"*. Although Agenda 2063 offers the vision for coherence among organs, decision on division of labours and planning was not pursued since the adoption of the agenda.

  The only progress achieved and considered tangible by AUC, is the establishment of the Technical Working Group (TWG) responsible for preparing the indicators and reporting framework for Agenda 2063(see interviewee 10). In addition, the AUDA and AUC have started to collaborate in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the agenda until 2018 by preparing the continental report on Agenda 2063 together with other organs. However, there is still a need for a mechanism to promote coherence, as recommended by the interviewees.

- Second, **the absence of framework or parameters to measure coherence** or boundaries for coherence/incoherence. The AU, as some interviewees alluded,

"in a need for an institutional mechanism for managing coherence starting from planning, implementation, reinforcing and evaluation of AU programmes and more specifically between AUC-AUDA/NEPAD and APRM".

In this sense, member states have the responsibility to push for such coherence along the lines of the European Union. This mechanism should act as an agent for policy coherence and inform member states of the state of coherence among the AU bodies. Interviewees note that *"the proliferation of interpersonal connections and political egos in addressing continental issues and programmes are resulted from the lack of institutional mechanism to assess coherence and predictable objectives"*. If such a mechanism exists and is guided by thematic domain, horizontal coherence among mandates and vertical coherence between the three organs, coherence can be improved.

- Thirdly, **the lack of synergies and down to earth approach** adopted by the AU organs at the different levels. Internally, there is a lack of integration and complementarity, especially in the joint planning of policy objectives (vertical coherence). Therefore, the organs have fallen into the trap of misinterpreting AU Assembly decisions and their implementation. Until implementation and reporting, most organs are not aware of the activities of peer organs. In relation to the principals (Member States), the organs tend to approach countries separately instead of sharing responsibilities. This has led to excessive activities and duplication of efforts and limits country ownership. However, it is foreseen that the adoption of the common budgetary framework (to be accomplished by 2024) will improve cooperation and alignment of activities between these organs.

  As far as governance is concerned, there is very limited coordination between the organs, although the APRM provides many innovative tools, reports, and activities around good governance to inform member states. Nevertheless, as interviewee 10 pointed out, one of the biggest challenges for incoherence is *"the readiness for real cooperation between the three organs therefore, APRM needs to be specific on what it offers to member states, especially technical capacities, so it does not fall in the trap of vagueness."*

- Fourth, **competition over financial resources between the organs**. As interviewee 11 said, *"The Lack of funds that are directed to other activities while ignoring the good governance component badly affected the functionality of APRM."* Some regional projects have more human and financial resources than APRM. The domestication of the must first come from within. Moreover, the reality of the mandates must be accepted. As one of the interviewees added *"We cannot enforce the implementation of Agenda 2063 if member states do not believe in it. SDGs remain more attractive due to the financial resources provided from the international community. Therefore, Convergence between both agendas shall be more used to achieve both together."*

- Another kind of **competition also exists over the political patronage**. Interviewee 18 argued that "*some organs are trying to get the credit by portraying their eagerness to support member states, either with info or programmes so they seem to be the 'best agent' among other organs."* Moreover, the feedback between the two organs is very weak, and often organs are unaware of the ongoing programmes implemented by other organs.

- Fifth, **lack of institutional continuity and regularity of participation in meetings alongside the relevance of some positions**. As interviewee 5 emphasised: *"some organs such as APRM sometimes are side-lined to join regional platforms or continental meetings."* But other interviewees challenged this argument by referring to the urgency to implement certain programs or reports quickly. On another hand, *"APRM is used to delegate different focal points for the same meeting and thus lack institutional memory of projects/programmes ownership." as interviewee 8 clarified.*

- Sixth, **lack of inclusivity of some organs in some high-level meetings with the principals,** *i.e., the High-Level Ministerial Committee of Agenda 206*3. For instance, APRM was not invited to be part of Agenda 2063 ministerial committee. As one of the interviewees commented, "it is insufficient to generate knowledge from home grown organs and own reports, the organs shall be

given a chance to interact with policy makers to generate key lessons to our member states and call for reforms at national level."

- Seventh, **the lack of a mechanism for reporting the results of the organs to the member states.** This was identified as one of the biggest challenges to a more coherent position of the AU organs. Interviewees argued that overlaps within the institutions led to confusion in the implementation of mandates. This is triggered by the lack of a reporting mechanism that needs to be put in place. As interviewee 8 commented, "*each of these organs i.e., APRM and AUDA-NEPAD are reporting directly to the AU Assembly through APR Forum or individual Summit."*

  The interviewee continued; *"NEPA reports to the AU Assembly through the orientation committee (heads of states), while the AU Commission reports to the assembly through executive council & PRC. The multi-level of reporting reflects an inefficient coordination between the Commission and other organs, on another hand. Only one organ should lead the reporting to member states, not each organ separately."*

- From the AGA perspective, there's an admission that *"AGA Secretariat failed to really synergise to some extent, to enhance levels of tripartite coordination between the three organs: APRM, NEPAD and AUC",* as one of the experts emphasised; *"accusations of duplications and similar mandates derail proper coordination between the three organs. For example, NEPDA argued that they are best equipped to produce the African Governance Report (AGR) as a flagship report of the Union since 2017, although it is not part of their mandate and they do not have the expertise to produce it."* Similar situations have badly affected the collaboration spirit between the three organs.

4.1.6 Fragile coordination between the AU organs including governance mechanisms persists

Interviewees tended to claim that coordination, between AU organs and member states on the one hand, and between AU organs on the other, is generally extremely poor. The following reasons were given to justify the poor coordination between the three selected organs:

- **Overlapping of the implemented activities** besides misunderstanding of mandates.

- **Lack of joint planning, budgeting, and programming** between the organs, including those dedicated to good governance issues. Interviewees[18] tended to agree that planning and coordination on policy objectives and programs, for many years, has been a great challenge. As interviewee 7 highlighted *"as every entity/organ is planning on its capacities and mandates. Intra-institutional arrangements among the AUC itself shall be enhanced, as each department or directorate plan activities independently."* Currently, with the AU reforms, interviewees expressed optimism to address this issue as the Commission anticipates preparing a joint budgeting for programmes to avoid duplicated efforts.

- **The lack of institutional memory** also derails this vertical or horizontal coherence to take place especially with the changes of representatives. As interviewee 4 pointed out; *"sometimes member states issued decisions that may contradict with precedent ones.* Interviewee 2 confirmed that *"a lot of interrogation and questions are coming up while executing programmes although same issues were raised and discussed in previous meetings between member states."*

- **The existence of patronage networks** among these organs and the lack of concrete technical opinions submitted to the Member States. This has unfortunately affected the way these bodies act as intermediaries, to provide sufficient information to member states (principle) on what needs to be done.

- **Competition between organs over funding resources.** As interviewee 11 explained; *"Obstruct the sense of complementarity and mutual recognition or*

[18] As interviewees 2,3,4, 6 7 and 10 emphasised

coordination among the organs to implement continental visions." Strategic planning, resource mobilisation, and M&E have been leading the coordination of Agenda 2063 follow-up, monitoring, and evaluation based on the Budget framework paper which set priorities for each year to be implemented. Having said that, *"the dilemma stands at implementation and how each policy organ, especially the Permanent Representatives' Committee, Executive Council, and AU Assembly of heads of states, receives the AUC work without inputs from organs such as the APRM*." as commented by interviewee 8.

- **Bargaining and negotiations are also quite problematic** between these organs to identify their mandates and activities rather than seeking a common consensus to achieve the overall vision. As one of the interviewees said "*the submitted plans of each organ were set without a common position which creates a lot of duplication of programmes, time-wasting, and confusion. Further, personalities are highly decisive for strategic planning relations."* Some interviewees agreed that responsiveness of AU sister organs can be frustrating However, the 2021–2024 Wide mid-term plan of the Union is foreseen to address this issue and shall consider inputs from all organs.

Aside from duplication in some tasks, the **energy and effort spent on improving coordination was unbalanced compared to the results.** As interviewee 3 mentioned; *"the Union has enough tools, platforms, and decisions, but actual coordination doesn't happen. Coordination means not just dialogue but a third position of combination and compromise. Actual dialogue does not build coherence or alignment among the Union's organs."*

4.1.7 Lack of awareness and applicability of the policy coherence scale's levels inside/among organs

To build on the previous considerations, the interview questions guided respondents through the levels of the Metcalfe scale, which were self-explanatory. Most **interviewees** from the three organs were unaware of the Metcalfe scale of policy coherence or the principles of policy coherence. The table below shows some of the interviewees'

perceptions of the application of the scale to coherence between APRM, AUC and AUDA-NEPAD.

Most respondents indicated that there is a unified strategy or vision and shared priorities for each of the organs, inspired by Agenda 2063. However, these strategies lack integration or synergy among the organs. In addition, responses highlighted both intra-institutional incoherence among some of the Commissions departments and inter-institutional incoherence and lack of coordination among the three organs. **Inter-institutional incoherence is underscored by the absence of many components of the Metcalfe scale starting from level five, seeking political consensus, to level one**, independent management of responsibilities by senior staff.

Consultation between organs or key departments within the same organ and/or between other organs was also rated as weak, as was the lack of information sharing. Although various consultations can be conducted within each organ to achieve coherence, less is achieved at the continental level. In addition, the implementation of the common strategy of each organ is not aligned with the goals of the vision. The table below shows the feedback from respondents on the scale levels of each organ.

Table 4 Reflections of Metcalfe Scale of Policy Coherence among AUC, APRM and AUDA-NEPAD

Metcalfe scale of policy coherence (1994)	AU Commission	AUDA-NEPAD	APRM	Observations
9. Unified Gov/organ strategy If yes, is there a sense of (integration between these strategies of various organs) – author added	The Commission is guided by Agenda 2063 and has medium-term strategic plan. Good governance components exist in this plan and mainly implemented by Dep. Of Political Affairs	Yes, it exists but actual implementation of the strategy may not be aligned with the strategy sometimes	Yes, APRM has strategic plan 2016–2020	On the Commission side, the implementation of good governance programmes is not properly operationalised.
8. Setting common priorities	Yes. the priorities are guided by AU assembly and executive council's decisions	Yes. however, identifying priorities may not necessarily be consistent with MSs needs at different times.	Yes, but member states demand may conflict each other. the APRM vision is aligned with AU principles more than the Comm or NEPAD priorities.	It seems from most of interviewees that the concept of setting common priorities is exists, but each organ has its own way and approach in setting

				these priorities under arching guidance of Agenda 2063
7. Establishing common parameters	Yes Criteria exist but adherence to these criteria vary from department to another	May be available on paper but not implemented	Not existing	APRM started broader consultations to enhance its governance assessment tools relevance to AU codes and standards
6. Arbitration of trade-offs & conflicts	The Comm used to have ethics Chair till June 2021 as responsible for addressing grievances and mediation. Yet, it was not so effective although ethics policy guidance has been adopted and training and discussions were provided but it did not last for long (four years).	Not quite common	Yes, the size of organisation is relatively small which allows for bilateral and even exco-meetings to address many issues internally. Yet, there is no mechanism for arbitration	
5. Search for policy consensus.	No. there's a structure but policy consensus inside the comm is quite week.	It does happen at the organ level, but there is a need to institutionalise policy consensus mechanism where the challenge is. A lot is based on personalities	The rationale of APRM to have national bodies alongside focal points (representatives of member states) alongside eminent persons panel provides sort of policy consensus on many issues including the methodology for governance assessment reviews.	

4. Avoiding policy divergences.	Highly not existing	policy divergences took place due to different demands of member states. they lack consistency on identifying priorities and national needs led to "*some countries change their needs between breakfast and lunch", as an interviewee observed*	Yes, to some extent	
3. Consultations among ministers/organ's divisions	it Depends on heads of division and personalities; however, principals or member states urge Comm to make consensus sometimes with the influence of ambassadorial and ministerial committees on Agenda 2063	Internal consultations are intensive across divisions and the AUDA-NEPAD new structure is set to foster alignment. Yet Long-system approach shall be set to enhance model) how all connect together (policy integration)	Internally consultations are strong, but it is less institutionalised with AUDA-NEPAD and AUC. As one interviewee mentioned " We could have done better with APRM specially to utilise APRM Checklist for Governance assessment i.e., agriculture as we succeed in incorporating these parameters to assess agriculture performance and share back APRM recommendations with some countries."	Consultations between AUC (Strategic planning_ and AUDA-NEPAD seems more consistent than AUC-APRM Consultations between APRM and AUDA-NEPAD took place at top management level and usually driven by personalities will consult and work together.
2. Exchange of information.	Interviewees doubted the quick flow of info inside the Comm as it highly depends on personalities. Lack of proper mechanism for	Internally, flow of information is quite okay, but externally it is being assessed by 50%. There's a room for reform and enhance flow of	Sharing of information is quite acceptable given the size of the organ (60 officials). Yet, accelerating the implementation of	

	info sharing or holds anyone accountable.	info between organs.	APRM structure shall foster better sharing of info with the AU Comm and other organs	
1. Ministers /executives manage independently within their own jurisdictions	On the Commission level, politics highly dominate this component	There are some linkages but not optimal. "*The AU system is forcing us to be compliant"*	Given the technical nature of APRM, this is highly relevant and achievable. Yet, some irregulates may take place due to influence of member states	

4.1.8 Reasonable official commitment of principals for Agenda 2063, but lacks political national ownership

Interviewees provided different variant views on the political commitment of member states – Principals - to implement or advocate for Agenda 2063 and towards Aspiration three. Some senior technical interviewees commended the political commitment of AU member states towards Agenda 2063t through different actions including:

1. **Eagerness of Principals to domesticate and recognise Agenda 2063 as an important framework for integration in the continent**. As interviewee 7 argued *"member states are keen to recognise Agenda 2063, especially at ministerial and parliamentary approvals level".* Interestingly, the same interviewee added that *"female politicians across the continent have been passionate and want to lead the implementation of the agenda at national level."*

2. **Institutional alignment for domesticating the agenda.** Institutional mechanisms were founded at local levels to raise awareness on Agenda 2063 and harmonise indicators.

