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POLICY ANALYSIS

SOCIAL INTEGRATION AS A COMPONENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE AFRICAN UNION CONTINENTAL INTEGRATION POLICY

Author:

Umar Kabanda

School of Transnational Governance

ISSUE 2022/19
JULY 2022

EUI SCHOOL OF TRANSNATIONAL GOVERNANCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy analysis has three aims. Firstly; to consider how social integration influences ethical professional behaviour among African regional integration practitioners, secondly; to understand how African social integration can improve trans-border practices and policies to realise the Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) and thirdly; to explore when social integration might be beneficial to the African Governance Architecture (AGA). This study employs an explanatory research methodology using a qualitative approach. The study recommends strategies to expand the reach of ACFTA and AGA in the lives of all Africans from a normative stance, considering the social variety among the African Union's 55 member nations. The paper emphasises the uniqueness of all African societies, which informs the inductive search for community pluralism. As a result, the differences identified serve as a springboard for discussions about how to achieve social integration. Deduction is also used to explain an ethical component in larger continental attempts to improve inclusiveness for more effective and efficient trans-border governance in Africa.

Author:
Umar Kabanda | Policy Leader Fellow 2021-2022, EUI School of Transnational Governance

The author would like to thank the staff of the EUI Library for their research assistance and Megan Gethin for preparing the policy paper for publication. Views expressed in this publication reflect the opinion of individual authors and not those of the European University Institute.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the perspective of African philosophy, this policy paper investigates the nature of social integration. The ideas provide a moral philosophical perspective that can guide contemporary attempts to address the difficulty of social integration in Africa's trans-border governance processes and trans-border projects.

The desire to learn more about this topic stems from the fact that nearly every African country is fighting to boost citizen engagement and participation in the regional integration agenda. On the economic front, trading under the African Free Continental Area (AfCTA) – the new African Union's trans-border trade initiative – began on 1 January 2021, with 38 of the 54 signatories having approved the Agreement by January 15, 2021 (Tralac, 2021). The AfCFTA is expected to bring together the 55 African Union members into a single market of 1.3 billion people with a combined GDP of more than US$2.2 trillion (Abrego, et al 2020). According to Yihdego (2011), the reform of the then Organisation of African Unity (OAU) goes beyond economics[1]. The transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union Commission not only restored the principles, but also introduced new political integration objectives for the continent (ibid, 569). These included the emergence of the African Governance Architecture on the policy front (AGA). The African Union's resolution to "preserve, promote, and protect human and people's rights" is renewed by the Constitutive Act. This is a new benchmark for all African countries to solidify democratic institutions and a democratic culture for good governance and the rule of law.

Moreso, Osakwe, and Poretti (2015) argue that social integration promotes civic awareness and poverty alleviation through long-term people-centred development. As a result, this paper focuses more on social transformation to ensure that all Africans have a better quality of life. While the paper promotes social integration as a priority for a prosperous and complete integration policy, the concepts of mutual benefit and justice, as well as the active participation and empowerment of all the continent's people, are required.

1.1 Background

The African Union's African Governance Architecture (AGA) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) are the newest flagship programs of the African Union, with the goal of igniting social, political, and economic transformation in Africa. Nonetheless, the need for better alternatives to enhance social cohesion and reduce citizen political apathy will always exist. This process establishes a good situation and a well-founded set of ideals that are incorporated in all integration projects, with the ability to accommodate the diversity of member states and their populations.

Hewitt de Alcantara (1994) claims that social integration increases economic inclusion. Elliott Green (2012) adds that it reduces tensions among diverse member states. It also contributes to the AU Agenda 2063 vision through both official and informal sectors. This also fosters a sense of belonging in political life among all African citizens, encouraging them to support the African Union's agendas.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA) are quickly growing across borders among African Union member states. In particular, the same economic and political integration initiatives necessitate new social integration patterns to promote the inclusion of all Africans and minimise economic insecurity in people's lives, in both urban and rural areas.

As a result, active citizen involvement necessitates ethical practices among trans-border governance actors, reflected in honest, fair, and accurate policies that are associated with the people they serve (McFall,1987, p. 5).

