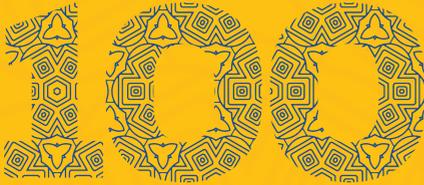
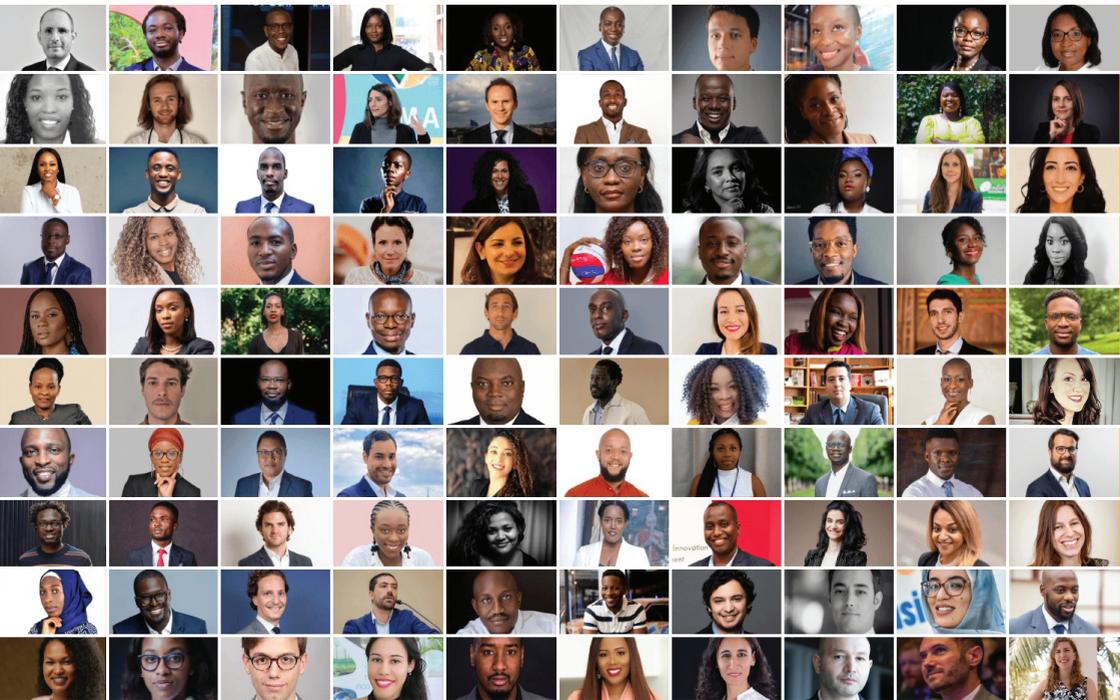




FRENCH-
AFRICAN
FOUNDATION



Africa - Europe
**YOUNG LEADERS &
RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR RESILIENCE.**



PROGRAM YOUNG LEADERS
2021 EDITION
FRENCH-AFRICAN FOUNDATION

RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR RESILIENCE FROM
100 YOUNG GLOBAL LEADERS



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Préface

As part of their giving back to the society, and in the interest of contributing to the development of this great continent, Young Leaders identified different areas of interest under the broad theme of sustainable development, in which they carried out research to inform policy recommendations to catalyze development of the continent of Africa. These recommendations form the very first edition of the Yearbook of the Young Leaders, an activity that we hope will become a tradition for the subsequent groups of Young Leaders. This Yearbook is meant to not only be a tribute but also a participant in the African dream of true sustainable development. It has been written with the conviction that Young Leaders have a role to play in the sustainable growth and development of their societies, by applying their skills, technical knowhow, knowledge, and experience to decipher things that may not be working properly in order to make recommendations for creating the change they would like to see. Although some chapters within this compilation may reference best practices and emerging trends and issues in certain countries, it may be noted that the Young Leaders' recommendations are based on current scenarios, which may change for better or for worse. As such, readers should regard content here from the perspective of what can be learnt and not who is best at what.

In chapter one, Iman Wanis addresses Tackling of Non-communicable Diseases through digital health. She explores the importance of health in the context of development, the general toll of non-communicable diseases on people across the continent, and even more specifically, its impact on the economy. The population is recognized as a key resource in development, as a healthy nation is a developed nation. Therefore, improving access to cost-effective health services is a key question which decision-makers face. The paper highlights the importance of a multi sectoral collaboration, and seeks to bring on board all stakeholders such as public health authorities, health professional training institutions, non-governmental organizations, and private sector partners to embrace technology to avail this very important service to all people on the continent.

The use of digital health interventions is recommended and governments of the continent are encouraged to capitalize on technology to improve access to health services, in order to realize health for all.

Chapter two embodies sustainable urban development. It attempts to address how to encourage the sedentarization of rural populations as a means of sustainable development. Aïssa Ndiaye & Mohamed Nadah hold the view that contrary to the common belief that Africa-to-Europe migration or other overseas migrations of Africans pose challenges for growth and development on the continent, rural to urban migration has just as negative consequences if not done strategically. They call upon governments of Africa to strengthen rural economies, allowing the creation of essential sustainable infrastructures that provide access to housing, water, energy and the establishment of basic services related to the civil status of people and land security in particular. Emphasis is also laid on the fight against gender inequalities in access to these services and infrastructures.

Climate change remains a pertinent issue of global concern, and many African countries are paying a hefty price as every year, climate change results in socio-economic loss of approximately 3–5 percent of the GDP. In response to climate change, chapter three concerns sustainable green financing recommending the development and adoption of green technology, the sustainability/development of Pan-African payment systems and stock exchanges ESG guidelines & green products. In the chapter on Green and Sustainable Financing in Africa as a means to Sustainable Development, Kolawole Osinowo & Emillie Wilson expose the fact that even though Africa is not a major pollution-producing continent, it is the most affected by climate change. The economic impact of climate change is dire, calling for the continent to find sustainable sources of energy for development. The duo point out challenges and opportunities in the field of sustainable green financing, and postulates that if governments of African States can commit to funding, supporting and making green financing a way of life on the continent, poverty will be reduced by a huge margin.