3. **Official approvals and adoption of decisions pertinent to Agenda 2063**. Interviewee 8 referred to the fact that *"member states emphasised in their political statements on the necessity to support Agenda 2063. Additionally, submission of*

progress reports on the agenda nationally is a positive indicator on this commitment."

4. The **engagement of member states (principals) in the meetings of ambassadorial and executive committees of Agenda 2063 to synergise efforts and ensure proper implementation and reporting on the agenda**. Interviewee 1 also emphasised that "*the commitment of member states has improved in 2019 compared to the past few years and it is up to the organs to show integrating traces to show benefits for member states."*

Notwithstanding the above, interviewees argued that the actual implementation of the agenda at the national level is challenging and varies greatly from country to country. They tended to assume that to date, 50 per cent of some countries have aligned their national plans with Agenda 2063 in accordance with the AU reports. Other countries, especially those with fragile structures such as Sudan, have great difficulty finding time to align strategic planning at all. Interviewee 7 noted that *"Some countries, like Kenya, Rwanda, and South Africa, have been taking seriously the agenda's integration into National Development Planning (NDP) and request support from the Union on capacitating their national experts and staff on the agenda while others do not."*

Interviewee 10, on the other hand, provocatively argued that *"some African countries are not very interested in domestication/implementing the agenda and they lack awareness on Agenda 2063 compared to SDGs."* Research findings supported this fact as the level of awareness and knowledge of Agenda 2063 among key players, i.e., media, parliamentarians, and civil society organs is relatively low in many African countries compared to level of awareness about Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (APRM, 2019).

A series of issues were identified by the interviewees concerning the poor political ownership by the African countries Principals:

- **Lack of financing Agenda 2063 programs** at continental and national levels. According to the AU assembly decision in 2019, member states were called to

ensure funding finance Agenda 2063 programs by 70 per cent. Nevertheless, interviewees tend to argue that programmes are badly operationalised and mostly funded by donors and financial institutions contribution. As interviewee 8 observed, "*Progress towards achieving the agenda programmes has barely achieved 20 per cent of each of them. Some flagship projects are also related to free movement of people or good governance training – which is also pertinent to freedoms – are not moving*."

- **Lack of Political national ownership**: some interviewees tend to claim that the Principals - member states - seek ownership and quickly rush to get the opportunity of hosting some organs created to serve some of the flagship programmes – like hosting the HQs of some organs – without necessarily supporting the idea/notion behind it. i.e., AfCFTA office is substandard. They rush /compete over ownership, but the actual commitment to finance and offer human capacity is salient. However, another interviewee mentioned that budget is not the problem. Once the political support and technical substance are in place, the budget will be easier to obtain. The same interviewee urged that *"the Commission and other organs need to remain committed to support member states to align Agenda 2063 into NDP and remain resourceful to countries' plans*."

- **Lack of commitment and reporting fatigue on Agenda 2063**. For instance, interviewees claimed that the first continental report on Agenda 2019 reflected data collected from thirty-one countries. Member states, although they are members in the Agenda 2063 Ministerial and Ambassadorial committees, did not provide necessary data for assessing regional programs and goals. Further, interviewee 10 claimed that *"reporting on Agenda 2063 is politically sensitive and technically complicated. Some countries refrain from sharing statistics on certain indictors to be left empty, particularly those related to human rights and political governance issues in general. So, Commitment is given by words not by actions and few countries are honestly devoted like Namibia and Zimbabwe."*

4.1.9 Lack of agreement on accountability and restrictive measures applied by the principals

As far as accountability is concerned, interviewees highlighted that the Commission, AUDA-NEPAD and APRM **are exposed to oversight mechanisms** – internal audit and assessment performance – as part of the institutional reforms. The external audit is also conducted and shared with the Chair of the Commission directly. As one of the interviewees pointed out, *"Human resources, Finance, and recruitment issues have been investigated under the AU organs audit assessment in 2020/2021."* However, *"empowerment and accountability cannot be achieved, while mandates are unclear and member states are inconsistent about the designated tasks for the AU organs."*

The 2016 report on AU institutional reforms, as one interviewee explicitly said, highlighted that one challenge against the efficiency of the Union is **the role of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC)**[19] which is rhetorically mandated to ensure that official documents are ready to be submitted to member states for discussion during the Executive Council of Ministers and AU Heads of States Summits. The PRC, as interviewee 7 argued, *"seems to take advantage of the Commission as some member states act as the '**micromanagement arm'** of the Commission. This is translated through the PRC's tendency to create small committees inside the Commission to decide on many issues instead of empowering the Commission to initiate decisions."*

The PRC, as interviewee 8 explained, *"initiated creating small committees to address issues such as finance, recruitment, or human resources, which worsen the Commission's accountability to implement the regional vision".* This approach, as he stressed, *"is not inclusive as it shows that member states want to develop policies serves the interests of certain countries rather than the public interest of the Union".* Furthermore, it affects the transparency and misleads the decision-makers or member states themselves (Principals) as well as the AU Assembly.

Last, the interviewee emphasised that *"Principals are also seeking to influence the recruitment process in hiring officials inside the African Union".* Accordingly, AU shared values and principles of integrity are also entrenched because of such behaviour. In a nutshell, interviewees agreed that the creating of these institutional layers

[19] PRC consists of national representatives of AU member states who are serving as ambassadors to the African Union in Addis Ababa.

and some of the microstructures put at the Union level may not push for anything, but integration.

Most **interviewees** also affirmed that *"accountability comes at different levels"*. Internally, the organs, especially after the Kagame reforms, become more punctual with regards to audit queries, appraisals, and performance assessments. Yet, interviewee 7 warned that *"at the level of implementation of programmes, the member states' interventions can lead us to failure, especially when they intervene in the Commission's management as they want to involve in the micromanagement and recruitment of staff. The creation of small committees and institutional layers dedicated to member states (i.e., the finance committee or the group of 10 for recruitment weakens the internal system of AUC."* He concluded *"The AU institutional reforms of Kagame were not adopted to promote this kind of hegemony by member states."* Interviewee 10 also commented on that by arguing *"When the Commission shows strong management of one portfolio, member states can stand against it."*

Another shortfall of the accountability approach is the **lack of inclusive approach towards accountability assessment**, as some interviewees disclosed. One of the interviewees pronounced that *"the political positions, i.e., Commissioners, at higher levels are rarely criticised/evaluated by member states while senior technical staff are constantly exposed to evaluation and performance appraisals"*. The political leadership of the organs, especially the AUC senior management, must be fairly assessed as the technical staff is evaluated.

Concerning the restrictive measures applied by the Principals, interviewees provided controversial opinions if member states applied strict restrictive measures as per the Principal-Agent theory (hire & fire of employees, voting power, etc) against the three organs to implement programmes related to Agenda 2063. Interviewee 7 observed, *"rules of procedures manage the functionality and delegated functions to the organs. Also, member states do not enjoy veto power to block decisions. Having said that, they practice some policies and approaches to intervene in the management of the organs or not adhere to the Union's regional frameworks."*

Interviewees tended to agree on the following restrictive practices by the principals:

1. **Interventions in the budget allocations for some projects**. Respondents tended to assert that member states sometimes exert pressure to fund certain projects/programmes, especially when these are more conducive to their own interests. For example, it was observed that member states are less interested in funding good governance or youth as this is mainly funded by donors such as USAID, GIZ and the European Union. The same applies to the bias in hiring certain nationalities in high political positions.

2. **Create duplicated structures or similar organs to conduct and implement programmes**. The lack of institutional memory by some member states urged them to create new structures and institutional layers instead of empowering the current structures. Therefore, *"stronger linkages shall exist between the Commission and other AU organs and functions of PRC including the newly created sub-committees to avoid redundant efforts and activities,"* as interviewee 11 emphasised.

3. **Lengthy procedures and delays in ratifying and acceding to AU standards, codes, and values**. Member States tend to sign agreements while delaying ratification and implementation into national law. For example, ratification and implementation of the ACADEC Agreement at national level is extremely low. As interviewee 17 expressed, *"The eagerness of member states to report on the national state of governance is also weak and member states usually expected from the Union to provide funds for implementing national programmes without empowering the Union with supranational powers to practice such a role."*

4. **Lack of support for any supranational privileges and member states' intervention in the organ's modus operandi.** This point was also seen as a challenge to policy coherence by many respondents. Respondents mentioned that the drive by Member States to form small committees to manage the internal affairs of the AUC, e.g., recruitment or finances, is seen as a restrictive measure, rather than empowering the Commission to manage the process at continental level.

5. **Incoherent approach towards access to information**. As interviewee 8 stated *"Member states occasionally put restrictions on data sharing with citizens, especially those pertinent to violence, conflict and security, which led to ignorance of citizenry about accurate situation of their own countries."* This to some extent, stands against the Union values and principles of bringing African citizens to the core of decision-making process and development programmes.

In conclusion, the themes and detailed description of the respondents' answers illustrate the extent of policy incoherence and confusion around the mandates of the three organs, despite various AU decisions and orientations aimed at improving synergies and alignment of their functions.

The following and final chapter delves deeper into the available data to highlight the main drivers of policy coherence: vertical, horizontal, and political and recommendations to enhance it. I do so by analysing AU decisions and sharing my own observations regarding the role of the AU and other institutional and coordinating mechanisms, i.e., the APRM and the AGA Secretariat in promoting good governance. A particular focus of the chapter is the APRM as an AU institutional mechanism dedicated to promoting good governance and how it has been functioning since its revival in 2016.

Chapter 5: The African Union analysis from Principal–Agent theory

5. Introduction

This chapter builds on the data and themes presented in chapter four to further explore the adequacy of AU organs, institutional and coordination mechanisms to promote good governance on the continent and to develop a coherent approach to achieving this goal. The chapter deepens the analysis of policy coherence by integrating the analysis of documents and observations from my professional experience with the AU.

The chapter also draws on the theoretical framework of the study - principal-agent theory - and other literature to clarify the role of the institutions as actors in the formulation of good governance policies and programmes, how the institutions have contributed or failed in developing a coherent approach to policy coherence, and the challenges involved. Finally, specific interventions needed to improve policy coherence among AU organs and to develop a coherent approach to the implementation of Aspiration 3 - good governance and rule of law - were identified. An attempt is made to contextualise the relevance of each organ (as an agent) and to link the preceding themes on policy coherence through the lens of principal-agent theory and the views of interviewees.

Although the analytical framework highlights the role of monitoring mechanisms in enhancing policy coherence, the chapter focuses only on the drivers of policy coherence among institutional and coordinating mechanisms, as the interview findings have already highlighted that the AU lacks a platform to evaluate programmes.

4.1 Vertical coherence between AU organs for the Promotion of Good Governance

This section addresses vertical coherence between AU organs and autonomous bodies dedicated to promoting good governance on the continent. Vertical coherence, as explained in the analytical framework, refers to the coordination of policy objectives and guidelines at the national/regional level. Given the breadth of this topic, I have focused on the AUC, the Secretariat AGA and the APRM. The following sub-sections look at the mandates of the organs as well as the functions conferred by the AU statutes and declarations for initiating, formulating, and setting the policy agenda to complement the information provided by respondents in chapter four. Through re-examination of some documents and participant observation, we have tried to summarise the importance of each organ or autonomous body as an empowered actor in terms of the AU. It also helps to identify ongoing challenges to policy coherence between the AUC, AGA and the APRM, and provides some recommendations that were recommended by interviewees.

5.1.1 Inter-institutional alignment between major stakeholders of Agenda 2063

The African Union witnessed various institutional reforms during the selected period of this study, (2014–2019). Various initiatives were led by African countries to support structural transformation inside the AU organs. Initially, the Ministerial Retreat of 12–13 May 2015 at Mekelle, Ethiopia recommended the *"AU Commission to remain involved in the work's bulk directed by the Commission. Commission is critical in the setting of agenda. This right of initiation and proposition of policies should be used strategically to achieve greater integration."* The AU Commission was urged to remain involved in all the phases pertinent to domestication, following up and evaluation of Agenda 2063.