On the other hand, Africa requires a normative standpoint of a values-based trans-border policymaking space, according to Sigauke

1 Republic of South Africa, (2004) Organization of African Unity (OAU) / African Union (AU) Retrieved from http://www.dirco.gov.za/foreign/Multilateral/africa/oau.htm

and colleagues (2015). This will provide a unifying point of experience capable of facilitating a perspective to unite African people through social integration policies on the continent. Teffo (2004) explains that the historical uniqueness of each post-colonial state system is an important element. For example, there are policy culture differences between Francophone and Anglophone states in Africa. The modern integration needs of the continent present new challenges. This in another way has persisted into the limited uptake of AU initiatives at the national level and also the lack of widespread popular support. Thus, the African Union is being pressured to adopt new social policies to promote a "shared values agenda" as a means of promoting a more people-centred framework across countries where citizens support the continent's ambitions.

Social integration promises a new African political philosophy and understanding in which people's daily lives, shared cultures and collective activities are supported at the continental level (Kasanda, 2013). Related social indicators for integration are discussed to justify how trans-border traditional value systems, which once underpinned Africans' orientation, could be re-energised to transform the integration process and the resulting trans-border representation of people in the African Union. As a result, this policy paper raises three questions:

- How might social integration influences promote ethical professional behaviour among trans-border governance practitioners in Africa?
- How might African social integration help strengthen trans-border practices and policies so that the Continental Free Trade Area may be realised?
- Why is social integration beneficial to the African Governance Architecture?

These three dimensions can provide an understanding of the general moral principle for Africa's social integration. The three points also provide a framework for exploring policy and practice options for increasing public participation in cross-border activities.

The paper distinguishes between the uniqueness of the African socio-cultural context and the more general global governance framework.

2. IN SOCIAL INTEGRATION, MORAL GROWTH IS IMPORTANT

Here, the concept of moral development in social integration, is based on Uchenna Okeja's (2018) work, particularly his views in "Justification of Norms in African Philosophy," which establishes that reconstructing the concept of human well-being is the most viable approach to building values-based leadership and integration in postcolonial Africa. Okeja defines the process of gaining morality as involving four essential typologies: appeal to traditions, appeal to community, appeal to religion and the gods, and appeal to human well-being. In all attempts at social integration, a focus on human well-being is used to conceive and justify moral rules.

The focus on human well-being can help advance the pan-continental recognition of African moral ideals in social integration processes. This interpretation applies the concept of human well-being to the African Continental Free Trade Area and the African Governance Architecture initiatives. Kasanda substantiates Africans' political and human well-being through African political philosophy, which seeks to understand people's everyday lives, everyday experiences of alliances, and collective political acts outside of the state (Kasanda, 2013). On the other hand, Afri-Capitalism strives to accomplish a holistic continental integration vision through socio-economic inclusion and sustainability of African history, traditions, culture, customs, beliefs, value systems, and extended family structures (Makhudu 1993, p. 40).

On the contrary, Okeja (2018) makes the counter-argument that, appealing to human well-being, raises the question of who a human being is as a recognised center of moral justification at the African Union level. To establish a social integration humanistic viewpoint and reconstruct moral principles, the mismatch in ethical conduct among trans-border players and citizen disinterest

in continental programs need to be reduced. Some member states' experience of political apathy in implementing African Union policies reflects citizens' lack of engagement because of inadequate social integration initiatives across the continent.

2.1 More social integration is critical

According to the ILO's global outlook report, 60 percent of the world's workforce is working in the informal sector[2].Furthermore, in the case of Africa, data shows that nearly 85.8% of the working class is employed in the informal sector.

Similarly, other figures from Agronomics Law (2019) indicate that Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for a significant portion of global agricultural output[3]. Over 90% of informal employment is in this sector, and its output accounts for up to 62 percent of official GDP. According to Agronomics Law, informal cross-border trade forms a significant portion of cross-border trade in West Africa, particularly in Benin and Nigeria;[4] approximately 75% and 20% of GDP in the two countries, respectively.[5] This points to a significant potential for people to become involved in the informal economy. Issues about their integration are difficult to answer with statistics.

During the World Summit for Social Development in 1994, the United Nations General Assembly established that social integration as a process necessitates continuous efforts to reduce and eliminate major sources of social distress and instability for the family and society to fully participate in economic activities across borders. This necessitates more inclusive institutions and aims that ensure that everyone has equal access to the Continental Free Trade Area's benefits.