The fourth chapter explores innovation in the education sector. Diane Le Goff and Aminata Sissoko - Wane share perspectives on how to prepare the future generations of workers and students by improving the secondary education systems. In their view, after reinforcing primary education systems in Africa, secondary education ought to be a key priority to empower the youth and prepare the next generation of workers. Despite the general increased investment in secondary education, there are still disparities and for many children access to education stops after primary education. This is attributable to lack of infrastructures and qualified staff, obsolete equipment among other reasons. This problem is worse for young people who live in marginalized communities and in vulnerable situations. The duo invite governments of Africa to prioritize access to secondary education as an indispensable part of the march towards development of this great continent.

Chapter five by Bridget Ugwe & Tolu Ogunlesi addresses digital democracy and the fight against fake news. It elaborates on how good digital practices can facilitate citizens' access to information and contribute to the improvement of political participation and democracy in Africa. This is in the background of arguments that trust, informed dialogue, mutual consent, and participation- fundamental features of democracy- are being eroded by the very features that make social media so profitable. For instance, the way in which information is distributed on digital platforms increases intolerance, polarization and skepticism towards democracy. Political misinformation has been found to have a significant direct and indirect impact on democratic participation and engagement. It calls for the need to strengthen the existing regulatory and self-regulatory mechanisms of the media and of digital technology companies, including identifying and seeking to replicate global best practices and enhancing cybersecurity.

Chapter six written by Samantha Biffot, Pierrick Chabi and H el ene Daba explores the opportunities that lie within the animation, audio and movies for employment of youth and for development in general, making recommendations. It tackles the challenge the audiovisual industry in Africa is facing: How to meet the exponential need of contents and the associated huge potential employment, on a continent with poorly structured or non-existent audiovisual industry?

The paper points out the vicious circle in which this industry is stuck: there is a lack of experienced professionals, and the lack of productions prevent professionals from gaining experience and therefore qualification. The analysis of the situation reveals that training leading to immediate and regular employment is the key. Simple and straightforward recommendations are expressed to unlock the potential of this branch of the Creative and Cultural Industry.

In chapter seven Samatar Abdi Osman and Claude Koua discuss digital skills and innovation to tackle unemployment and development challenges in Africa. The chapter outlines the significant role of digital skills for improving employability and stimulating innovation in order to achieve inclusive growth in Africa. whilst acknowledging that the rise in the use of digital technology in the African informal sector can improve economic performance, market access or financial inclusion and can facilitate the transition of actors to the formal sector. However, the downside of it is that since most job adverts are now made through the internet, job seekers who have no internet skills are excluded. Other challenges include absence of the ecosystem necessary for the development of digital skills such as access to electricity, weak regulatory frameworks, illiteracy and unaffordability of digital tools and services. It recommends governments to secure universal access to digital solutions best suited to local contexts and developing digital skills specific to the fourth industrial revolution.

Chapter eight by Mahdi Mosbah & Angela Ochumba sheds light on developing entrepreneurship on the continent through private equity, as a solution to the challenges that young and promising African population faces such as, unemployment, poverty, and limited access to financing opportunities among others. Acknowledging that the public sector cannot on its own absorb this important workforce, private equity has become a handy solution as it promotes private initiatives through the development of entrepreneurship programs and institutions, thereby providing great opportunities for growth. This paper posits that private equity could be the game changer, as it has tremendous potential if properly channeled. Governments are invited to be innovative, put the necessary policies in place to embrace new ways of doing things that benefit the population.

The final chapter is a discourse on economic empowerment of women as a catalyst of Africa's sustainable development. Dr. Judith Oloo argues that gender equality is a critical enabler of all development and reveals that gender inequality and discrimination cost sub-Saharan Africa up to US\$105 billion in 2014 alone, the figures are most likely higher today. This huge but unnecessary loss continues to jeopardize the continent's efforts for inclusive human development and economic growth, as more than 1.3 billion women worldwide remain largely outside the formal financial system. Although many African states recognize the place and contribution of women in the society, evident from existing laws at the domestic, regional and continental level, more need to be done to implement the said laws in order to realize equality of men and women and to unlock development.

About the French-African Foundation

The French-African Foundation, an association created in 2019, aims to contribute to the emergence of a new generation of African & French leaders, capable, through their values and their means of action, of meeting the economic, social and political challenges of our time.

The Phare Young Leaders programme aims to identify, bring together and promote high African and French potentials during two exceptional seminars. The 2021 edition is placed under the High patronage of the French President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Emmanuel Macron on the one hand and under the High Patronage of the Senegalese President of the Republic, His Excellency, Mr. Macky Sall on the other hand, Senegal being the host country where the second seminar took place.

The EU-AU Resilience Plan:

Following the accession of President Emmanuel Macron and President Macky Sall to the presidency of the European Union and the African Union, the French-African Foundation and the Young International Leaders recognize their dynamic role on the world stage.

With priority pillars focusing on climate change, migration, terrorism, health and economic development, this recommendation provides an overview of the intercontinental challenges facing the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU). These challenges require providing sustainable, agile and responsible solutions. We hope that this document will be the foundation for development policies and programs that will integrate our continents into a shared prosperity.



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Tackling Non-Communicable Diseases Through Digital Health

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Health is not only a basic human right but also a basic need, and a nation with a healthy population is more likely to experience sustained growth. Not only is good health a major indicator of a country's progress, it is also essential for the stability of a country or even an entire region.