The 2017 AU institutional Reforms Report, presented by President Kagame identifies six challenges facing the AU including:

- The consistent failure to enforce African Union decisions has led to a crisis of implementation.

- A perception of limited relevance to African citizens; a fragmented organisation with a multitude of priority areas.

- Over-dependence on partner funding; underperformance of some organs and institutions due to unclear mandates or chronic underfunding; limited management capacity.

- Lack of accountability for performance, at all levels.

- Unclear division of labour between the African Union Commission, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), other Regional Mechanisms (RMs), and member states; and

- Inefficient working methods in both the Commission and the Assembly.[20] Recommendations were therefore made that the AU institutions need to implement specific priorities and effective management of the AU at both policy and operational levels, which requires policy coherence, collaboration, coordination, and building synergies among AU organs, institutions, and architectures. The need for more detailed consultations on the new shape and role of AUDA-NEPAD, APRM, and other key organs and institutions was also stressed.

Before addressing the mandate and role of each organ in initiating, formulating, and achieving the goals pertinent to Aspiration 3 (good governance), we should point out that the breadth of Agenda 2063 and the involvement of various key stakeholders at different institutional levels already make adequate coordination between these organs and structures on the one hand, and coordination with national stakeholders, on the other, difficult. The following table shows which actors are involved in the policy initiation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063.

[20] AU Commission, Kagame Report on AU Institutional Reforms, p 6–7.

Table 5 Key Stakeholders involved in Agenda 2063/SDGs in Africa (Source: Author)[21]

Regional level	Sub-regional levels	National level
AU Assembly Executive Council Ministerial Committee Agenda 2063 AU Commission (strategic planning unit, TWG on Agenda 2063 monitoring) African Peer Review Mechanism AUDA-NEPAD African Development Bank African Capacity Building foundation	▪ Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are leading efforts at sub-regional levels to enhance Agenda 2063 integration into member states' national development plan. ▪ Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). ▪ 12) the East African Community (EAC). ▪ Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). ▪ Central Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD). ▪ Southern African Development Community (SADC). ▪ Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). ▪ Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA); and ▪ Union for Arab Maghreb (UAM)	The domestication of Agenda 2063, like SDGs, is an imperative responsibility of states at different levels. Member states integrates the Agenda 2063 indicators, including those pertinent to good governance into the national M&E system Domestication of AU codes and standards with the support of the organs

5.1.2 The AU Commission

The Commission, as expressed by most respondents, is at the centre of policy initiation, formulation, and design at the Union level. Moreover, it is noted that the comparative advantage of the Commission over other organs or agencies, e.g., AUDA-NEPAD or APRM, lies in the delegated functions backed by legal powers highlighted in the AU Constitutive Act (AUC, 2003). The Commission's delegated functions are legally enshrined in Article 3 of the Commission's Statute, which confirms that the Commission is the secretariat of the AU and is responsible for the following tasks:

[21] This table is initiated by the author based on given information from the basic note on Agenda 2063 and the first ten-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063.

- Representing the AU and defending its interests under the direction of the Assembly and the Executive Council according to their guidelines.

- Initiating proposals submitted to the organs of the AU and implementing the decisions taken by them.

- Acting as the custodian of the Constitutive Act of the AU and all other legal instruments of the OAU/AU.

- Working closely to the AU organs to guide, support and monitor the performance of the AU to ensure consistency and harmony with agreed policies, strategies, programmes, and projects.

- Providing operational support to all AU organs.

- Assist member states in the implementation of AU programmes.

- Developing common AU positions and coordinate Member States actions in international negotiations.

- Managing the AU budget and resources.

- Elaborating, promoting, coordinating, and harmonising AU programmes and policies with those of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

- Ensuring gender mainstreaming in all AU programmes and activities.

- Taking actions, as delegated by the Assembly and the Executive Council.

Reflecting on the Principal–Agent theoretical lens, the Commission, as many interviewees highlighted, already provides member states with necessary information pertinent to different topics, which makes it "*a reliable agent*" for African countries. For

instance, the Commission led the continental dialogue on the post-2015 Africa Position on Sustainable Development, which brought governance to the core of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development alongside Agenda 2063.

In addition, interviewees tended to say that the Commission led the overall policy initiative, design, drafting and engagement of other stakeholders, while other organs provided content contributions and set their own strategies to support the agenda. The AUC also played an essential role in engaging a wide range of national consultations during the drafting phase of Agenda 2063, including representatives from academia, youth and civil society. After the adoption of the Agenda, the Commission's role shifted to following up on the Agenda and assisting in monitoring and reporting on the Agenda and related programmes, while implementation is highly dependent on countries.

However, it is also clear from the interviews and participatory observations that the Commission is not sufficiently empowered to initiate creative policies or to lobby within the territory of the client – the African Countries (WHO), as envisaged by the Principal Agent theory for supranational organisations. The PA theory states that for regional organs can act as autonomous supranational agents if they develop creative policies to address complex problems. They should also be able to build networks with national authorities and actors including the private sector and non-state actors, to gain support for the implementation of regional integration programmes[22]

For example, interviewees noted that the AU Commission, has held more than twenty workshops on the implementation of Agenda 2063 in the last five years. However, neither the Commission nor the Secretariat AGA can launch national programmes to engage civil society or discuss policy issues without the consent of the host country. Moreover, most of the participants in these AUC/AGA meetings and forums are affiliated to the state and government, which negates the possibility of involving other segments of society, making the union of limited relevance to African citizens, as the Kagame Report points out.

[22] Check page 39 on theoretical framework

Another observation expressed by some respondents is that the Commission has limited ability to influence or assist in promoting good governance policies/programmes, especially given the political sensitivity of some issues, e.g., human rights, elections at the national level. It was also noted that the Commission lacks visibility and communication of its work at the national level, including the Political Affairs Division, which was expected to assist national authorities in monitoring elections and other issues related to the rule of law.

One of the key issues identified by an independent report to assess policy coherence between AUC and other organs is *"the absence of a clearly defined mechanism to ensure that the operations support and agenda settings for the other organs are as effective as they should be"* (AFCBF, 2019). The same report also concluded that *"there is no monitoring mechanism to ensure that policies can be adjusted in the light of new information, changing circumstances and feedback on their effects to enhance policy coherence among AU organs."* This conclusion was also confirmed by many respondents, as the Union still needs a monitoring mechanism to track whether the institutions are working coherently or not.

While interviewees generally raised the issue of lack of coordination between organs as a reason for vertical incoherence, it was observed that the coordination between AUC and APRM in terms of initiating, formulating, and targeting policies to promote to promote good governance in the continent was theoretically weak and not followed up. Some of the reasons observed for this are the leadership challenges of the APRM over the last decade, the functionality of the APRM as an intended mechanism and the unwillingness of the Commission to integrate the objectives and programs of the APRM into the AUC strategic plan to ensure alignment and policy coherence on good governance programmes.

One positive observation that can be documented for the Commission to enhance vertical coherence with the organs is the establishment of a Technical Working Group (TWG) to develop core indicators framework on Agenda 2063 since 2017, mainly in partnership with AUDA-NEPAD, APRM and other regional organs to ensure the implementation of the First Ten-Year Implementation plan (FTYIP) of Agenda 2063

The FTYIP recommended the creation of a reporting framework to assess the performance of Agenda 2063. Since 2018, the Commission has established a Technical Working Group to work on this framework, including the development of indicators to assess good governance. Aspiration three, - good governance, rule of law and democracy - has been parsimoniously divided into two goals: Goal 11: Democratic values, practises, universal principles of human rights, 2) justice and the rule of law enshrined; Goal 12:) Building effective institutions and transformative leadership with a dual focus on institutions and leadership and participatory development and local governance.

In light of the above, some respondents noted that consensus on the targets and associated indicators for each target to ensure proper continuous tracking and evaluation was difficult and was not comprehensive, especially for the good governance indicators. The following reasons were given for this. First, the timing of the development of these indicators or even Agenda 2063 has witnessed staggering changes within the APRM - which is considered the home-grown AU mechanism for good governance[23]. The mechanism has gone through various structural weaknesses and lack of strong leadership to survive from 2012-2015

Secondly, the long-time taken to set up this group and the lack of participation by some key stakeholders have hampered its functioning until 2018. The framework for the core indicators of Agenda 2063 was only properly promoted to Member States in 2020. Although the Commission acknowledges the involvement of all partners in the formulation of the indicators, this led to further delays in reporting on Agenda 2063 programmes related to good governance and other flagship projects from 2014 to 2018.

Third, the goals and aspiration are not translated into further detailed indicators to report holistically on progress in governance, as is the case with the SDGs core indicators or the governance indicators introduced by UNDP.

[23] Therefore, a decision was taken by AU Assembly (Assembly/AU/Draft/Dec.11 (XXXIII) to recommend the integration of the APRM into the AU at the 23rd AU Assembly session in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea in June 2014.

The following table illustrates aspiration three and associated targets and indicators, as agreed in 2019 by the TWG. Compared to the SDG 16 – which has 23 indicators to assess good governance issues[24] - I can claim that the indicators of Aspiration three are absorbed and insufficient to provide an adequate picture of the state of governance on the continent. Therefore, once again, it is evident that AUC-APRM coordination remains weak at both levels: in programming and in monitoring good governance policies.

Table 6 Goals and indicators of Aspiration three

ASPIRATION 3: AN AFRICA OF GOOD GOVERNANCE, DEMOCRACY, RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW		
Goal 11: Democratic values, practices, universal principles of human rights, justice and the rule of law entrenched		
	Targets	Indicators
1. Democratic Values and Practices are the Norm	At least 70% of the people believe that they are empowered and are holding their leaders accountable	% Of people who believe that there are effective mechanisms and oversight institutions to hold their leaders accountable
	At least 70% of the people perceive that the press /information is free, and freedom of expression pertains	% Of people who perceive that there is press freedom
		% Of people who believe that there is free access to information.
	At least 70% of the public perceive elections are free, fair, and transparent	% Of people who believe that the elections are free, fair, and transparent.
	African Charter on Democracy is signed, ratified, and domesticated by 2020	- Signed
		- Ratified
		- Integrated the African Charter on democracy
Goal 12: Capable institutions and transformed leadership in place at all levels		
1. Institutions and Leadership	At least 70% of the public acknowledge the public service to be professional, efficient, responsive, accountable, impartial and corruption free	Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public /private official and asked or paid a bribe during the previous twelve months
ASPIRATION 4. A PEACEFUL AND SECURE AFRICA		
Goal 13: Peace, Security and Stability are preserved		

[24] For further insights, please check https://www.sdg16hub.org/landing-page/sdg-16-indicators.

Maintenance and Restoration of Peace and Security	Level of conflict emanating from ethnicity, all forms of exclusion, religious and political differences is at most 50% of 2013 levels.	Conflict related deaths per 100,000 population
Goal 14: A Stable and Peaceful Africa		
1. Institutional Structure for AU Instruments on Peace and Security	Silence All Guns by 2020	a) Number of armed conflicts
		b) % decrease in armed conflicts
Goal 15: A Fully Functional and Operational African Peace and Security Architecture		
1.Operationalisation of APSA Pillars	National Peace Council is established by 2016	a) Existence of a national peace council.
		b) Number of national dialogues held

Source: Agenda 2063 Core Indicators Framework

Some conclusions can be drawn from this analysis:

1. The Commission fulfils some of the key conditions of the agent theory to act as an empowered regional organ. However, the Commission lacks coordination with affiliated organs or autonomous bodies, such as AGA and APRM. This has clearly weakened the Commission's capacity to initiate assertive action, whether in the form of programmes or reporting frameworks on regional issues, especially good governance programmes and reporting instruments.

2. While acknowledging the political support by the principals to the AU Commission, it lacks capacity to lobby within the principal's territory with the reluctance of principals to cede some sovereignty for the sake of the union's integration. Further, the Commissions lacks institutional and human capacities to improve quality of services for member states.

3. The contractual agreement between the member states and AUC remains confusing with duplicated mandates and consequent interventions in the commission's operational procedures. The dominance of principals on its modus operandi derails its autonomy as a regional organ.

The following section on AGA and the APRM can help us summarise the vertical coherence between AUC, AGA, and APRM on one hand and with AUC substructures, i.e., the Agenda 2063 committees of ambassadors and ministers on another hand.

5.1.3 AGA Platform and Secretariat

The establishment and mandate of AGA is based on the decision of the 15th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government (AU/Dec.304 (XV), held in July 2010. The AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government decided to dedicate the theme of the 16th Ordinary Session of the African Assembly to the shared values of the AU[25], which was held in Addis Ababa in 2011, thus giving mandate for the creation of a "Pan-African Architecture for Governance".