The African Governance Architecture was established as another vehicle for communication between various African Union (AU) stakeholders and sub-regional organs and organisations at a political level, thereby – according to Kariseb et al (2020) – promising an African governance platform to promote excellent democratic governance. However the delay in the approval of the AU protocol[6] relating to free movement of persons, right of residence and right of establishment has limited cross-border human interaction on the continent. Furthermore, there are difficulties associated with the sluggish implementation of the No-Visa policy on entry and a single African passport. Many regional passports, such as those issued by the Economic Communities of East, Central, South, West, and Southern Africa, have hampered African identity at the wider level of movement and social integration across the continent.

Increased social integration, on the other hand, has a negative connotation for some people, bringing up images of an unwanted imposition of uniformity. Others believe that the practice of facilitating one's identity through passports and ease of movement does not necessarily reflect a positive or negative condition. It's simply a way of describing Africa's togetherness, shared identity, and cross-border collaboration. This study sheds light on the fear of conformity vs unity in diversity.

3. METHODOLOGY

This policy paper uses an explanatory research approach through a qualitative evaluation of scholarly work. The method seeks to shed light on social integration and its importance in the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area and the African Governance Architecture. An in-depth analysis and investigation of a wide range of social characteristics across diverse communities in Africa is conducted using a qualitative technique (Mason, 2002).

Content analysis is used to synthesise existing information on social integration and African

2 ILO, (2018) Informal Economy https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_627189/lang--en/index.htm
3 Ohnsorge. F and Shu Yu. (2022), The Long Shadow of Informality: Challenges and Policies, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank
4 Olafuyi., M (2019) The Informal Economy and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement: Making Trade Work for the Often Overlooked 2
5 *Ibid.*
6 African Union; protocol to the treaty establishing the African Economic Community relating to free movement of persons, right of residence and right of establishment

identity from books, scientific publications and websites. Sub-themes of social integration are also taken into consideration, including; morals and integrity, transparent trans-border conduct, economic integration, and the political integration of individuals in continental integration.

Deductively, a narrative of social integration for a people-centered African Continental Free Trade Area and the African Governance Architecture is constructed.

4. IN AFRICA, SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND CROSS-BORDER ETHICAL CONDUCT ARE IMPORTANT

The conflict between people who typically do not share the same religion, language, or customs places exceptional demands on human tolerance and understanding for social integration. This necessitates trans-border ethical conduct in Africa, as measured by inclusive economic growth and regulated well-being, employment, remittances and anti-corruption measures. The depletion of natural resources, as well as related ecological and gender issues add to other ethical sensitivities and needs, according to Kohnert (2019). Additional elements to consider are the rise of xenophobia, nationalism and populism across the continent – partly due to increased labour mobility.

It is however important to note that there isn't much of a viable alternative to regional integration generated by social integration based on moral principles. In regionalism and devolution, sensitivity to diverse cultural contexts can have a favourable impact on the poorest communities and economic sectors and other disadvantaged social strata (Sideri, 1997).

More importantly, ethical behaviour in Africa needs guidelines. According to Eisenbei and Brodbeck (2014), this should develop ethical leadership that should recognise the genuine cross-cultural commonalities and variations of ethics across the multi-cultural continent.

The United Nations' trans-border governance practices and policies address a wider and more complicated ethical component for universal and indivisible basic values and principles for the rule of law and human rights. Social Integration is a broad-ranging synonym for more justice, equality, material well-being, and democratic freedom in policy settings. It requires ethical action that integrates global fundamental ideals with the multi-cultural context of the African continent.

At the continental level, transnational actors must comprehend the complicated ethical needs of individuals in their separate countries, which can mean different things to different people. This identity and moral perspective, according to Walumbwa et al. (2011), should be founded on personal moral norms rather than pressure from external peers, organisations, or social pressures. Such a moral perspective establishes a positive aim, meaning equal chances and rights for all Africans. In this scenario, becoming more integrated entails bettering one's chances in life.

The development of an internalised moral perspective can be promoted through a cultural 'governance conversation' to facilitate the acceptance of African people's way of life as a positive value for further integration. According to Lennick and Kiel (2007), this can maintain a high aptitude for moral intelligence among transborder players, which is defined as the mental capacity to evaluate how different moral principles can support Africans' own beliefs, ambitions, and activities in support of Agenda 2063.