Our health is a human resource and an essential ingredient of our development. Good health allows people to reach their full potential, children are better learners, workers are more productive, and parents are better caretakers. Therefore, improving access to health services and the provision of cost-effective health services are key questions which decision-makers worldwide face, particularly in countries where health systems are not sufficiently financed and access to health services is challenging. It is on this premise that this chapter explores how African countries can adapt digital technology to facilitate healthcare, especially regarding non-communicable diseases, which continue to claim lives and cause disabilities. Due to the increasing burden of non-communicable diseases and its increasing cost of treatment, more innovative and cost-effective health solutions should be considered. The evidence; so far, has shown that telemedicine is a promising solution.

II. THE BURDEN OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES IN AFRICA

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) (such as diabetes, CVDs, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases) have been and still are the leading cause of death in most regions of the world. Africa, home to 54 low- and middle-income countries, has the world's youngest population and a rapidly expanding cohort of young people. The African region has the highest proportion of all deaths attributable to diabetes occurring before the age of 60 at 73.7%¹, and it is expected to have the world's largest increase in NCD deaths over the next decade. The African and MENA regions are forecasted to experience the largest relative growth in the number of people with diabetes from 2021 until 2045.² In most North African countries, NCDs account for three quarters of all deaths and in sub-Saharan Africa NCDs will be the leading cause of death by 2030. These estimates confirm the large and increasing burden of NCDs; especially, diabetes¹; which could be explained by the changes towards a sedentary lifestyle and higher rates of urbanization. In sub-Saharan Africa, more than 15.9 million people have diabetes and by 2045 the number is estimated to increase by 129%³. This will impose a significant burden on the overstretched health systems; in addition to doubling its population by 2050.⁴ Most CVDs can be prevented by using behavioral change strategies and people with CVDs need early detection and management using counseling and medicines, as appropriate.

III. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

As a result of the mortality and prolonged disability associated with NCDs, there is a sizable economic impact on households, industries and societies, due to the consumption of health services and losses in income and productivity. According to the International Diabetes Federation, the health expenditure due to diabetes (18-99 years) in sub-Saharan Africa in 2017 was estimated to be USD 3.4 billion –less than 1% of the global expenditure while it is estimated to increase by 2045 to USD 6.1 billion.³ The total healthcare budgets allocated to diabetes being 6% in the Africa Region and 16% in the Middle East and North African Region.

The major driver of diabetes costs is the treatment of the related complications; and it is estimated that costs for healthcare among people with diabetes are twice as those in people without diabetes.¹ On the other hand, in LMICs, the economic impact of CVDs accounts for 50% of the total economic loss being approximately US\$ 500 billion which amounts to roughly 4% of GDP for low- and middle-income countries in 2010.⁶ Therefore, identifying and scaling up proven and cost-effective interventions is important for tackling NCDs in Africa. In addition, if risk behaviors can be curbed among the younger population, the region stands a chance of alleviating a potentially large and costly NCD epidemic in the future.⁴

IV. CHALLENGES AROUND HEALTHCARE SERVICES⁷

Healthcare systems in Africa suffer from neglect and underfunding, leading to severe challenges which include inadequate budgetary allocation, inadequate human resources for health, limited access to healthcare, inadequate healthcare infrastructure, weak healthcare systems, and poor integration of healthcare programmes. This has led the majority of African countries to not meet the basic requirement for good healthcare systems and consequently poor health outcomes.

Scarcity of funds for healthcare is a chronic problem in many African countries with even the richest countries finding it increasingly difficult to keep up with the rising healthcare costs, especially in the face of the on-going economic downturn.⁸ Therefore, improving access and cost-effectiveness of healthcare services are key questions which decision-makers face. This calls for creative solutions such as digital health and telemedicine to improve access to healthcare services. Lack of resources may mean that public-private partnerships may be an effective way to capitalize on the relative strengths of the public and private sectors to address problems that neither could tackle adequately on its own.

IV. THE ROLE OF TELEMEDICINE IN NCDS

Telemedicine is defined as: “The delivery of health care services, where distance is a critical factor, by all health care professionals using information and communication technologies for the exchange of valid information for diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease and injuries, research and evaluation, and for the continuing education of health care providers, all in the interests of advancing the health of individuals and their communities”.⁹ M-Health is defined as “the use of mobile and wireless technologies to support the achievement of health objectives”.¹⁰

Telemedicine has the potential to transform the face of health service delivery across the world. There is an added value which is not found in traditional in-person medicine. This practice represents a new paradigm which can also bring economic gains when applied wisely.¹¹ Economic benefits could be gained when proper matching of patients, technology and payment is applied. The use of telemedicine could save patients work and travel time and money and it could be beneficial in efficiently allocating persons in geographically remote areas who are in a great need of a specialist, supporting rural doctors, overcoming the shortage of doctors, delivering education and facilitating research, and therefore, improving the quality of health care.^{12,11}

E-health could have an important role in medication adherence which is essential in long-term chronic conditions. The use of portable and easily accessible technology-based interventions, particularly text messaging and smartphone apps; has shown to be both feasible and acceptable for such health conditions.¹³ mHealth has been mostly used for a behavior change communication type interventions to improve attendance rates and medication adherence e.g. in outpatient clinic attendance, cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. SMS is the mHealth function most often used in the interventions e.g. to send reminders, information, provide support or collect data.¹² The amount of evidence on the effectiveness or efficacy of digital health interventions (DHI) in terms of improving the quality of care, access to health services and health outcomes; although still limited, has recently begun to increase.¹⁴

V. THE ROLE OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN DIGITAL HEALTH

Telemedicine and Digital Health Interventions (DHI) have shown a lot of potential in public health especially in expanding access to services in underserved remote areas in the developing world, in distance training of healthcare professionals, in patients' follow-up, and in disease surveillance. Public-Private-Partnerships are seen as an effective way to capitalize on the relative strengths of the public and private sectors to address problems that neither could tackle adequately on its own. Recently, PPP has become a distinctive feature of the healthcare landscape due to the need to tackle certain health burdens and lack of services or means which calls for a multi-sectoral intervention through a PPP. There is an added value in PPP as both sectors capitalize on their strengths towards a common objective aiming at meeting a health need.