To operationalise the AU Assembly's decision to establish of the Pan-African Governance Architecture, AGA was intended to provide a platform for dialogue among stakeholders tasked with promoting democracy, governance, and human rights in order to enhance their capacities and optimise their impact.[26] The shortcomings that AGA sought to address are: to push member states to adhere to democratic norms and policies and secondly, to curb the limited coherence and cooperation among AU organs, institutions, and RECs in implementing the AU's shared values.

The Secretariat of AGA has elaborated and defined the processes and functions of AGA, culminating in the adoption of the Rules of Procedure of the AGA Platform in January 2016.[27] In the absence of a basic , binding legal instrument to establish the platform, Platform members ingeniously anchored AGA on the common comprehensive legal instrument on democratic governance – the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG).[28] The mandate of the AGA Platform includes the verification of member states' compliance with the ACDEG.[29] The AGA Platform

[25] See AU Assembly Decision on Specialised Technical Committees Assembly/AU/Dec. 589(XXVI). The AGA Rules of Procedure and State Reporting Guidelines were adopted by the January 2016 AU Assembly of Heads of States and Government.

[26] The AGA platform constitute key stakeholders including "AU Peace and Security Council; AU Commission; African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights; African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights; Pan-African Parliament; African Peer Review Mechanism; Economic, Social and Cultural Council; AU Advisory Board on Corruption; African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; African Union Commission on International Law; NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency and the Regional Economic Communities"

[27] See AU Assembly Decision on Specialised Technical Committees Assembly/AU/Dec. 589(XXVI). The AGA Rules of Procedure and State Reporting Guidelines were adopted by the January 2016 AU Assembly of Heads of States and Government.

[28] Ibid

[29] Ibid

is coordinated by an AGA Secretariat and a Bureau composed of representatives from the AU organs and RECs while AGA Secretariat has been hosted by the DPA-AU Commission as mentioned earlier.

The themes of analysis pertinent to Policy coherence already inferred confusion and misperception between the role of AGA and the APRM. AGA is perceived by many observers and interviewees as *a coordination mechanism* dedicated to the promotion and protection of democracy, governance, and human rights on the continent (Gumedze, 2011). It is also inspired by the Constitutive Act of the AU[30] which affirms its determination to '*promote and protect human and people's rights, consolidate democratic institutions and culture and ensure good governance and the rule of law*.'

However, some respondents saw AGA as the AU's main policy and institutional framework for promoting good governance on the continent, while APRM needs to complement its activities and implement the recommendations of the AGA platform. In the same vein, respondents stressed that the AGA Secretariat could not deliver on its main pillars[31] as expected, to ensure appropriate joint programming or planning on good governance issues in partnership with most members of the Platform, including the Commission. Although the Platform has a big lobby within member states to act as an effective facilitator, the AGA Secretariat - as a unit alongside the Commission - has had problems with intra-institutional coherence and even horizontal coherence with other departments within the Commission itself.

With the Secretariat being run by the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) from AGA to 2020, the Secretariat has faced administrative and financial challenges. DPA also plays a strategic role as rapporteur of the AGA platform. From interviews and various observations at the meetings of the AGA platform, it appears that the role of the AGA secretariat has been affected by the following factors:

- **The slow implementation of the Secretariat and platform activities**: many activities are delayed or postponed completing the administrative cycle within the DPA, or there is some reluctance to support activities.

[30] AU, About AGA. https://au.int/aga/about accessed on 25 June 2021.
[31] Check page 38

- **Budgeting issues to finance programmes**, in particular that the budget of the AGA Secretariat and the Platform becomes part of the DPA, thus affecting the autonomy of the Platform. It was also noted that the AGA Secretariat has helped DPA to obtain further funding from various partners, e.g., GIZ/European Union. **Overall coordination between AGA and DPA** seems on the one hand even less progressive than the APRM-AGA level of coordination. The DPA's top leadership through AGA secretariats has delayed the implementation of many projects while practising little political leadership to operationalise the AGA programmes.

- **Lack of understanding of AGA's rules of procedures hamper the autonomy of the structure**. AGA Secretariat, as some interviewees explained was handicapped by DPA and this complicates vertical coherence between AGA Sec and the Chair of AGA which is based on rotation between the Platform's 17 entities. The misinterpretation of the mandates has caused much confusion. Other organs also recommend that the Secretariat be placed under their leadership when they run the platform.

- **The dominance of the DPA in officially approving the activities of AGA has weakened its autonomy and the visibility of its work**. As the platform consists of different units, they usually develop important programmes. Respondents noted that -the DPA presented the work as part of the department's achievements and results. For example, the secretariat AGA proposed to organise an annual meeting of all national electoral bodies (ENBs) to improve and study the electoral process in Africa, and to coordinate national human rights commissions to meet annually to review their activities, share experiences and study ways to implement the AU Codes (ACDEC).

AGA also conducted a study on the role of youth in elections and effective leadership of women. AGA took the lead to launch these projects. However, the DPA tended to capture all this as an outcome of DPA performance and results PA. This approach led to tensions and a double understanding of roles among many stakeholders, including member states.

Under the current institutional reforms, it is observed that a decision had been taken to merge political affairs, peace, and security departments in the AU Commission for better synergies and complementarities. Accordingly, there is a scenario of having a broad Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) department which constitutes two directorates: 1) governance and conflict-prevention; and 2) peace & security and conflict-management. The position of the secretariat of AGA will thus remain fragile and unclear how it will continue to function until the merger of the two departments has taken place.

Guided by the above, it can be argued that AGA, as a coordination mechanism, was not sufficiently empowered to act as a useful agent for member states. Although the coordination mechanisms are significant to enhance the delivery of the regional organs vision, the lack of legal competences of AGA and the competition over the Secretariat and Platform's financial resources weakened its presence and engagement at regional level.

Having highlighted the key observations on the role of the AUC and AGA in vertical coherence for good governance policy, the following sub-section reflects on the role of the APRM and the recent developments of this institutional mechanism in promoting good governance on the continent.

5.1.4 The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

The APRM was originally established at the inaugural session of the African Union Assembly in Durban, South Africa in July 2002 as an agent with the power to review and assess the governance of member states and to serve as a peer learning platform for African countries on good governance practises. Member states emphasised in the APRM baseline document that the APRM expresses the Union's objectives too. It was described as an "*instrument voluntarily acceded to by Member States of the African Union and as an African self-monitoring mechanism; and convinced of the imperative need for the APRM to consolidate itself as the authoritative institution on Governance within the African Union*." (APRM, 2016).

Since 2008, there have been discussions among African countries on the status of the APRM, especially because of the lack of implementation of its activities. In July 2008, the 11th APRM Assembly adopted a resolution stating that "*the APRM structures … shall be part of the processes and structures of the African Union*." later, the AU Assembly took various decisions to integrate APRM into the AU system rather than continuing as an autonomous body without a clear legal basis (see Annex 1: decisions of 2011,2014,2017).

With the adoption of Agenda 2063, The Assembly requested the AUC and the APRM Secretariat to consult on the practical modalities involved in integrating the APRM into the AU system. The Decision of the 23rd Assembly session in Malabo Equatorial Guinea (2014) requests considering the fact that the "*APRM is a voluntary organisation of AU member state and exercises autonomy in its financial and budgetary processes, legal personality, structure, administrative, human resources, and financial management shall be based on the standard procedures of the AU system*." (Ibid, p2)

The APRM Constitution of 2016 sets out the procedural rules to be followed by the APRM in conducting governance assessments, based on the principles of neutrality, freedom from political manipulation and inclusion of all stakeholders in the governance assessment process. The APRM governance assessment process empowers the Continental Secretariat to appoint a team of independent consultants or experts from different countries to examine the four governance themes: political, economic, social, and socio-economic in the country that has volunteered.

The APRM self-assessment of governance takes place after the volunteering country has submitted a self-assessment report prepared by the relevant national authorities, while the APRM appoints an independent team to look into governance issues in the group. The final report is published after validation by the country and is usually presented by the Heads of State for adoption at the APR Forum on the margins of the AU Summit.

The assessment review is followed by a Plan of Action (PAN) proposed by the technical team and endorsed by the APR Summit for implementation. The PAN includes

various reforms and measures to address critical governance deficiencies to be implemented by countries on an ongoing basis. The NPOA is usually followed every six months by a progress report prepared by member states to show progress in implementing the recommendations

Beyond this traditional mandate, the decisions adopted by the AU Assembly from 2014-2019 reflect strategic shifts in the mandate and functioning of the APRM. Faced with growing criticism of the mechanism's functioning and the lack of technical competencies of the continental secretariat and related structures at the national level, the 2017 AU Assembly took a decision on the revitalisation of the APRM.

The **AU Assembly/AU/Draft/Dec.10 (XXVIII)** decision on the revitalisation of the APRM of January 2017 supported the strengthening of the role of the APRM to track implementation and oversee monitoring and evaluation in key areas of governance in the continent and calls on the APRM to take the necessary steps to achieve this objective. Furthermore, the AU Assembly welcomes the Forum's commitment to the revitalisation of the APRM, with section 7 (i) specifically highlighting the commitment to reposition the APRM to play a monitoring and evaluation role for the AU Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the past, interviewees tended to agree that the APRM struggled with the lack of communication and engagement with the AUC or AUDA-NEPAD for joint programming and planning for these reviews. In addition, the APRM did not have a strategic vision or plan for its activities, including governance reviews, until 2016. It can be observed that the APRM approached countries to conduct reviews without explicitly highlighting the added value of these reviews or how they contribute to the overall goals of the vision or the values of the African Union.

Thanks to these decisions and the new leadership that the APRM has had since 2016, the continental secretariat has begun to initiate several institutional review processes. First, for the first time since its inception, the Mechanism has adopted a strategic plan for 2016-2019, which sets out the main objectives for revising its approach

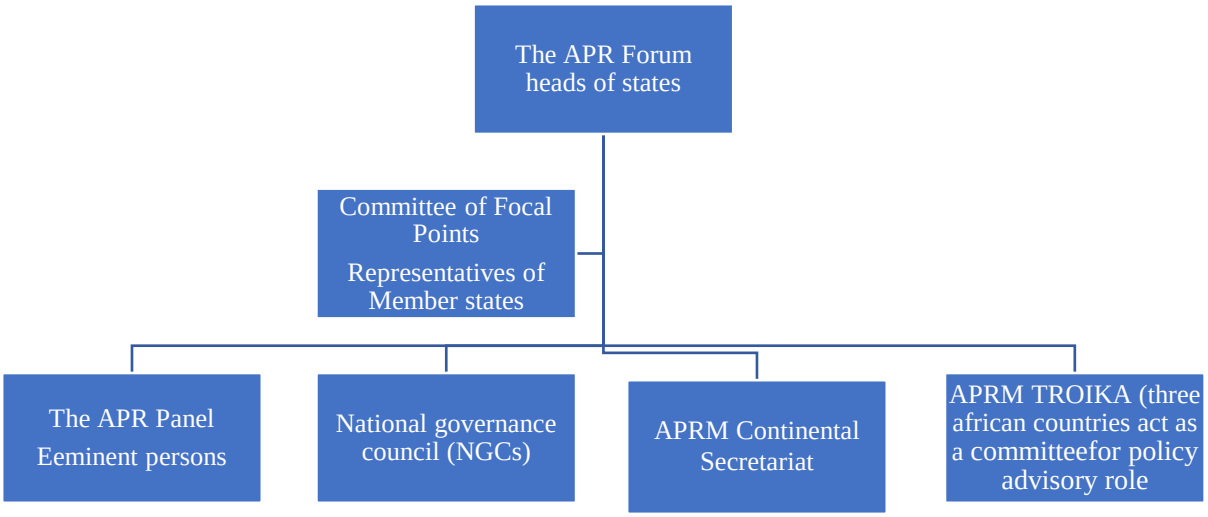
Box 2. Key objectives of the APRM strategic plan 2016-2019

1. Promoting the common values of the AU: This is to be achieved through the integration of the APRM into the AU, universal adherence and the increased relevance of the APRM to Africa's regional integration agenda: Aim to integrate the APRM into the structures and processes of the AU as envisaged in the decision of the 2014 Malabo Summit; launch the campaign for accelerated universal adherence and enhanced relevance of the APRM to Africa's regional integration agenda
2. Review and implement the APRM core mandate: this is primarily to ensure that the APRM mandate and priorities are adapted to the changing governance realities on the continent over time
3. Develop human capacity to ensure that there is a fully resourced secretariat capable of effectively and efficiently implementing the comprehensive mandate of the APRM. This included revising the APRM organisational structure in line with the AU and improving performance management in the Secretariat.4. Development of monitoring and evaluation frameworks and systems. Revising the APRM tools and questionnaires to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of peer review processes and the quality of internal review processes.
4. Enhancement of Research & Development capacity and Improvement of Operational Tools: this includes enhancing Evidence-based national compliance with the APRM review
5. Recommendations and National Programmes of Action (NPOAs) as well as establishing national networks and structures with relevant research and advocacy institutions for increased research collaboration and enhanced participation of civil society in peer review processes.
6. Intra-APRM Coordination and Harmonisation: the aim is to improve coordination and harmonisation between the continental APRM and national and regional structures, as well as with relevant AU bodies in the exercise of the APRM mandate and programmes: strengthened linkages and coordination between the APRM Secretariat, the APR body and national and regional structures, as well as with relevant AU bodies in the exercise of the APRM mandate and programmes.