Increased moral integration, on the other hand, may conjure up images of an unwelcome imposition of conformity among Africans.

Though other scholars may believe that the term does not always signify a pleasant or undesirable state. In Africa, social integration necessitates a uniform trans-national ethical code. According to Albrecht and Goleman (2007), great moral intelligence honours the commitments of any organisation's ambitions. Lennick and Kiel (2007) add that exhibiting social and moral intelligence welcomes the diversity of persons portrayed and taps into the intellect of everyone involved. Thus, in

the latter view, social integration may provide a more affluent, equitable, or compassionate framework for humans than a continental outlook. Yet one concept of social integration can be fundamentally different from another, without being better or worse.

Moral intelligence among trans-border actors is a key enabler in achieving the African Union Commission's short- and long-term goals. According to Hosmer (2007), this honours the commitment to respect others' rights while engaging the different cultural views of African societies in building transnational government across the continent.

The striking inconsistency between patterns of social integration that bind people closer together on the one hand, and the frailty of existing mechanisms for discussing joint problems and promoting joint action on the other hand, limits real networks of relations and institutions. This also can fail social integration and the livelihood of people in specific times and places. The identity norm, according to Burke (1991), describes citizens' expectations from continental or regional activities as related to self-defined positions inside respective AU member states. Burke and Reitzes (1981) go on to say that trans-border actors must see themselves and their actions through the lens of sub-state districts or territories in Africa, and strive to be high-performing, results-oriented, and committed to the best interests of citizens reflective of their cognitive and affective proclivities (Organ 1988).

The adoption of 'hypernorms' as proposed by Donaldson and Dunfee, is required to produce highly ethical standards in trans-border governance (1999). As a result, governance actors will be enabled to focus on attaining positive societal and African Union Vision 2063 outcomes (Donaldson and Dunfee 1999). This will distinguish the patterns and processes of social integration to provide practical instruments for African leaders to redefine trans-border governance principles and determine whether they have positive or negative consequences for the well-being of various groups across the continent.

In a continental integration policy perspective, the important question for those who view social integration through the lens of an ethic of excellence (Solomon 1992) is not how to increase integration *per se*, but how to promote ethical conduct among trans-border leaders to promote the creation of a more just and equitable society.

The leadership in traditional ethnic communities can help modify integration goals and encourage social integration in African countries. This is possible because in African countries where there are traditional, ethnic or tribal leadership structures, citizens are engaged with them. Also, in many societies, inter-generational cultural norms are at least as important as formal processes of decision-making, according to Robinson (1997). They are however frequently neither understood by transnational actors nor used for communication as a form of tapping into people's attachment to their own cultural practices and norms.

Another explanation offered by Rousseau (1998) establishes that an individual's ideas about the terms and conditions of an expected continental duty are crucial in terms of a psychological contract. As a result, the content of citizen participation in supporting Agenda 2063 necessitates a contract that can be adapted to each Continental goal's particular interpretation. (Kessler and Coyle-Shapiro, 2000).

5. THE REALISATION OF THE CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

The Continental Free Trade Area (CAFTA)[7] and its six protocols promise African countries unfettered transborder trade. However, the lack of statistics limits the informal economy's transborder trade participation.[8] As a result, more activities are needed to increase the legitimacy of CAFTA, consistent with the values and demands of actors in the informal sector. Carroll and Buchholtz (2009) posit that when legitimacy is increased there can

7 African Continental Free Trade Area retrieved from https://au.int/en/african-continental-free-trade-area on 04/04/2022
8 K. Pace, A. Bouet and J.W. Glauber (2019) 'Informal cross-border trade in Africa. MTID PROJECT NOTE' retrieved https://www.ifpri.org/publication/informal-cross-border-trade-africa on 04/04/2022.

be more engagement by the informal sector in the CAFTA initiative. Caldwell and Hansen (2010) argue that all of this is contingent on the contributions of informal trader organisations to maximize their ability to build long-term prosperity as envisioned by the trade agreement.

Even though the informal sector develops employee relationships that lead to employment (Thompson and Heron 2005), a shared commitment to synergistic growth is expected under AfCTA which envisages more formal engagement. This is because most businesses do not form ties based on informal sub-optimal use of their trading potential (Pfeffer 1998). This enforces the fact that understanding the realities and limitations of the informal sector, sets an ethical obligation for proponents of integration to promote an African continent whose people are fully committed to improving trans-border trade (Collins 2001).