VI. CONCLUSION

The health of a population is indispensable for its development. Our continent has faced serious challenges in the provision of healthcare and medical services to the population. This paper is a call to African governments to be innovative to ensure the population reaps the benefit of information technology, and thereby making life easier and affordable through widening access to healthcare. This, in our view, is the point of sustainable development!

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation of digital health interventions requires strong stakeholder collaboration and government involvement for sustainability. The following recommendations are made to different stakeholders.^{15, 16}

To Governments:

1. Establish dedicated bodies and governance mechanisms to prioritize and implement digital health at national level including in times of emergency.

2. Since digital health involves the use of large amounts of data, governments should consider putting in place legal framework for data protection, security and property during the planning phase especially in countries where data protection and security systems are vulnerable.

3. The use of digital health interventions in low-income settings is an innovative approach to delivering health services; however, there is a need to assess the scale-up of such interventions and the cost-effectiveness and impact on the overall health system.

4. Targeting young age group in the implementation of DHIs in the management of diabetes could be very beneficial because it empowers patients' independence and management of the disease and also the use of visualization tools and videogames could lead to a health behavior change by providing information on healthy food and physical activity.

5. Coordinating investments in evidence-based approaches to assess promote and disseminate new and innovative health technologies for national scaled digital health programmes.

6. Capacity-building for leaders of public health authorities and policy-makers to take informed decisions to support digital health investments.

7. Establish centers of excellence or innovation hubs to assess and promote digital health solutions that are aligned with country defined needs.

To health professionals training institutions:

8. Integrate digital health competencies in the education and training curricula of all health professionals and allied workers.

To non-governmental organizations:

9. Collaborate with governments to support digital health transformation and its implementation at district and national levels.

Private entrepreneurs and partners:

10. Promote collaborations and partnership models within and across organizations on digital health initiatives.

11. Promote centers of excellence or innovation hubs to assess and implement digital health solutions that are aligned with country-defined needs and health related strategic goals.

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Sustainable Rural-Urban Migration as a Measure of Development

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

All continents are experiencing high rates of urbanization caused by rural to urban migration, increased natality, reclassification of human settlements and changes in population. According to the UN Habitat, the urban population in Africa increased from 15% of the population in 1960 to 40% in 2010, and is projected to reach 60% in 2050. The urban populations in Africa are expected to triple in the next 50 years, transforming the profile of the region. There is a high correlation between the Human Development Index (HDI) and urbanization across countries. Economic growth cannot occur without urbanization, but urbanization alone is not sufficient to generate economic growth. Urbanization that occurs in unsustainable patterns can actually constrain economic growth.

This chapter is an excursion into sustainable urban development as a contributing factor to development. Rural to urban migration has been analyzed through the perspectives of the lack of essential services as well as of administrative services. Indeed, the rural population are victims of a vicious circle where due to the lack of those services they are not able to develop a local economy and hence settle in the villages. Firstly, the migration phenomenon is described and the main reasons for migration outlined, followed by some recommendations to avert this phenomenon are offered.

¹<https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/download-manager-files/Sustainable%20Urban%20Development%20in%20Africa.pdf>

²Correlation coefficient = -.368, p<.001, n=119 countries; based on 2013 urbanization data and average of available data for 2003-2013 national poverty rates from the World Development Indicators

II. UNDERSTANDING THE URBAN MIGRATION PHENOMENON

Urban migration is the real plague of Africa (not migration to Europe!) contrary to the common ideology that African migrations are frequently presented as massive, ever growing and mainly European-faced. This idea is based on false premises and partial observations of the population's movement rather than well documented processes. We must recall that out of the continent migrations only represent 14% of the worldwide ones. According to the UN, the number of Africans living out of Africa has increased from 20 million in 1990 up to 33 million in 2015 against a natural demographic growth of +320 million over the same period of time (source: cairn). In other words, migrations towards richest countries remain a non-significant movement of population.

As the figure 1 shows, most African international migrations happen between African countries.

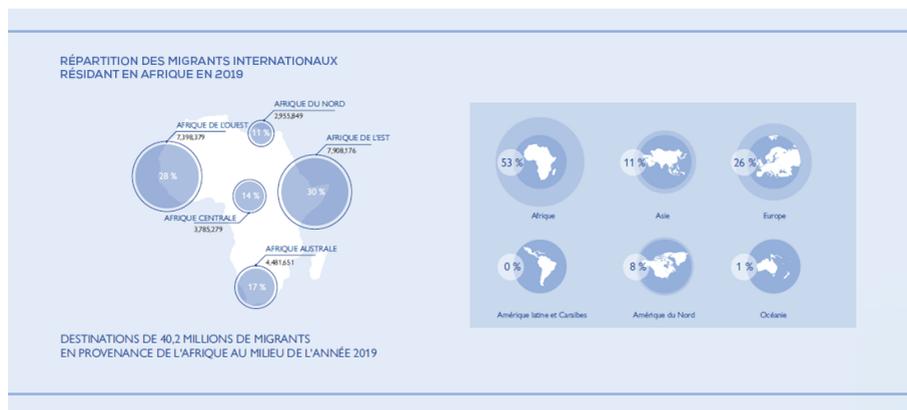


Figure 1: African international migration breakdown (source: IOM's GMDAC 2020).