It is also observed that the APRM continental Secretariat led many efforts to achieve the above-mentioned objectives. First, the Secretariat set a better follow- up communication system with the APRM national structures National Governance Council, national Secretariats or Commissions and focal point offices), _to implement more activities in the member states, rather than hosting them in continental meetings (see It should also be noted that the continental APRM Secretariat has made many efforts to achieve the above objectives.

Firstly, the Secretariat has established a better follow-up communication system with the national APRM structures (National Governance Council, National Secretariats or Commissions and Focal Point Offices) to conduct more activities in member states instead of holding them at continental meetings (see Figure 7). Secondly, the APRM technical experts have initiated an internal process to update the traditional governance assessment questionnaire - which included over 190 indicators on governance issues - to include some indicators from Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. The updated questionnaire still needs to be validated by member states, and the length of the approval process usually limits the APRM to address governance issues based on recent developments on the continent and to work in line with global development agendas.

Figure 6 APRM Institutional Structures at national and continental levels



(Source: Author -based on APRM statute)

The APRM's improved research and published papers were also mentioned by respondents. Reputable academic institutions were invited to contribute to the methodology and methods of the APRM reviews. Some of these institutions, as observed, acknowledged the mechanism's new innovative assessment products, including targeted reviews focusing on thematic governance challenges or specific issues alongside governance bottlenecks or Agenda 2063 governance reports. Countries such as Uganda, Zambia, Namibia, Djibouti, and Sierra Leone have asked the APRM to participate in these reviews. However, bringing these reports to citizens and implementing the recommendations remains a major challenge in some countries.

It should also be noted that Member States are even more eager to participate in the APRM governance review during the 2016 to 2019 period. Countries such as Egypt, Senegal, Uganda, Niger, and Mozambique have requested the review, while others such as Kenya, and South Africa are expected to complete the governance review by 2022. The call for universal adherence to the APRM also seemed to have an impact as more countries joined the Secretariat during the same period. Forty-one African countries will join the mechanism by 2021, up from twenty-three countries in 2015.

The APRM's engagement in the preparation of the Africa Governance Report (AGR) and the broad-based consultations have given the APRM a strong niche as Africa's in-house body that promotes dialogue among various stakeholders on the challenges of good governance. This is also much needed as for the first-time civil society, women and youth are invited to reflect on governance challenges on the continent for a continental report produced by African bodies.

Against these reforms and recognitions, the technical and administrative competencies of the APRM should be strengthened, as respondents noted. For example, follow-up of reviews requires technical skills and availability of resources that the Secretariat lacks. Moreover, the AU's process of integrating the APRM after revising the mandate and its structure took over five years until the AU adopted the new structure of the APRM in August 2021.

The APRM's expanded mandate, which pushes the mechanism to play a role in monitoring and evaluating the aspirations of Agenda 2063 and the APRM's role as an early warning tool for conflict prevention on the continent, is also perceived with scepticism by some AU officials. Lack of communication and fear of confusion between the mandates of APRM, APSA and AGA are the main reasons for this.

As explained in the interviews on the mandates of AU bodies, it was also noted that APRM efforts and activities are being expanded instead of focusing on governance review and follow-up of national action plans (NPOAs). Above all, the lack of communication tools prevents the mechanism from being noticed or recognised. Therefore, the communication strategy of the APRM should be improved to make these processes and products visible and accessible.

The APRM continues to face criticism on the credibility of some technical reports, which was attributed by some interviewees to the influence of member states in the review process. One interviewee stressed that "sovereign states continue to dominate the APRM's dialogues or reforms despite the improved quality of the reports". Accessibility to reports across the continent has improved, but not all country reports are accessible, and it is of great importance for the member state to (dis)share the report publicly or at the national level."

Another study that looks at assessing the impact of APRM reports in some countries comes to the same conclusion, as the author points out "*APRM member states preferred to keep control over the mechanism's mandate to avoid severe critics against democratisation. Further, the fact that the review results and recommendations must be consulted and approved by the member state raises many doubts on the degree of autonomous and independent reviewing."*

In light of the above, the findings and analysis suggest the following:

1. The APRM, as an agent, supports member states with the necessary information relevant to good governance, especially with the extended mandate. Thanks to its national structures, the mechanism can lobby to a certain extent within the territory of the principal by coordinating with national structures.

2. However, the tasks entrusted to the APRM, which are voluntary and non-binding, have not enabled the mechanism to introduce/monitor the implementation of the National Plan of Action within the framework of the tasks entrusted by the Principals (the states). Therefore, the impact of the APRM on promoting good governance on the continent remains minimal.

3. The overlap between the activities of the APRM and AGA has further hampered the implementation of good governance interventions and assessments. hereby referred to as policy coherence.

5.2 Horizontal coherence and evaluation of good governance programs among AU organs [32]

As outlined in Chapter 4, emphasised various institutional deficits between the AUC and other organs and mechanisms to improve horizontal coherence, particularly in the policy areas of good governance. Interviewees cited a variety of reasons, including the lack of a platform to evaluate the performance of the organs, lack *of synergies and soil- based organs approach, lack of parameters to assess coherence between the organs and relevance of their programs to one another besides political patronage and competition between AU over the support of member states.*

Interviewees also agreed with the strategic and central role of the AU Commission as a key actor for African countries in the implementation of continental programmes and visions. Many of them referred to the Commission as a secretariat and important action and information centre for member states. The role of the AU Commission in monitoring and following up Agenda 2063 is recognised, although further improvements are needed.

On the other hand, the AUC-AGA horizontal cooperation reflects an apparent failure to improve coherence in good governance policy areas within the Commission. The

[32] Horizontal coherence means understanding coordination across policy areas for enhancing policy impact – look back at the analytical framework

Political Affairs Division, which oversees the activities and programmes of the AGA Secretariat, rhetorically advises on specific policy areas. These policy areas include: 1) election monitoring to promote democratisation on the continent, 2) dialogue with the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) on peace and conflict challenges, and the promotion of various political dialogues among African youth and women.

Other departments or committees, such as the Public Service Committee, are part of the AU Commission and work on issues related to the fight against corruption and the implementation of the African Charter on Public Service Delivery on the continent. However, some interviewees felt that the Commission has failed to reach out to African citizens and even public servants to inform them about the Union and how it supports certain programmes. It also remains unclear how the programmes and activities implemented by the Commission and its affiliated departments are aligned or impact on good governance and the promotion of democracy on the continent.

It has been observed in many fora and continental discussions that the AGA Secretariat acts in a more cohesive and inclusive manner compared to other departments of the Commission at the Member State level. In line with the mandate of AGA and the Rules of Procedure, the AGA platform, with the support of the Secretariat, focuses on specific thematic areas: 1) democracy; 2) human rights and transitional justice; 3) humanitarian affairs; 4) socio-economic service delivery and urbanisation; and 5) constitutionalism and rule of law.[33]

However, the AGA platform and the Secretariat do not work efficiently because the dominance of the Political Affairs Department over Secretariat initiatives and administrative procedures, including budget approvals, has frustrated Secretariat members. In addition, the Strategic Planning Division, which is responsible for setting the reporting framework on Agenda 2063, has not consulted the Secretariat on either the development of the reporting framework or the reporting process. .

It is therefore safe to say that intra-institutional coordination between Commission departments or related structures concerned with promoting good governance is quite

[33] AGA Secretariat, African Governance Architecture (AGA) Framework. Unpublished strategic note, April 2020.

weak. This was confirmed by respondents from AU institutions who complained about a lack of communication and information sharing or joint planning between departments within the Commission.

In relation to this point, many respondents feel that the Commission has ignored the input of other institutions or mechanisms when adopting the Medium-Term Strategic Plan (2016-2019). Thus, it is easy to see that the AUC has not synchronised the policy areas of good governance with other organs such as the APRM.

In addition to the problems with alignment within the Commission, it can be observed that the APRM's engagement in the implementation of good governance programmes, on the one hand, and in relation to AGA, on the other, has not been as smooth as anticipated. The visibility of the APRM at the continental level has increased since 2018, thanks to the revitalisation process and related reforms and programmes across the continent. The revitalisation of national APRM structures, including secretariats to implement programmes at national level, including those with AUC and AGA, has made the APRM more visible and proactive.

Several of those interviewed in Chapter four also noted that the relationship between the APRM as a specialised organ and the AGA platform is quite unclear. The APRM is supposed to support the domestication of codes and standards, i.e., ACDEG rather than rampant activities. However, it is noted that the APRM lacks the financial resources to support AGA in domesticating AU codes and standards (see box 3).

Although the APRM core governance questionnaire includes indicators to assess ACDEG in the country under review, actual implementation of the declaration at national levels is difficult to achieve [34]. Further, as one interviewee commented, "*APRM seems to duplicate some work, i.e., the youth and women strategies while AGA has already set the same policies for implementation in partnership with all the platform members."*

[34] AU Commission Agenda 2063 Continental Report, February 2019, Addis Ababa.

Box 3: African Regional Governance Instruments and Standards

1. Lagos Plan of Action (1980)
2. African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981/1986)
3. Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (1985)
4. African Charter of Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (1990)
5. African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990)
6. The Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (1991)
7. Grand Bay (Mauritius) Declaration (1999)
8. The African Platform on the Right to Education (1999)
9. Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation ---Solemn Declaration (2000)
10. Declaration on Framework for an OAU Response to Unconstitutional Changes of Government (2000)
11. Constitutive Act of the African Union (2000/2001)
12. The NEPAD Declaration (2001)
13. The NEPAD Framework Documents
14. Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance (2002)
15. Declaration on Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa (2002)
16. The AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (2003)
17. The Maputo Declaration on Gender Mainstreaming and the Effective Participation of Women in the African Union (2003)
18. Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004)
19. Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007)

Source: APRM Deepening the Review Proposal

The Autonomy of the mechanism also remains critical -and dependant on the political will of AU member states- to either empower national structures to implement AU standards and codes, or to pursue the implementation of the National Plan of Action (NPOA) that emerged from the governance review.

One of the key examples developed by AGA and APRM reflecting a sense of horizontal coherence is the development of African Governance Report (AGR) The report has been developed in compliance with the decision of the 28th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (Assembly of the AU) of January 2017, Assembly/AU/Dec. 631 (XXVIII). This decision had called for the APRM to be empowered to track implementation and oversee monitoring and evaluation of the key governance areas on the continent[35].

The 2019 AGR was conceptualised in partnership and wide consultations with various partners and regional experts across the continent, led by the APRM and AGA. To

[35] The decision was supported by **Assembly/AU/Decl.4 (XXX)–**Declaration on the Commemoration of the 15th Anniversary of the APRM January 2018. The declaration called for strengthening the capacity of the APRM to deliver on its extended mandate, and enhance its functional autonomy, including developing a report on the state of governance in Africa in collaboration with the African Governance Architecture

ensure the report's credibility, a designated survey was broadly dismantled across the continent to stock take on the state of governance in four thematic areas: Constitutionalism, Peace and Security, Development-Governance Nexus, and Transformative leadership. The report is one of the exceptional "home-grown" reports which provide member states and experts with an accurate, reliable, and fair assessment of governance on the continent within a complex international political context. The 2019 version addressed the referred thematic areas of governance with explicit recommendations, as explained in box.4 (AGA, 2019).

Accordingly, these observations alongside interviewees reflections suggested the following

1. The horizontal coherence between policies relevant to good governance was also compromised by the lack of vertical coherence.

2. The unwillingness of AU bodies to cooperate and plan policy objectives together has led to confusion over who does what and in which area of good governance, i.e., corruption, elections, public service delivery and setting appropriate governance indicators, etc.

3. The historically weak vertical coherence between the AUC and the APRM has been exacerbated by intra-institutional challenges between the AGA and the AUC and has derailed horizontal coherence.

4. The cooperation and programmes of AGA and APRM seem to be better aligned, especially in the joint planning of AGA. However, the sustainability of these activities will be tested in the coming years.

5.3 Political coherence and coordination among member states to empower/derail AU organs to promote good governance

Policy coherence to promote good governance is explicitly emphasised in Agenda 2063, as most interviewees expressed in chapter four. However, interviewees distinguished between verbal or written political commitments, which may be contained in official declarations or decisions of member states, and political national ownership to take Agenda 2063 and the promotion of good governance seriously at national level.

Interviewees also noted that some coordination task forces/committees set up by the AU Commission are useful in ensuring proper coordination between member states and the organs involved in following up the agenda, monitoring and evaluation. In this short section, we highlight some of these coordination structures that served to create policy coherence for better coordination between Member States and the organs.