More so, proponents of the AfCTA acknowledge that trade can be informal at times, however the delayed engagement of the informal sector across the continent limits the attainment of trade goals and hampers the development of African people.

On the other hand, trans-border governance actors' recognition of African Continental Free Trade Area governance as a 'public good' across societies adopt a 'just world' perspective (Organ 1988). This promises social engagement of those trading in the informal sector and promotes a perspective of fairness and justice. This can as well be decidedly a subjective perception that can be perceived from the formal traders in the trade arrangement (Primeaux et al. 2003).

In other ways, the inadequate informal sector engagement will restrict the incorporation of African populations into the envisioned trade and economic revolution. Therefore, understanding the vision of trade and its possibilities to promote economic integration necessitates a thorough understanding of individuals who work in the informal sector. According to Goleman (2007), this can help traders across borders to monitor and adjust to new emergent situations that can best meet the needs of the formal sector and achieve the best possible outcomes.

The failure to establish social integration within and beyond the state's borders limits regional integration activities and jeopardises people's livelihoods in informal group settings across the continent. These informal sector's unwillingness to assume an 'owner and partner' role in the African Continental Free Trade Area (Block 1993) can undermine the shared understanding and long-term wealth creation and strategic competitive advantage in the implementation of the continental trade and economic initiative (Senge 2006).

Moreover, the AfCTA presents new opportunities in selected regions and nations already established in production and services, in addition to the need to change the informal sector.

Cross-border migration is an additional aspect which must be considered. In certain African countries, geographical barriers continue to obstruct the free movement of people.[9]

Besides, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights is based on international protocols for migration declarations and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which was adopted in 1981. Also the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) was signed in 1966. All of these relate to the freedom of movement in Africa and the freedom of movement throughout the world. In relation to the ACFTA, the Abuja Treaty inspired the adoption of the Free Movement Protocol[10], an idea that was approved in 1991 when the African Economic Community was formed. This in a way promises to open the door to cross-border movement of people in Africa. The free movement protocol suggests a single African passport.

On the front lines of social integration, an African passport could improve ordinary people's cross-border interactions inside the African Free Trade arrangement. Unlike many other integration initiatives, the implementation of

9 K. Nkrumah, launch of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) speech, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1963.
10 Abuja Treaty (1991) Retrieved from https://wipolex.wipo.int/en/text/173333

the single passport can promote all AU treaties and protocols, as well as inspiring people from afar to have a continental perspective.

The African passport and the 'No Visa on Entry' idea relate to social integration and citizen movement. Furthermore, by granting all Africans the right of free movement, there would be greater citizen participation in the African Commission policy to realise the 2063 vision. The East African Community has taken similar steps at the sub-regional level (EAC).[11] It began issuing e-passports in 2018. The EAC member states are phasing out national passports for the REC passport, thus advancing social integration in that specific region.[12]

On the same note, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 2000, also launched its free movement of persons protocol in the sub-region. Both the EAC and ECOWAS initiatives contain a regional component that prohibits other Africans from the same level of freedom of movement in those geographical areas. A more continent-wide strategy – beyond the regional approach – is envisaged by the African Union.

It is hoped that the correct implementation of a protocol on free movement of persons will foster social integration. This relates to International Monetary Fund research which established that that free movement leads to improved social institutions[13] and this is seen in differences between East and Western Europe.

In Africa, the Continental Free Trade Area, and the implementation of the free movement of people protocol is expected to introduce new arrivals, but Flahaux et al (2016) point out that this can introduced strains on host countries. Such strains may appear in the form of increased violence and underdevelopment pressures, which might put pressure on social services. This demands synchronisation and integration of national policy frameworks with continental policy frameworks. This effort is likely to expand migration-inclusive systems and policies for comprehensive social integration.

Migration-exclusive systems and policies are likely to result in blocking the new benefits of the Continental Free Trade Area, as well as limiting the cultural integration of traders across borders. This necessitates policies that adequately address the demand for cultural diversity[14] at state level and increase Africanity beyond national characteristics.

In another argument, Booth (2003), explains that proper accommodation of the sensitivities among the poorest and informal business choices might reveal their own forms of social structure. The mainstreaming of Continental Free Trade Area implementation activities reflects this as well.