The movement of population from rural to urban areas (urbanization) is an intrinsic global phenomenon. In Africa, the percentage of the population living in urban areas increased from 15% in the 1960s to 43% in 2018, and is expected to reach 50% by 2030. The link between migration and urbanization is a well-known fact, and Africa is no exception with African cities being places of origin, transit, destination, and return.

Migrants in general, tend to move to cities where they expect to find better opportunities which result in the concentration of economic activities or a more secure environment than in their current place of residence.

Within a country, migrants may move to cities for the following reasons: (a) to diversify household income; (b) in response to environmental shocks; (c) as a result of social and political unrest in rural areas; or (d) in response to loss of livelihoods due to climate change and increasingly difficult access to secure tenure, or to work as casual or low-wage urban labour. This shows the need to rethink the relationship between local mechanisms or municipal and national migration governance mechanisms: while national governments often regulate migration within national level, local governments bear the greater burden of reception and assistance to migrants without being involved in the development of national migration policy. Therefore, without inclusive planning at the local level and a good balance between national, regional and local authorities, African cities will be ineffective in ensuring migrants' access to public services, opportunities and the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms for all.

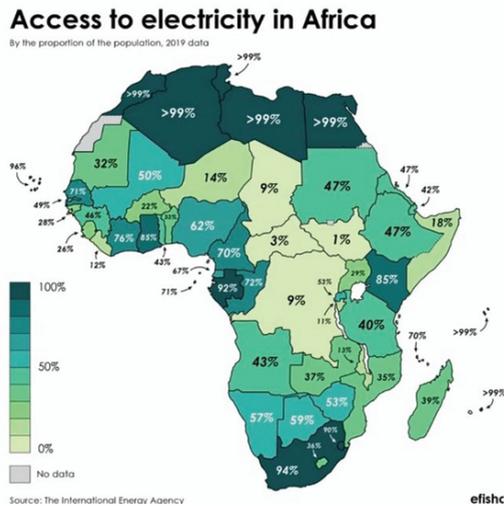
III. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION

a. Climate Change

Africa is facing an intensification of ethnic and religious tensions that fuel migratory flows, in a context of strong population growth putting pressure on land. Climate change increases these tensions, and therefore conflicts, by further increasing the pressure on fertile land. Thus, the traditional cooperation between farmers and transhumant herders in Africa is affected by episodes of drought, just as the resulting rises in food prices on world markets increase conflicts on the continent. This link between climate and conflict is reinforced in many African countries by their legal and institutional weaknesses, in particular those concerning property rights and dispute resolution mechanisms, aimed at preventing conflicts. Poverty and high levels of inequality in Africa are another push factor for migration.

Despite significant progress, including the Sahel, the socio-economic context of the continent makes it more difficult than elsewhere to adopt and implement policies to adapt to climate change. Per capita income in sub-Saharan Africa remains the lowest in the world, the poverty rate is very high and formal social safety nets cover only 10% of the population. Lack of basic sustainable infrastructure.

The sub-Saharan African rural world suffers from a lack of energy, water, and hygiene access. The figures are striking and enough to understand the urgency of the situation, as sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 75 percent of the world’s population without access to electricity, and, as seen in Figure 2, the region’s access deficit has increased from 556 million people in 2010 to 570 million people in 2019. Importantly, while the number of people without access to electricity has increased within sub-Saharan Africa, from 33 percent in 2010 to 46 percent in 2019, the share has dropped due to rapid population growth. Such a trend indicates that electrification is lagging behind population growth in many places, particularly in countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, and Malawi.



Access to safe drinking water in rural areas improved marginally from 22.4 in 2015 to 24.4% in 2020. At this rate, only 28.6% of the rural population will have access to a safely managed water supply by 2030. If the basic water services are included, the rates improved from 57.1% in 2015 to 61.2% in 2020. It is to be highlighted that Central Africa has the lowest level of access to safely managed drinking water service, at only 32%. The rest of the rural population use unimproved or non-treated surface water sources. (source: AfDB – 9th world water forum). On average, access to at least basic sanitation in rural areas of Africa only improved marginally from 35% in 2015 to 37% in 2020. At this rate of improvement, only 41% of the rural population in rural areas of Africa would have access to at least basic sanitation by 2030. Overall there was a slight decrease in the population practicing open defecation from 25% in 2015 to 21.7% in 2020. This rate is not enough to ensure open defecation free status by 2030.

According to the world bank, 10 billion euros per annum are required to guarantee a universal access to energy in sub-Saharan African countries. 114 billion euros per annum are required for ensuring universal safe water access according to the World Health Organization.

b. Lack of administrative services

Lack of administrative services such as registering people at birth is a fundamental necessity for participating in the administrative process. Recognition of children at birth is a major topic in the context of sustainable development of territories. According to the latest figures of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) published in December 2019, the global situation states that 166 million children under the age of five are not registered, and 237 million children do not have a birth certificate. 94 million children in sub-Saharan Africa are by far the largest geographic area affected. These children do not officially exist for the administrations of their countries, as they were not registered at birth mainly due to poverty and exclusion, distance, or cultural reasons. This is a hindrance to the socio-economic development of the states and in this case to rural and urban development. It is essential that the authorities have reliable public resources.

This leads us to another primordial subject which is land rights. The question of urbanization in the countries of the South is also related to the problems surrounding land ownership and the land register (“cadastre”). The question of land organization is essential in any country that wishes to ensure its economic development. Indeed, an efficient land tenure system secures the small farms that contribute to food needs, avoids conflicts that weigh down the State's finances and the budget of the most disadvantaged, reassure the companies which wish to carry out long-term investments and promote a better management of natural resources and thus contribute to the protection of the environment and access to water. The issuance of secure titles can be organized through the implementation of a land reform is generally necessary.

c. Lack of employment and no possibilities to settle

According to the World Bank, developing countries will need to create 600 million additional jobs by 2030 to keep pace with population growth. Quality jobs will have to be created to avoid the concentration of people. Indeed, the lack of basic infrastructure, access to transport, access to health care and access to education, encourages people to concentrate in large urban areas in order to find employment, often precarious but which allows them to survive.