5.3.1 Agenda 2063 Ministerial Committee

The Agenda 2063 Ministerial Committee was established in 2018 to bring together Member States and AU organs involved in the implementation of Agenda 2063 programmes through regular meetings. Special attention was given to the continental projects, as observed, i.e., Africa, continental free trade area, free movement of citizens and not all aspirations. In addition, Member States are also informed of the technical work of the Commission to ensure implementation, monitoring and follow-up of the agenda. The Committee meets regularly (every two or three months) to discuss the implementation of Agenda 2063 with the Vice-Chair, AU institutions, and regional economic councils.

The value of this committee as a reliable platform between African countries and the organs was highlighted. It is also noted that the committee provides guidance at all levels and valuable recommendations from all partners. In view of the above, the APRM, as an autonomous body, was not invited to participate the committee meetings until 2020. This was seen as very negative for institutional coherence among AU organs. It also disrupted communication between member states and the organs on good governance issues

5.3.2. Agenda 2063 Ambassadorial Committee and Technical Working Group (TWG)

The Committee of Ambassadors consists of representatives of the PRC (Committee of Permanent Representatives) of African Ambassadors. The Committee meets regularly with the Agenda 2063 TWG to be informed of progress and challenges. It provides technical oversight and support to the Commission in monitoring and evaluating the Agenda and in budgetary allocations. However, it should be emphasised that until 2017, there were no Ambassadors or Ministerial Committees for Agenda 2063. In addition to a fully-fledged coordinating body at the AU, the committee was observed as another institutional level without any real technical impact.

The Technical Working Group (TWG) which works as a joint task team is dedicated to preparing the continental report on Agenda 2063. The working group was designated to be inclusive and reflects complementarity between AU organs. It includes representatives from APRM, AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, AFCBF, African Development Bank and RECs representatives. The TWG has been working on designating stipulated responsibilities for each organ and conduct regular meetings.

In terms of coherence between these levels, respondents emphasised the need for a structure or monitoring mechanism to ensure policy coherence for planning and joint activities beyond the regular meetings on Agenda 2063 activities. It was expected that the Ministerial Committee on Agenda 2063 would serve as such a mechanism, but unfortunately all bodies dealing with Agenda 2063 have individual interests at the forefront and cannot devote time to policy integration issues, as observations and interviews confirmed.

Furthermore, the APRM has been excluded from these committees until 2019. Participant observations suggest that the bodies continue to pursue their own mandate, whether or not it is linked or synergistic with other bodies. The definition of good governance seems to be attractive, so that the organs benefit from it when they apply for funds for good governance programmes. For example, the APRM has been allocated a budget for this purpose, but the Commission also receives a similar budget to

carry out similar programmes, which puts pressure on the APRM to carry out its activities independently due to lack of funds.

Another senior expert reflected that "*Good governance is a catch-up all term which provides a legitimate reason for all organs and divisions to benefit from*." For example, three departments (mainly Political Affairs, Peace and Security, and Environmental Integration) dealt with governance from a single angle, but the political departments in the Commission "emphasised their supremacy in this area, while the APRM is only meant to complement what they do". Therefore, some interviewees stressed, the APRM was sometimes displaced by regional meetings or policy formulation meetings.

Despite these efforts, respondents raised several restrictive measures that can be taken by member states - not necessarily the AU's largest donors - to impede the activities of the Commission or other bodies. Restrictive measures, as highlighted by respondents in chapter four, include interference in the administration of the Commission, the establishment of subcommittees to deal with programming issues, and references to the recruitment of staff.

It can be observed that these kinds of practises can also weaken the political coherence of the Union in the long term. These practises include the creation of micro-management bodies within the Commissions and clearly affect the accountability and autonomy of the Commission to conduct its own business. Moreover, the delays in budget contributions by some countries do not bode well for their commitment to Agenda 2063. Member States should instead focus on adhering to the Union's codes and standards without further delays and rethink their sovereignty-conscious approach to the organs.

Interviewees and observations also advised that the political coherence of the union can only be pursued if the AU organs arrange themselves internally -instead of working on isolated ground and create a sense of institutional harmony that can be presented to member states. Only then can the Principals understand and appreciate their contributions towards regional programmes including the promotion of good governance.

Observations, documents and even the results of interviews also suggest that policy coherence within the Commission is imperative to reflect a coherent approach to policy making before the principals. In addition, other organs, agencies, and mechanisms such as AUDA-NEPAD, AGA and APRM should maintain systematic communication and willingness to cooperate in the implementation and evaluation Agenda 2063.

In conclusion, it can be argued that political coherence is not optimal at the Union level or among AU member states despite the adoption of Agenda 2063 "*The Africa We Want"*. The slow in the implementation of AU codes and standards at the national level, as well as the lack of political ownership, commitment, and sovereignty barriers, pose major challenges to overall policy coherence. Despite various institutional levels created to facilitate dialogue and communication between AU organs and member states, member states exercise hegemony over the functioning of the Union.

Applying the Principal–Agent theory and its assumptions to assess vertical and horizontal coherence among the selected AU organs and bodies has helped to understand the extent to which these organs or mechanisms are useful, empowered, and autonomous to fulfil their mandate. While they are perceived as useful agents for the principal, they are not sufficiently empowered or delegated enough to be sufficiently autonomous.

Another visible issue speaks to "*insufficient trust*" between the principals and agents (organs and bodies) despite the contractual agreement between both sides. The member states clearly asked the Commission to manage some regional programmes, including monitoring and evaluation of regional visions, i.e., Agenda 2063, which includes good governance promotion as one of its aspirations. Although the Commission has been starting and leading creative policies, i.e., Agenda 2063, performance at national level remains weak, with limited capacities of the organs to liaise with national stakeholders constantly.

Last but not least, the findings suggest that the institutional hazards and lack of vertical and horizontal coherence between these organs have led to incoherent policies and thus a lack of policy integration to promote good governance on the continent. The lack of joint policy formulation and planning, monitoring mechanisms and adequate

communication flow, as well as interpersonal considerations, affect coordination among the organs and accordingly their ability to deliver the results expected by the principals is ineffective and needs to be improved.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

> *"No African country is a replica of another, and no African society is a mirror image of another."*
>
> *Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance (NEPAD, 18/6/2002)*

This study examined how the AU governance architecture, particularly the AUC in collaboration with AGA, the AUD-NEPAD and APRM, has shaped and influenced the development of a coherent continental policy framework/approach/paradigm to promote good governance in Africa under Agenda 2063 "*The Africa We Want''*. Promoting good governance has become a compelling objective of the Union since the adoption of the Joint African Position for Sustainable Development Post- 2015 and Agenda 2063 in 2013 during the Heads of State Summit in Addis Ababa. Nevertheless, progress towards good governance at the continental level remains slow. Various continental reports and academic evidence show that African governance systems are becoming increasingly complex, alongside conflicts and other socio-economic problems.

Given the theoretical gaps on the drivers of regional integration in Africa and the capacity of regional AU bodies to develop regional policies, i.e., promote good governance, one of the theories of EU integration (principal-agent theory) was used to pursue the research objectives through inductive thematic analysis. We sought to understand how each AU body - APRM, AUC, NEPAFD - planned specific interventions to promote good governance on the continent and what tasks were assigned to them. In addition, the research sought to;

- Assess the appropriateness of the AU's existing institutional and coordination mechanisms (AGA-AUC/APRM/AUDA-NEPAD) in promoting "policy coherence for good governance".

- Identify challenges of AUC sub-structures such as AGA, AUDA-NEPAD, and APRM with regards to policy coherence for promoting good governance; and

- Determine specific interventions needed to enhance policy coherence among AU organs towards the attainment of Aspiration 3 (good governance).

Policy coherence among AU institutions has also increased since the 2016 institutional reforms led by Rwandan President Paul Kagame and supported by other member states to improve the functioning of the Union and its institutions. In this study, I have drawn on the OECD concept of policy coherence for sustainable development, looking at its application in a continental rather than a national context. I have also tried to focus more on the promotion of policy coherence for good governance to avoid the broad application of the concept.

In order to unravel the complexities of policy coherence at the African Union level, the study developed an analytical framework for the key drivers of policy coherence at the regional level. This has helped to understand the aspects of policy, vertical and horizontal coherence among selected organs of the AU (APRM, AUDA-NEPAD, AUC) to formulate/implement coherent policies to promote good governance in the region. Research methods used included document analysis, synthesis of primary data (interviews with 16 experts from the continent) and participant observations.

The study also used the Metcalfe Policy Coherence Scale to understand the extent to which AU staff are aware of this scale and the extent to which it is implemented by their institutions and concerned departments. Interestingly, the interviews revealed that awareness or knowledge of policy coherence issues or approach is low among these organs. This has led to a new conceptual recommendation to use the scale not only at the national level but also at the regional level.

The importance of this study lies not only in refining the concept of policy coherence at the regional level or in developing a particular analytical framework for analysing the policy coherence dilemma at the AU level, but also in its capacity to act. The findings and reflections of the African interviewees were extremely thorough and called for the Union to revise its policy coherence approach. The research findings also call for change within and between these organs and selected bodies (AGA and APRM) to better fulfil their mandate. The implications beyond this immediate research are also

imperative to contribute to the African literature on policy coherence and the case for AU regional integration from a principal-agent perspective.

6.1 Findings of analysis

The research has produced a number of findings that suggest ways to improve policy coherence at the Union level and between the AUC, the APRM and AUDA-NEPAD.

First, the functions and mandates delegated to the AUC by its principals appear to be much broader and deeper than any other organ. Therefore, the AUC enjoys a sense of empowerment and autonomy that other organs and autonomous bodies do not. However, there are three points that are significant in relation to the mandates and should be highlighted:

1. The mandates of the AU Commission and other organs/mechanisms examined in this study are quite broad and therefore lead to misinterpretation and misunderstanding between the designated organs or bodies. For example, the AU assembly's decision to recommend that the APRM play a role in the monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 seems very broad and needs further clarity so that each organ can focus on its own area and improve its work. The APRM's interference in some activities creates tensions with other organs due to a lack of consultation with them, as can be seen from the comments of some interviewees.

2. Despite the increasing cooperation between AGA and the APRM in the last three years (2016–2019), the mandates of AGA and the APRM in the areas of cooperation need to be further clarified and determined to avoid redundancy and waste of resources. Moreover, the new mandates of some bodies, i.e., the expanded mandate of the APRM, are causing confusion among many AU staff and even some AU partners. As Fukuyama argued, even if political principals have created broad mandate, they can issue other mandates regarding how broad mandate is to be executed. (Fukuyama, 2013. p.14)

3. The lack of powers and autonomy of the AU organs affects their ability to properly fulfil their intended broad mandates. Although the Commission is the most autonomous, the principal seems to set detailed rules for its management, resulting in it being a subordinate bureaucracy and micromanaged by the principal. Therefore, the political leadership of the Commission–AU Chairperson office- shall consider the technical staff observations on the member states' interventions in the Commission's daily work. The sovereign governance practised by some, if not most, AU member states clearly affects the ability of these institutions to perform their functions.

Secondly, the functioning of autonomous bodies or institutional and coordinating mechanisms such as APRM and AGA remains a challenge. Both structures still have many challenges to overcome, mainly because both are based on soft law and legally non-binding recommendations for member states. The lack of legal powers granted exclusively to these structures by AU laws or treaties has relinquished their presence and influence on governance change and political transformation on the continent.

Recommendations proposed by APRM reviews or AGA platform meetings to improve political, economic, and social governance aspects will only be effective if the reviewed country is convinced to implement them. Therefore, APRM member states need to discuss how the reviews should be more effective, technically sound, and neutral, and realistically implementable in the short to medium term.

Lack of human and financial capacity negatively affects the functioning of these mechanisms. According to respondents' comments, APRM and AGA activities are largely carried out by donor funding. In addition, the revitalisation and restructuring of the APRM has taken several years, leaving the organ in a transitional phase from 2015 to 2019, until it is fully integrated into the Union in August 2021. Therefore, member states should support good governance programmes as well as AUDA-NEPAD budget for continental programmes to strengthen APRM and AGA. Moreover, joint budgeting can be even more effective to avoid redundancies between organs.

Third, the policy incoherence between these institutions appears to be due to a variety of reasons, including 1) the lack of asymmetric communication and limited coordination between the organs; 2) political patronage and interpersonal relations, 3) competition for resources, and 4) the lack of institutional mechanisms to ensure coordination of programming, budgeting, and evaluation, as well as the lack of clear parameters to assess the degree of coherence or policy integration. The Union simply lacks a monitoring mechanism for policy coherence, and AU staff awareness of the concept itself remains unclear. The negative responses of some respondents to the application of the Metcalfe scale for policy coherence at the low levels of the scale simply mean that there is uncertainty about setting common priorities and implementing the vision between AU organs is uncertain.

On the other hand, the study sheds light on some initiatives taken by the organs to improve policy coherence. These include the appointment of a Policy Coherence Advisor in the Office of the AU Chairperson since 2018 to address the problems of policy incoherence. In addition, the adoption of AGR as a joint report of the AGA Secretariat and the APRM is another step towards horizontal coherence between the two. Also, the establishment of the Agenda 2063 Technical Working Group since 2018 is a positive step to bring all these organs together to address issues and practises of monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063.