Inclusion of the disadvantaged, such as the informal sector, and the cultural value system can achieve greater social integration at the continental level. This allows all people to participate in, and benefit from, the Continental Free Trade Area's freedoms.

6. INTRODUCTION THE AFRICAN GOVERNANCE ARCHITECTURE AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

In 2011, the African Governance Architecture (AGA) was formally adopted as a working mechanism within the African Union's superstructure.[15] The AGA was established in 2012 with a variety of goals, including increasing public participation and citizen engagement in the pursuit of democracy, good governance, and respect for human rights, among others. The framework also serves as a mechanism at the political level[16] to encourage discussion between diverse African Union (AU) stakeholders and sub-regional agencies while not forgetting inter-institutional interactions

11 EAC (2014) Retrieved from https://au.int/en/visa-free-africa
12 EAC e-Passport (2017) https://www.eac.int/press-releases/148-immigration-and-labour/754-eac-to-start-issuing-ea-e-passport-january-2018%20=
13 IMF, (2016) Emigration Slows Eastern Europe's Catch Up with the West retrieved from https://blogs.imf.org/2016/07/20/emigration-slows-eastern-europes-catch-up-with-the-west/ on 30/03/2022
14 Global heritage Fund (2019) Cultural heritage in the Changing world. Retrieved from https://globalheritagefund.org/2019/05/21/cultural-diversity-a-necessity-in-our-changing-world/
15 Decision on the Theme, Date and Venue of the Sixteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union," AU Doc Assembly/AU/Dec.304(XV), Fifteenth Ordinary Session, Kampala, Uganda, July 27, 2010; "Decision on the Theme of the January 2011 Summit," AU Doc EX.CL/Dec.525(XVI), Sixteenth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, February 1, 2010, para. 2.
16 Created by the AUC and endorsed by the AU Assembly Executive Council's decision EX.CL/Dec.525(XVI)

based on shared values. This sets a framework to help African people experience the enjoyment of human rights and democratic government.[17] While this is truly a grand promise to all Africans, Kariseb and Okoloise (2019) explain that it also establishes a Pan-African strategy to advance democratic governance on the continent. The third pillar of AGA – addressing shared African values – envisages that the realisation of human rights and democracy are expected to be realised through long-term strategic direction on the continent.[18]

It is of high importance to note that, the diversity of African reality sets diverse values, which differ from those advanced by Matlosa (2014). This refers to legal values, norms, and standards incorporated in all of the African Union's numerous instruments. Viljoen (1997), on the other hand, confirms that African values are dynamic and entangled in a variety of social, cultural, political and legal contexts. This necessitating the search for social integration through the promotion of solidarity and mutual association between the governed and the governors on the continent.

On another front, the AGA is inspired by AU's legal instruments, particularly the AU Constitutive Act of 2000, key provisions of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance (African Democracy Charter) of 2007 and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981. All of these establish a uniform governance structure for AU Member States to have a basis for a Pan-African perspective.

The implementation of the legal guidance in the AGA gave birth to the African Governance Platform (AGP). This was born from the political interaction of member states to actualise the AGA Framework. The platform also functions as a foundation for supporting the harmonisation of instruments and the coordination of governance and democracy activities.[19]

Among the numerous initiatives under the AGP guided by the AGA, is the High-Level Dialogues on Governance, Democracy, and Human Rights at the AGA.[20] Delapalme (2021) explains that the African Governance Platform faces new social challenges such as the apathy of many African citizens towards continental governance. As a result, this has continued to remain prominent and to influence the representativeness of the participants in the dialogue.

The second initiative is the African Democracy Charter's monitoring role in the AGP. This defines the core values of the Union; including the endeavour to promote and uphold democratic ideals and institutions, human rights, popular involvement, the rule of law, and good administration in the continent. At the same time, political corruption is rampant.[21] In another explanation, Mindzie (2015) also adds that human rights' violations in African countries have escalated as opposotion to governments has increased. As a description of the cause, Viljoen (2016), asserts that this scenario is exacerbated in part by the growing diversity and allegiance of most ethnic groups, the colonial past, and nations' disregard for continental governance.

There is more promised in the African Union agenda 2063 and this can stimulate the contribution of citizen participation. This paper seeks to promote social integration and find ways to create and strengthen common identity and build an African viewpoint.