IV. CONCLUSION

Migration is a feature of social and economic life across many countries, but the profile of migrant populations varies considerably. and has important impacts on our societies, and these can be controversial. The economic impact of migration is no exception. Understanding these impacts is important if our societies are to usefully debate the role of migration on development as discussed above. Sustainable urban development is nowadays a key issue for countries in the South, many of which have to deal with the concentration of populations in large urban areas. The ultimate goal is to achieve sustainable social and economic stability in these territories through an attractive environment in terms of quality of life and employment.

This development must be reflected in the strengthening of the local economy, allowing the creation of essential sustainable infrastructures that provide access to housing, water, energy and the establishment of basic services related to the civil status of people and land security in particular. In conclusion, we can emphasize that the fight against gender inequalities in access to these services and infrastructures will also be an essential element.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the foregoing discourse, the following recommendations are fronted to African governments as a solution to rural-urban population migration.

1. Provision of clean infrastructure solutions

Governments should endeavor to provide essential services that are locally adapted, such as drinking water access, energy access and sanitation in the rural space, the infrastructure solutions should be self-sufficient in terms of energy, robust and sustainable even in isolated rural areas, and should be easy to operate and maintain. Today in Africa, new solutions and technologies embedding those criteria have been developed. Pan African solutions that are only developed over the continent. For instance, the off-grid solutions for the electricity access such as the mini-grids and the solar home systems have been strongly growing in Africa the past 10 years, and drinking water access through both underground or surface water resources is now available with equipment that are fully self-sufficient in energy and that require almost no expertise to operate. There is a need for the provision of essential services through well adapted, clean infrastructure with a sustainable business model. This includes essential administrative services such as registration of birth and deaths for a sustainable territorial development.

2. Creation of Job Opportunities

Governments should support workers in rural areas with a vocation for sustainable development, these theoretical and practical training should help to diversify their skills in their field of activity. The net effect is that workers will allow them to have more professional opportunities.

3. Funding/Provision of Loans / incentives for Self-employment

Governments should facilitate the rural population to access loans at subsidized and competitive rates in order to allow young people to develop their own activity and create employment for themselves and for others.

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Green and Sustainable Financing in Africa as a means to Sustainable Development

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Africa is simply tired of being in the dark. It is time to take decisive action and turn around this narrative: to light up and power Africa – and accelerate the pace of economic transformation, unlock the potential of businesses, and drive much needed industrialization to create jobs.- AfDB President, Akinwumi Adesina.

The Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7) clearly sets out a global agenda to ensure access to clean, affordable, sustainable and reliable energy for all. The consensus amongst several stakeholders is that green financing must become a Major priority for African countries not only to achieve net-zero impact but also to improve the economic growth of the continent. However, African governments and stakeholders have fallen short of this goal due to the investment levels and political willpower deployed in the implementation of several sustainable energy initiatives and projects.

Despite contributing less than 4% of Global carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, the African continent suffers immensely from the impact of climate change, making several countries vulnerable to changing weather conditions. To mitigate these impacts and to meet the sustainable development goals, African governments and stakeholders will have to close the funding gap that currently exists in the financing of sustainable development projects especially in the area of renewable and clean energy.

No doubt, foreign aid has been the major source of financing for sustainability projects in Africa with several donor agencies and governments struggling with the implementation effectiveness due to the consistent economic, food and energy crises that has affected several communities across Africa. In this recommendation book, we expand the observations by asking some pertinent questions, highlight the areas of challenge and most importantly, proffer recommendations to all sectors of society (Government, Business and Civic organizations).

II. CONTEXTUALIZING GREEN FINANCING IN AFRICA AND EMERGING CONCERNS

The environment also directly and indirectly impacts finance and the performance of investments. It is therefore very important to be mindful of our environment. According to the Chartered Banker Institute, green financing is understood to mean any financial initiative, process, product or service that is either designed to protect the natural environment or to manage how the environment impacts finance and investment. 'Green finance' is used to describe activities related to the two-way interaction between the environment, finance and investment, and is synonymous to responsible investment (RI), environmental, social and governance (ESG), sustainable finance and climate finance. According to the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), Green financing is important for sustainable development, as it aims to increase the level of financial flows (from banking, micro-credit, insurance and investment) from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors to sustainable development priorities. Consequently, green financing results to better manage environmental and social risks, whilst taking up opportunities that bring both a decent rate of return and environmental benefit and deliver greater accountability. The use of green financing is inevitable if Africa is to achieve its development goals. Green finance is becoming more popular in developing nations, as shown by the 36% growth in renewable energy sources reported by (Igogo et al., 2021). Some of the key questions raised by stakeholders include - firstly, whether aid is enough to facilitate the implementation of the sustainable development goals and achieve near zero emissions. Secondly, what are the impediments to accessing financial resources for green growth and sustainable development in Africa?

Thirdly, what other sources of funding mechanisms can be deployed beyond aid. The roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders (Government, businesses, Civil Society and Development Finance Institutions) in promoting green financing and finally, what new funding partnerships can emerge from DFIs and private sector organizations in funding sustainable development in Africa? We cannot provide answers to these questions, without exploring the current situation and the key sustainability challenges impacting various communities in Africa.

III. THE CURRENT SITUATION

Mario Fernandes, the Director of Africa Power Utilities and Renewables, Deloitte, holds the view that Funding will be the biggest hurdle in ensuring Africa's sustainable transition to renewables at scale. He acknowledges the existence of many financing solutions, but warns that Africa's winners will be the ones that are able to leverage what exists while creating an enabling environment for the private sector through a Renewable Energy Investment facility.