Fourth, reporting on good governance issues remains problematic on the continent. Although the APRM's expanded mandate supports its role in national reporting on governance frameworks, progress is slow. Moreover, the unwillingness of the mandator to share information or progress towards goal three is quite alarming. According to the first continental report on Agenda 2063, most countries - which reported on the overall progress of the agenda - did not provide sufficient data on the indicator for goal three. The APRM is a useful actor that can work towards regular reporting on this goal through coordination with national structures within the territory of the commissioner.

Fifth and finally, the political commitment and ownership of Agenda 2063 by member states is quite uneven and contested. While the adoption of Agenda 2063 is a milestone for the further economic, political and social integration of the continent, funding for the Agenda remains low and does not reflect member states' agreement to fund key

programmes from AU member states' contributions. The over-dependence on donor funds raises doubts not only about the political independence of the Union, but also about the direction of implementation and prioritisation of programmes. Moreover, the restrictive measures practised at AU institutions, i.e., political directives, budget cuts, interference in personnel matters and HR, clearly affect the accountability of the actors and cast doubts on the interest of the principals in strengthening the Union as a regional actor.

6.2 Contribution to knowledge and implications for policy and research

This study contributes to the prevailing literature in Africa on the role of regional bodies in promoting regional policies as part of the regional integration process. The introduction of the concept of policy coherence remains essential to go beyond the traditional coordination aspects. The aim of the study was to understand how AU organs have acted under specific mandates and functions to enhance policy coherence to promote good governance on the continent.

Building on the thorough research of the United Nations, the OECD, and various studies on policy coherence, I have tried to introduce the concept in a way that is applicable at the regional level. The study proposed a refined concept of policy coherence at the regional level as follows "*the level of communication, inter-institutional alignment and coordination between official regional institutions to frame policy objectives and instruments for the promotion of regional integration agendas i.e., Agenda 2063."*

Theoretically, the study used principal-agent theory to examine the degree of coherence among the organs and their capacity for autonomous operationalisation in initiating, implementing, and monitoring good governance measures. The research findings, based on interviews, observations, and document analysis, conclude that none of the organs or bodies examined in this study - i.e., AGA or APRM - meet all the assumptions of the principal-agent theory to act as a supranational organ. The AUC is considered by all respondents to be the strongest, most delegated, and most functional organ compared to AUDA-NEPAD, APRM or the AGA platform. Nevertheless, none of the

organs is fully delegated or empowered by the principals to operate with sufficient autonomy. The following table summarises the main findings on the applicability of the conditions of PA to the selected AU organs.

Table 7 Applicability of Principal-Agent theory conditions on the AU organs

Principal-Agent theory Assumptions	AUC	AUDA-NEPAD	AGA	APRM
Support member states with necessary information	Yes	Yes	Not visible	Yes
Assist member states in agenda setting and policy initiation at regional level	yes	To some extent	No depending on state request	Yes, with NPOA
Solving problems of incomplete contracts and taking necessary regional actions	yes	Yes, continental agreements	No	Yes
Reduce instability in policy implementation and take responsibility for unpopular decisions	Yes	No	No	No
Lowering transaction costs that might prevent cooperation and sorting out complex issues	Depending on the topic	Yes	No	To some extent
Provide technical expertise when necessary	No various human and technical deficits	Yes	Sometimes	Yes
Lobby inside the principal's territory	No	No	No	Yes with limitations

Source: Author

In addition, the study consulted the Metcalfe Policy Coherence Scale, which is intended to be applicable to the assessment of regional bodies. This was a useful exercise as respondents were able to provide further insights into the modus operandi of their organs and whether or not they are able to realise regional visions.

The development of the scale that can be consulted at the regional level can also be one of the contributions to research by suggesting the adaptation of the scale in similar studies at the continental level. The following table compares the original

Metcalfe scale that can be used at the national level with the redefined scale that I propose to use at the continental level.

Metcalfe Scale for policy coherence	Redefined scale for policy coherence – regional level (suggested by theauthor)
9. Unified Government strategy 8. Setting common priorities 7. Establishing common parameters 6. Arbitration of trade-offs & conflicts 5. Search for policy consensus. 4. Avoiding policy divergences. 3. Consultations among ministers 2. Exchange of information. 1. Ministers manage independently within their own jurisdictions	9. Unified continental vision /associated implementation strategies 8. Setting common priorities 7. Establishing common parameters 6. Arbitration of trade-offs & conflicts 5. Search for policy consensus among the organs 4. Avoiding policy divergences. 3. Consultations among principals and organs /between organs 2. Exchange of information among organs 1. Directorates/divisions manage independently within their own jurisdictions

This study, guided by the methods and analytical framework employed, remains a starting point for further exploration of empirical and theoretical issues related to the relationships between principled representatives and policy coherence at the African Union level. Taking into account the above, the study leads to further theoretical questions on the role of other actors, i.e., the RECs and the Pan-African Parliament, in promoting policy coherence through cascading and promoting good governance at the regional/national level. What is their role? Are they also affected by the institutional reforms and what improvements are being introduced to improve coordination with the Union institutions?

Further research could be conducted by redefining the Metcalfe scale of policy coherence to understand institutional and implementation coherence among AU organs. More advanced quantitative methods can be used – at PhD level- to explore the drivers of policy coherence between the APRM, the AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, and key Regional Economic Communities (RECs). This could broaden the scope of research, but other organs should also be consulted, i.e., RECs, especially because they play a crucial role

in the domesticating and implementing Agenda 2063 and Aspiration three in particular.

Another reflexive focus of such a study could be the role of the APRM in promoting good governance through case studies from some African countries, especially with regard to the various reforms and revision of instruments taking place within the organ to adapt to global and regional updates and strategies. Such an academic study will help to understand how the Principal–Agent relationships can influence the promotion of good governance at the national level.

6.3 Policy recommendations

1. Given the importance of this work for improving policy coherence amongst AU organs and mechanisms, a number of recommendations are suggested based on the research findings. The following recommendations can be useful in case this study can be transformed into a published work in the future: The expanded and renewed mandates of selected AU organs and autonomous bodies, i.e., AGA and APRM, are discussed in detail. The continuing confusion regarding these bodies remains a major obstacle to a proper interpretation of their mandates.

2. A coordination mechanism is needed to improve joint planning, budgeting and overall coordination between AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and APRM activities and annual programmes. So far, it is quite confusing how AGA, the AUC Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the APRM implement major programmes to promote good governance on the continent without understanding how they rely on each other or the impact this has on African societies. Inter-institutional coordination and institutional harmony is needed to improve vertical and horizontal coherence between these bodies and agencies.

3. There is a need to raise awareness of the problems of policy incoherence within the Union. It is also necessary to develop certain parameters and indicators to assess the coherence of policies. Therefore, the Metcalfe scale for policy co-

herence can be redefined as a first step to introduce a board-based impact assessment for policy coherence at the Union level or at the level of individual organs.

4. Reporting on the progress of on the continent needs to be improved. A catalyst for incentives can be proposed. First, the political will of member states to share information on sensitive political issues, such as, violence, corruption and service delivery should be encouraged by the organs. Second, the role of the APRM national structures needs to be strengthened and supported so they can assist the continental Secretariat in reporting on Aspiration 3 and the overall governance reviews. Thirdly, AU organs should provide more donor funding to support capacity building on various governance issues, especially on issues of transparency, accountability, integrity, and public service delivery at the national level.

5. AU member states or principals clearly need consensus on exclusive competences for the African Union to operate with more autonomy. While the five largest contributors to the AU budget (Algeria, Egypt, South Africa, Nigeria, and Morocco) can play an influential role in asserting the role and vision of the Union, the rest of the continent needs to raise its voice on how the Union should be strengthened. The unwillingness to give up sovereignty issues in favour of strengthening the Union will lead to fragile outcomes of Agenda 2063.

6. The degree of independence and the powers of the AU organs must be improved. For the Union to succeed and act as an effective actor, member states must surrender sovereignty. This will not only strengthen the Union but also set standards for continental politics, i.e., good governance and peace and conflict resolution.

7. Member states shall also adhere to the recommendations of the AU Assembly of January 2018 regarding the golden rules for financial and budgetary management[36] to improve the implementation of Agenda 2063, including the flagship programmes on good governance. The decision recommends that the Union budget must be predictable credible and that financial flows must be reliable. Member states' contributions should cover a minimum threshold of the budget.

8. Countries remain committed to their decisions and accept the supervisory that the Union is supposed to exercise. Certain countries remain committed to some issues until they escalate. for example, Rwanda held the chair of the AU in 2017. The country signed and ratified the charter of the AU human rights court. After issues relevant to human rights in Africa were discussed by the court, Rwanda withdrew from the court.

9. The APRM needs to be empowered and follow a bold approach in displaying critical governance issues related to human rights and improve quality of reporting on good governance as a comprehensive concept. The APRM needs to coordinate with other governance organs to ensure that national mechanisms are put in place to underpin the effectiveness of governance systems at the member states level, rather than showcasing specific aspects of governance in each country.

[36] For further info, please visit https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38739-doc-report_on_financing_of_the_union_jun_2020_002.pdf.

Appendices

Annex 1. Decisions pertinent to APRM structures and integration into the African Union[37]

Decision	Recommendations and consequence on APRM functionality
AU Assembly Decision on the African Peer Review Mechanism (Assembly/AU/Dec.198 (XI) taken at Sharm El-Sheikh in July 2008	Decision authorising the establishment of the APRM structures namely the APRM Forum, the APRM Panel and the APRM Secretariat as part of the processes and structures of the African Union
APR Forum Decision on the Operating Procedures of the APRM of January 2012	"The structures of the APRM shall include the Forum, Focal Points Committee, Panel and Secretariat".
AU Assembly Decision (Assembly/AU/Draft/Dec.11 (XXXIII) on the integration of the APRM into the AU at the 23rd AU Assembly session in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea in June 2014	Requested the AUC and the APRM Secretariat to consult on the practical modalities involved in the integration of the APRM into the AU system, taking into account the fact that the APRM: • is a voluntary organisation of AU member states • exercises autonomy in its financial and budgetary processes legal personality, structure, administrative, human resources, and financial management shall be based on the standard procedures of the AU system.
25th APR Forum in Nairobi, Kenya (26 August 2016)	Approved the Draft Statute for APRM Integration into the AU Structures. The statue is provisionally approved, pending final approval by the AU Assembly. The Statute establishes the APRM as a specialised agency of the African Union
AU Assembly/AU/Draft/Dec.14 (XXVIII) on the Outcome of the Retreat of the Assembly of the African Union o the Institutional Reform of the African Union of January 2017	Section B paragraph (v) states that "The African Peer Review Mechanism should be strengthened *to track implementation and oversee monitoring and evaluation in key governance areas of the continent*."
AU Assembly/AU/Draft/Dec.10 (XXVIII) on the Revitalisation of the APRM of January 2017	Paragraph 6 welcomes and supports the recommendations in the Outcome of the Retreat of the Assembly of the African Union o the Institutional Reform of the African Union for the APRM to be strengthened to track implementation and oversee monitoring and evaluation in key governance areas of the continent and requests the APRM to take necessary steps towards the attainment of this goal. Paragraph 7 states that "the AU Assembly welcomes the Forum's commitment to the revitalisation of the APRM, with section 7 (i) specifically noting the commitment to reposition APRM to play a monitoring and evaluation role of

[37] Source: APRM Continental Secretariat. The Author is grateful to the strategic planning Unit at APRM Secretariat for providing such a concise summary on APRM-AU Assembly decisions related to APRM.