The third initiative under the AGA is the Youth engagement strategy program. This is the AGA grassroots initiative to promote inclusion in continental integration platforms and programmes. Though it promises new ways to engage diversity, more needs to be done by the engaged youth to establish basic links of mutual support, accountability and cultivation of a pan-African identity (Legum 1965).

The call for greater social integration with the AGA stems from a widespread perception that fundamental institutions of society, such as the family and community, are failing to function

17 AU Doc Assembly/AU/Decl.1(XVI), para. 2, Sixteenth Ordinary Session, 30–31 January 2011, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, accessed December 28, 2018
18 "Strategic Plan 2009–2012," paras. 88–96; "African Governance Architecture Framework," para. 1
19 Sixteenth AU-Ordinary Session, Towards Greater Unity and Integration Through Shared Values,'" AU Doc Assembly/AU/Decl.1(XVI), "Declaration on the Theme of the Summit," para. 11, 30–31 January 2011, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia,
20 AGA High Level Dialogues on governance retrieved from https://au.int/en/newsevents/20201210/9th-high-level-dialogue-democracy-human-rights-and-governance-africa on 04/04/2022
21 Political Apathy, retrieved from https://trekafrica.net/politics/political-apathy-causes-effects-and-remedies/ on 06/04/2022

effectively. This is evidenced by the increase in corruption and a reluctance to curb this, which limits participation in governance. The inability of the majority of citizens to identify corruption limits the ability of those in authority to take action.[22] Beyond AGA youth consultations and training, young people should be encouraged to increase their awareness of the mission and vision of the AGA and African Union at the grassroots level. This can increase citizen participation in government institutions with a pan-African outlook.

Extended youth engagement in the forums, according to Persell, et al. (2001) can promote young people's knowledge dissemination at grassroot level, for civility and tolerance in day-to-day social interactions with local public officials and those beyond country borders.

The AGA initiatives are designed to promote the role of regional integration practitioners. However more needs to be done to promote social integration to develop an African shared values base. This can be realised by encouraging peaceful cultural contact and togetherness at all societal levels. When this aspect of social integration is prioritised, it lowers the various causes of social estrangement and opens a new practical road for incorporating an African perspective into the implementation of the AGA and AGP, in which all Africans play a role.

Ocheni and Nwankwo (2012) claim that differences arising from colonial and post-colonial experiences resulted in the formation of a professional identity in the implementation of the AGA. This paper posits that there is a growing conflict among African practitioners of regional integration, which is failing to achieve its original goal of establishing good governance across the continent. The AGA's knowledge management initiative[23] is necessary to investigate the impact of social relations' networks. It is substantiated by Due et al. (1999), that the many colonial systems of government can strengthen the implementation of the African Governance Architecture if more diverse identities are sought out to develop a pan-African perspective.

The Union must project its goals within a structure of institutions ranging from African clans, neighbourhoods, communities, families, or households to schools, associations (where most Africans seek protection); and farms, factories, small holdings, streetshops, stores, and offices to survive and pursue social integration in Africa (in which all Africans work).

In a broader sense, Valcour and Cornell (2003) argue that for larger political and economic structures to reflect the dynamics in the pluralistic nature of the continent they must reflect the dynamics in the society they intended to serve. The impact of local governments or tribal councils, as well as the state and continental levels need to be understood. Similarly, the continental integration policy requires social integration – not in the sense of increasing integration per se – but in the sense of promoting a type of integration that fosters the formation of a more just and equitable society.

7. CONCLUSIONS

To summarise, the integration of African minorities and socially excluded populations into the economy and political spectrum has a strong potential for enhancing the social cohesion of the African Union's ACFTA and AGA. More importantly, the diverse nature of African societies will be accommodated through social integration in a way that informs ethical professional conduct among regional integration practitioners towards the improvement of trans-border governance practices and policies aimed at promoting the realisation of the Continental Free Trade Area. Similarly, if approached from the perspective of this article, social integration can advance a more constructive pathway to mutual engagement with, and promotion of, the African Governance Architecture.