Different types of funds can be mobilized to finance sustainability. At the level of countries, governments have started in recent years to issue green or sustainable bonds, in order to finance ESG-focused policy implementation. These financial products have most often been issued on stock exchanges outside of the African continent, in order to tap into a greater liquid pool of enthusiastic investors, African stock exchanges' market depth being more limited. Overall, out of the 300 bn USD of green bonds issued worldwide every year, only about 1% is dedicated to projects on the continent, which remains lower than its share of global greenhouse gas emissions, albeit the smallest worldwide at just 3.8%. This poses the challenge of having large debt in foreign currency, while inflationary trends are impacting the exchange rate of several countries in the current post-covid, disrupted food supply chain environment.

Corporate sustainable bonds started to be issued before the pandemic, mostly by financial institutions such as banks, and this trend accelerated over the past two years and reached the real estate sector, with HC capital properties and FMCT issuing green bonds in 2021 on local stock exchanges BRVM and BVMAC respectively.

African stock exchanges are also part of the global trend to include ESG reporting for listed companies, which causes sustainability concerns into the broader economy. Such reporting remains on a voluntary basis in a lot of countries, and are sometimes perceived as “imported requirements” to remain attractive to international investors, some exchanges, such as the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, the Egyptian Stock Exchange or the Casablanca Stock Exchange, have an ESG index in place. Another noteworthy example is the Dar Es Salaam stock exchange, who just made ESG reporting mandatory for all listed companies in March 2022. Stock exchanges play an increasingly important role in raising awareness on ESG performances; however, they still currently lack the necessary volume and liquidity to support large-scale fundraising. While stock exchanges of the continent have not seen a high number of new listings (IPOs) in the past few years, private capital has been very active and has also put ESG at the center of their strategy, under the impulse of their largest contributors (or Limited Partners - LPs), the Development Finance Institutions (DFIs).

Indeed, the time when aid was the dominant source of funding is coming to an end, and models such as Private Equity (PE) and Venture Capital (VC) are a good way to grow local champions. Commercial investors still being risk-averse, and most African markets still being perceived as high risk, DFIs are today the largest investors in PE and VC funds. The investment industry was one of the first to take into consideration its ESG impact, and it is now explicitly working towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Most investments having a strong ESG impact, on top of being profitable, it is a winning combination.

Several funds have been set up with the explicit goal to invest in ESG projects such as:

Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (SEFA) - Established by the African Development Bank in 2011 with multi-stakeholder funding of up to \$200 million to support various renewable energy projects and programmes across Africa. SEFA operates three funding windows that provide funding opportunities for small to medium renewable energy projects.

⁴What is green finance? Chartered Banker Institute - The Green Qualifications Workbook.
<file:///C:/Users/HP/Downloads/The%20Green%20Qualifications%20Workbook%20-%20Chapter%201.pdf>
⁵United Nations Environmental Programme. UNEP at SO: Green Financing.
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⁶Deloitte Press Release: Funding will be key for Africa's Energy Future.

These include: 1) Grants to facilitate sustainable projects 2) Equity investments to bridge financing gaps 3) Funding for public sector projects to improve the enabling environment for sustainability projects.

Africa Climate Change Fund (ACCF) - Domiciled in the African Development Bank with the support of the German Development agency(GIZ), the fund seeks to provide financial support to African countries in strengthening their climate resilience , foster green growth and help in the transition to low-carbon status. Through a call for proposal and project appraisal process, the fund provides grants to support green growth initiatives with funding between \$250,000 to \$1 million.

Power Africa Initiative - This initiative is driven by the US Government , African Development Bank and some key African countries to facilitate access to reliable, affordable and sustainable power in Africa. Through a multi-stakeholder approaching the the US Government, Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia , Liberia and US / Africa private sector players, the fund operates four investment vehicles:

- Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa - SEFA
- African Legal Support Facility - ALSF
- Partial Risk Guarantee Support - PRG)
- The Africa50 Fund

However, it is noteworthy that impactful investments have also been undertaken by commercial investors, with successful results. A current example is the company Arise IIP, supported by investments from Meridiam and Africa Finance Corporation, who is currently creating a sustainable industrial cluster in West Africa, that will not only use the latest environment-friendly technologies, but will relocate the value chain in the region, decreasing carbon emissions and providing local social impact. Most flagship renewable energy projects have been financed by DFIs, either directly, through funds (GPs) or within consortiums including banks. It is the case for Noor Ouarzazate Solar Power Station in Morocco, and Benban solar plant in Egypt. DFIs' role is not only to invest in structuring projects, but also to de-risk investments, so that further investors or banks can benefit from a lower risk level while providing funding.

Specific mechanisms have been put in place such as guarantees to this extent, for example, African Guarantee Fund has an innovative approach to support Small businesses across Africa by sharing the risks anticipated from financial institutions through Loan Guarantee, Equity Guarantee and Fundraising guarantee. These guarantees enable over 20,000 SMES in 40 African countries to mitigate their inability to provide collaterals, unlock needed financing and grow their businesses. Of course, DFIs also provide aid for sustainable projects, but its scope tends to be limited to alleviating poverty only, that cannot be introduced as part of a viable business model (e.g. providing basic utilities or sanitary infrastructure in the poorest areas). Banks remain the traditional fund provider, so they have a great role to play to finance sustainability. However, their approach tends to be conservative and low-risk, due to several factors including high interest rates, difficulties to action guarantees which increases the likelihood of non-performing loans, and sometimes simply Central Bank restrictions. For example, Nigeria currently has a 65% Loan-to-Deposit (LDR) ratio policy, while any bank in the USA would find it normal for this ratio to be between 80 and 90%. Blended finance is helping to boost lending, and the apparition of lending-based FinTech, made possible by increased borrower traceability arising from the use of mobile money and expansion of credit rating agencies, is also making a significant impact on the availability of funds. Leasing models are also increasingly being adopted, as they simply take away the risks of default. Individual renewable energy installations, or shared-use equipment have been adopting this model.