	AU Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals" Paragraph 12 "takes note of the Statutes on the APRM integration into the AU, provisionally adopted by the APR Forum, and duly provides to consider for adoption in June 2017." Paragraph 13 "directs the APRM to provide support to member states in the field of Rating Agencies"
Assembly/AU/Dec.686(XXX) on the Report of the APRM January 2018	Paragraph 6 "REITERATES that the APRM remains the premier homegrown, African good governance tool conceived in 2003 and voluntarily acceded to by thirty-seven (37) member states representing 67% of AU member states, more than half of whom twenty-one (21) have undergone the review" Paragraph 9 "WELCOMES steps taken to position the APRM as an early warning tool for conflict prevention on the continent, in the context of harmony and synergy between the APRM, the African Peace and Security Architecture, and the African Governance Architecture"
Assembly/AU/Decl.4(XXX)– Declaration on the Commemoration of the 15th Anniversary of the APRM January 2018	• "Recalling our commitment to the fundamental principles and objectives of the AU, as enshrined in the Constitutive Act, the founding instrument of the AU and comprising, inter alia, the promotion of democratic principles and institutions, popular participation, good governance, human and peoples' rights; the promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent; and the acceleration of the political and socio-economic integration of Africa…'' Reaffirming that the principles and objectives of the APRM are themselves intrinsic to the afore-mentioned principles and objectives of the AU… Inspired by the vision of the APRM as an African-owned and African-led platform for self-assessment, peer-learning, and experience-sharing in the pursuit of the highest possible standards of good political, economic and corporate governance as well as broad-based and sustainable socio-economic development; • "Recognising that the primary purpose of the APRM is to foster the adoption of policies, standards and practices leading to political stability, high economic growth, sustainable development

	and accelerated regional and continental economic integration." • Recalling that the mandate of the APRM is to encourage participating States in ensuring that their policies and practices conform to the agreed political, economic, and corporate governance values, codes and standards, and to achieve mutually agreed objectives in socio-economic development contained in the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance; • "Reaffirming the commitment to the APRM Base Document AHG/235 (XXXVIII) Annex II of July 2002 in which the APRM is described as an instrument voluntarily acceded to by member states of the African Union and as an African self-monitoring mechanism; and convinced of the imperative need for the APRM to consolidate itself as the authoritative institution on Governance within the African Union''; • "Reaffirming our commitment to the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance of January 2007, and particularly its principal objective to promote adherence to the universal values and principles of democracy and respect for human rights, thus building on the core principles of the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance;" • "Recalling that the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance stipulates that the States Parties shall promote and deepen democratic governance by implementing, inter alia, the principles and core values of the APRM;"
Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.1(XI) From November 2018	• "DECIDES to integrate the APRM budget in the statutory Union budget funded by member states; and REQUESTS the Chairperson of the Commission to propose concrete implementation modalities to the February 2019 Summit" • "REAFFIRMS the need to strengthen the capacity of the APRM to deliver on its extended mandate, and enhance its functional autonomy, including developing a report on the state of governance in Africa in collaboration with the African Governance Architecture"

	• URGES the remaining eighteen (18) member states to accelerate accession to APRM in order to achieve universality by 2023
Feb 2019 Exec Council	• "REQUESTS the Commission to urgently draft the Statute of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)"
Assembly/AU/Dec.720(XXXII) Feb 2019	• "URGES member states to develop national governance reports as a self-assessment tool, for promoting good governance, in line with the recommendations of the Report" • "REQUESTS the APRM Secretariat to provide technical support to member states in developing Country Self-Assessment Reports (CSAR) on Governance;" • "ALSO REQUESTS APRM to launch the Report officially in collaboration with AGA, and URGES all AGA Members to incorporate the Report in their Annual Work Plans;" • "DECIDES that the Africa Governance Report shall be developed by APRM, in collaboration with AGA, and shall be presented every two (2) years for consideration by the Assembly at its Ordinary Sessions" • "REAFFIRMS that the APRM remains the premier home-grown, African good governance tool conceived in 2003 and voluntarily acceded to by thirty-seven (37) member states, representing 69% of AU member states, more than half of whom, twenty-one (21), have undergone the review;" • "REDEDICATES ourselves to the cause of good governance in all its four manifestations of good political governance, sound economic governance and management, corporate governance, and inclusive and broad-based socio-economic development"

Source: APRM Continental Secretariat (Strategic Planning Directorate)

Annex II. Agreements and documents endorsed good governance promotion in Africa (1980s-2015)

Name	Year of adoption	Purpose
UNDP program of Action for Africa Economic Recovery and Development	1986	The program identified certain measures that shall be taken for reforms in trade, industrialization, agriculture while emphasizing the role of the state in leading public sector reforms and enhance governance measures.
African Alternative framework to Structural Adjustment	1989	This was a response to the failure of WB structural programs in Africa. It Identified Africa's failure to implement the WB structural adjustment programs to 3 reasons 1) weak structures of African economies and limited industrial capabilities associated with economic dependency ; 2) social structures, ethnicity and patronage that envisaged inequality ; 3) political ecosystem and lack of citizens engagement in public policy issues and thus lack enthusiasm to assist any societal initiative for development ''the crisis in Africa isn't purely economic, but rather societal and political''
African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and transformation	1990 – Arusha	The document aimed to support /complement the new alternative framework for structural Adjustment in Africa. It emphasized the notion of participation in development process. To adopt the previous framework, it emphasized that Africa's problem is not just economic but political and social in core. It rejected the aid conditionality and the harsh conditions of world bank which don't consider the role or voice of African citizens. It also encouraged dialogue between Governments and CSOs as well as sharing experiences among African countries.
Lagos plan for Economic integration	1991	The plan aimed to revive Africa's economic progress especially after the falling economic growth in 1985 and rise of Africa's debt to 80%. role of state in managing state reforms. The plan emphasized the responsibility of African states and governments to adopt coherent policies for the socioeconomic development of their nation. It also referred to the negative impact of external conditions, i.e drops of natural resources prices vs rise of oil price
Kampala document of Conference on security, stability, development, and cooperation (CSSDCA)	1991	Adherence of African countries to respect rule of law, citizen-engagement in public decision making, transparency and power rotation. Creation of mechanism to follow up on these issues was recommended yet it remains de facto till 2000.

Millennium partnership for Africa recovery (MAP) (UNDP/ECA)	OAU Summit- Sirt March 2001	Led by President Mbeki (South Africa) and supported by Nigeria and Algeria to address underdevelopment and debts challenges in Africa. MAP was adopted as a vision for the continent's revival which centralized good governance as an objective, not just a mean to improve economic development in Africa. It was highly dedicated to the role of state as Africa's failures resulted from weak capacities of states and institutions. It is the state responsibility to support basic needs. This plan is seen as cornerstone of the foundation of APRM. Although it was seen as led by ''non-Africans'', it seeks to compromise between good governance and liberal market economy as cornerstone for development in Africa. It encourages the foundation of a special good governance mechanism to enhance the understanding between AU and donors as well as strategic partners. - UNECA and UNDP supported the initiative and encourage the foundation of Peer-learning mechanism to assess governance issues (later, APRM). ECA suggested **three indicators to be assessed by APRM: representation, institutional efficiency, and economic management**
OMEGA	January 2001	Led by President of Senegale, President Abdoulaye WADE and was first presented at the Franco-Africa Summit in Yaounde, Cameroon in January 2001. It was then also presented at the OAU Extraordinary Summit in Sirte in March 2001. It was also presented in the African ministerial conference in Algiers during May 2001. The OMEGA Plan is premised on four central pillars, dealing with the building of infrastructures, including the new technologies of information and communication (ICT), education and human resource development, health, and agriculture.
New Partnership for (NEPAD)	2002	Millennium Africa Recovery Plan (MAP) and Omega Plan for Africa are seen as base for developing a third initiative the New African Initiative (NAI) which then led to the establishment of NEPAD in 2001. The Founding Member States of NEPAD included South Africa, Nigeria, Algeria, Egypt, and Senegal.
NEPAD Declaration on democracy, governance	18 June 2002	Reaffirming member states commitment to AU transformation, standards, and codes on good governance. It affirms countries commitment to work on key objectives:

		- Democracy and Good Political Governance, 2) Economic and Corporate Governance , 3) Socio-Economic Development; and 4) African Peer Review Mechanism
Post 2015 Common Africa Position	March 2014	The position was introduced to reflect of Africa's achievements and challenges to implement the Millennium Development goals. It highlights the role of good governance in accelerating development. The position endorsed five key pillars for Africa's post 2015 development agenda; 1) Pillar one: Structural economic transformation and inclusive growth Pillar Two: Science, technology, and innovation Pillar Three: People-centred development Pillar Four: Environmental sustainability, natural resources management and disaster risk management Pillar Five: Peace and Security

Annex III. Research data collection instrument

Suggested data gathering instrument: the semi-structured interviews with officials and experts from the African Union (targeted ten experts)[38]

I. Interviews with AU senior experts (AUC/AGA, APRM/AUDA-NEPAD/ member states)

Brief on the purpose of the interview:

The purpose of this interview is to strengthen the research analysis and student's knowledge of the working mechanisms of the African Union and the mandates of three vital organs: AUC, AUDA-NEPAD, and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

This is a semi-structured interview where the student highly appreciates confidentiality, respect of interviewee time as well as neutrality. The purpose is not to verdict if the AU organs are implementing Agenda 2063 successfully or not. It instead seeks to enrich the African literature on regional integration and to conceptualize on the ''policy coherence'' for the implementation of Agenda 2063, particularly Aspirations 3– Africa with good governance and peaceful societies.

The following initiated questions may guide the interviews with AU officials and beneficiaries of AU – could be mainly focusing on the AU Commission given its role as a policy initiator.

Section I: Agenda setting policy initiation, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up

[38] The interviewees are experts in their domains of AU affairs and agenda 2063- particularly Aspiration three -Good Governance in Africa. Most of them are senior experts with an age range from 35-65 years old. I conducted 18 interviews with 11 experts from AUC (Political Affairs Department, AGA secretariat, Strategic Planning Directorate, AUDA-NEAD, APRM). 7 interviews were conducted with member states and RECs representatives (4) and 3 interviewees with academic figures and development partners. Selection of interviewees was run by criteria: availability, years of experience, familiarity and relevance to the research topic and readiness to conduct the interview according to Wits ethics and rules.

- How do you assess the delegated functions by AU member states to the AUC, NEPAD and APRM to enhance the Implementation of Agenda 2063- particularly Aspirations three?

- Do you think the AU commission play the prime mover in implementing agenda 2063, as in the drafting and initiating phases of the Agenda?

- How do you assess coordination between the organs of the African Union as regard policy objectives and implementation mechanisms for promotion of good governance?? Is there a vertical collaboration/coherence amongst the three organs as regard Or it is entirely left to the Commission's departments to lead?[39]

- How frequent is the communication between your organ and the other organs of the AU?

- To what extent you think the AU Commission, APRM, AUDA-NEPAD are empowered and has a sense of autonomy and accountability for its daily work on implementing Agenda 2063 in general and aspirations 3 in particular?

- The AU Assembly in January 2017 recommended that the APRM shall be revitalized to play a role in the monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063. How do you assess the APRM expanded mandate inputs and outputs to play such a role efficiently? Do you think the APRM recent activities are aligned with the expectations of AU member states?

- What are the main challenges for policy coherence among the three mentioned organs (AUC, NEPAD, and APRM) to promote policy directives and proper coordination mechanisms for the promotion of good governance on the continent?

[39] On communication & AUC engaging other organs

- Are you aware of Metcalfe scale of policy coherence? If not, am going to ask you few questions yes or no on the implementation of Metcalf Scale

Metcalfe scale of policy coherence (1994)	AUC	AUDA-NEPAD	APRM	Observations
9. Unified Gov/ organ strategy If yes, is there a sense of (integration between these strategies of various organs)				
8. Setting common priorities				
7. Establishing common parameters				
6. Arbitration of trade-offs & conflicts				
5. Search for policy consensus.				
4. Avoiding policy divergences.				
3. Consultations among ministers (key players)				
2. Exchange of information.				
1. Ministers /executives manage independently within their own jurisdictions				

On communication with other organs:

- How do you assess the coordination mechanisms between AUC, APRM, and NEPAD over the last four years? **(AGA), TWG on agenda 2063, ministerial committee of agenda 2063**

- Has the Commission been able to engage the other two organs in its technical meetings as well as regional consultations?

- Do you think that the mentioned organs are responsive to the AUC communications and states' directives concerning the implementation and monitoring of the Agenda 2063 (Aspiration 3- promotion of good governance)?

Section II. AU Member states expectations, political commitment, institutional procedures, and restrictive mechanisms

- How do you assess the political commitment of AU member states regarding the implementation of Agenda 2063 (Aspiration 3)? How is this translated into actions (political statements, flagship projects, budget approvals, regional initiatives?

- Has the Commission established an institutionalized mechanism – i.e., agenda 2063 ministerial committee or focal points – to follow up with member states on the progress to Agenda 2063 over the last five years? If yes, what are the tools or activities, i.e., special missions, workshops? ..etc?

- Do you think that AU member states, mainly the top five leading contributors in the AU budget, impose restrictive measures on the AUC autonomy to play an active role in the implementation of Agenda 2063- aspiration three ? (Veto on initiated proposals/ this could hire/fire officials or suspension of budget…etc)

- How do you assess the inputs and conclusions of the Ministerial committee of Agenda 2063? do you think it is a proper **coordination mechanism** between AUC, member states, and other organs?

- Connecting to the previous question, to what extent you think the AUC and it substituted bodies – AGA and other divisions are following up efficiently on the implementation of Aspirations 3?

- As you know, ***APSA was founded in 2003, while AGA*** was established in 2010. The first aimed to enhance Africa's peaceful dialogue and conflict prevention while the latter aims to promote good governance, democracy, and reinforcing AU protocols on linking African citizens with their regional organs. Nevertheless, conflicts in Africa by today increased from 11 to 18 – According to a recent report published by NEPAD. On the other hand, the progress on governance reforms in the continent is sluggish.

My question is, how do you see these alarming findings? And what are the challenges that both platforms, as platforms for dialogue, face to promote the said aspirations?

- What are the required actions to be taken at national levels, especially amongst the top 5 leading contributors of AU, to pursue good governance among AU member states?

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