In a nutshell, this will aid the long-term development and progress of civilisations that identify with the development method that has been carried from within the continent to nations and citizens. The AfCFTA mission to bring the 55 members of the African Union bloc into a combined market of 1.3 billion people – and to actualise the anticipated cumulative Gross

22 African Identities, Retrieved from https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14725843.2022.2044132 on 04/04/2022
23 Objective and principle No 7. Retrieved from http://aga-platform.org/about/ on 04/04/2022

Domestic Product exceeding US$2.2 trillion – is one such progressive outcome hoped for with proper integration of social relations and networks.

Finally, the political lives of African people will be reawakened to identify with their respective country projects, programmes, and activities in advancing good governance for the realisation of political integration and aspiration stipulated in the African Governance Architecture. This would revitalise the renaissance of African development with a no-one-left-behind approach.

8. IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

If social integration is highlighted in the strategy and implementation of the AcFTA and AGA, it has a strong potential to spark the desired African identity, sustain continental activities at the national level, and establish a Pan- African identity at the grassroots' level. In addition, this will have various policy ramifications for all Africans' social, cultural, economic, and political lives in the following ways:

8.1 Pan-African mentality

- New trainings on ethical leadership sensitivities in cross-cultural contexts, and the multiplicity of ethics from the continent's different cultures, need to be organised by the African Union secretariate for transborder leaders. This will reveal individuals' complex ethical needs, allowing a diversity of leaders in transborder promotion to become more involved in all continental efforts.
- Through a cultural 'governance dialogue' the African Union Commission will unveil a new method of internalising a moral perspective introduced by participants. This will provide a set of positive ideas that will aid in social integration. This might make policy developed at the continental level even easier to implement and adapt to Africans' way of life.
- The African Union Secretariat should host forums to spur innovation on how to transform transnational leaders' ethical behaviour. This may be one that promotes the construction of a more just and equal society for individuals who work in the informal economy.
- The AfCTA and the AGA secretariat should rethink and consider the role of sub-state districts or territories in promoting African social integration. It is envisaged that this will encourage sub-state actors and facilitate adequate member state engagement by leaders at different levels of governance in Africa.

8.2 Architecture of African Governance

- The AGA secretariat needs to engage more the civil society organisations in the AGA High Level Dialogues on governance, democracy, and human rights. The advantage of assembling broad-based civil society groups is that new perspectives on the demands of diverse members of the public will be included in high-level discussions.
- While the AGA secretariat undertakes many knowledge development initiatives, there is a pressing need to establish a journal or platform for knowledge dissemination. This would attract African academic and policymakers to contribute publications. This would increase the avenues for including diverse perspectives of governance and economic demands in African nations.
- The AGA secretariat should establish a youth fund to increase the participation in the AGA's Youth Empowerment program, hosted once a year. This would enable younger people to promote and sponsor local activation programmes which are aimed at raising AGA awareness at the grassroots level.

8.3 Arrangement for an African Free Continental Trade Area

- The AfCTA Secretariat must work to have the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in Africa ratified and adopted by all signatories to the free trade agreement.

The sluggish ratification procedure restricts Africans' genuine freedom of travel, residency, and work as variables that would encourage trade throughout the continent.

- Given the numerous challenges associated with achieving the goal of having an African passport, such as the cost, the existence of existing regional passports, and the delayed adoption of the Treaty on the Free Movement of Persons, the AfCFTA must advocate for the issuing of the same National ID as a first step towards unifying continental travel to trade. IDs can support some free movement before the African passport becomes a reality. This will also provide a common identification for those traveling throughout the continent.
- The AfCFTA secretariate needs to formalise structures in the form of forums, workshops, and dialogues with actors in the informal sector. This will facilitate the better understanding of how these might be mainstreamed in the execution of all AfCTA protocols. If this is done, it will improve the identification of hidden knowledge and how this could contribute to continental growth and job creation via the AfCTA trade agreement.
- The AfCTA secretariate must urgently lobby for the African Union Commission's No Visa on Arrival policy among its treaty signatory member states. If done correctly, this will allow for smooth cross-border migration and contribute to the continent's long-sought social integration.

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School of Transnational Governance
European University Institute
Via Camillo Cavour 65, Firenze, FI 50129
Email: stg.publications@eui.eu

www.eui.eu/stg

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The European Commission supports the EUI through the European Union budget. This publication reflects the views only of the author(s), and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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doi: 10.2870/143114
ISBN: 978-92-9466-230-9
ISSN: 2600-271X
QM-BA-22-019-EN-N

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