IV. CHALLENGES

Alok Sharma, advised State Parties that to begin to recover from the Coronavirus pandemic, States must take the historic opportunity to tackle climate change at the same time – to build back better, and greener. Domesticating this advise at the continental level remains critical. For instance, renewable Energy could be part of the solution to Africa’s energy crisis, considering that over 600m African’s still lack access to electricity and according to the African Development Bank (AfDb) this represents only 40% access rate which is the lowest in the world.

Providing access to clean energy will not only reduce poverty in Africa but also reduce the cost of doing business, create economic prosperity , increase job creation opportunities , improve healthcare and education in many communities across Africa. Acknowledging that challenges of electricity access in Africa are multifaceted , daunting and sometimes complicated. However, for the purpose of this recommendation book, we distill the challenges into three key challenges:

Access and Distribution - The national grid will continue to be a key component in accessing and distributing electricity across many cities in Africa but the advancement in renewable energy can significantly increase access to electricity especially Solar energy considering the abundance of sunshine throughout the year in Africa. The challenge in accessing renewable energy is linked to the cost of implementing renewable energy sources such Solar or Wind min-grids. Key stakeholders are not invested enough in terms of financial capabilities and political support in expanding the opportunities of off-grid solutions.

According to the OECD, we need to review the concept of “grid” and start viewing energy access from the lens of “LEGO” bricks where each off-grid builds up the energy needs of communities across Africa. Another challenge is the exorbitant cost of renewable energy systems such as Solar home systems (SHS) which are fast going beyond the reach of millions of Africans due to lack of local manufacturing , import duties and transportation costs. Hence, several off-grid communities fall back on fossil fuels and alternative energy sources which are not scarce but impact the environment negatively in the long-term.

Financing - Funding is one of the biggest challenges consumers and organizations in the African renewable energy sector face in accessing clean energy. This is compounded by the growing risk profile and political instability in most African markets. These issues have been accentuated by the COVID 19 pandemic as many people now have affordability challenges as they have to prioritize food and shelter over any other household expense. According to the World Economic Forum, Africa still has some financing opportunities albeit few but the key challenges with these financing opportunities include:

Limited collaboration amongst stakeholders in financing renewable energy projects and deals.

Current financing models are risky for investors to achieve a beneficial return-on-investment position.

Lack of conducive business environment such as taxes , rebates and incentives by governments to stimulate investments in the sectors. While some do exist on paper, the reality at the points of execution is far from the policy documents.

Productive Use - The Alliance for Rural Electrification research indicates a strong correlation between the productive use of renewable energy and economic growth especially for small businesses in rural and peri-urban communities. While residential usage of renewable energy improves the quality of lives in communities where it is accessible and affordable, productive use of renewable energy triggers economic development , growth of small businesses and generates income for families within these communities. However, just like renewable energy for residential use, the key challenges includes.

Expensive setup cost of mini-grids that can power these productive use systems.

Limited productive use appliances and machines that can consume the electricity generated from these Mini-grids.

Affordability of productive use appliances are often beyond the reach of smallholder farmers and small businesses that require these equipment in scaling their businesses.

Essentially, we can summarize the challenge of renewable energy in Africa in the following words: Access , Affordability and Financing challenges while the opportunities and potentials are huge and can significantly improve the livelihoods of African communities , increase economic growth , reduce poverty and enhance health care , food production and security of lives.

V. OPPORTUNITIES

All is not gloom. Certain opportunities have been identified that if explored, could go along way in enhancing and catalyzing Africa's dream of sustainable development as follows;

Clean Cooking - By 2030 Over 1 billion people will not have access to clean cooking in Africa and according to the International Energy Agency, Only 3% of investments required to achieve net-zero in clean cooking was deployed to sub-saharan Africa and this reduces the effort to scale access to cleaner sources of cooking for communities in Africa. Clean cooking reduces illnesses and deaths from smoke-related causes, improves the quality of air and mitigates the effects of climate change.

Adoption - Consumers willingness to embrace clean cooking in Africa is still limited due to the limited availability of clean cooking products in most markets across Africa compared to fossil-fuel alternatives that are readily available. Also, consumers' exposure to clean cooking technologies and understanding the benefits of clean cooking alternatives remains a major obstacle in adopting clean cooking in Africa.

Affordability - When households exhibit willingness to adopt clean cooking alternatives, the ability to pay for affordability of this alternative both in the short and long term becomes an obstacle in switching to clean cooking appliances. High upfront costs and sustaining operational costs are considerations for the adoption of clean cookstoves.

The twin problem of willingness-to-adopt and affordability are closely intertwined and impact significantly the success of clean cooking in Africa. We observe that willingness to adopt is a function of education , awareness and exposure of consumers whilst ability to afford is linked to the high upfront cost on the short-term and supply of clean energy to power these clean cooking appliances. Is this the only opportunity?

VI. CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, it is apparent that while Africa's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel significantly lags behind those of other continents, it still carries a huge potential to accelerate the transition to a net-zero future. Analysis of the current situation is that half of the continent lives without adequate access to electricity. As energy demands increase, the energy gap could be bridged through clean energy alternatives, if the financing solutions are employed now. That is where green financing comes in. Of course there exists a myriad of challenges as pointed out above, however, the opportunities are more significant. African governments and other players in the energy sector on the continent are implored to take measures to enhance the use of green financing. There is a lot that remains unexplored that we believe can be targeted, to enable Africa achieve its sustainable development goals and indeed positively impact the lives of billions on the continent.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

In financing for sustainable development and expanding the green transformation of Africa, we have never been short of initiatives, projects, policies and indeed funding as observed from the review of various initiatives above. These initiatives continue to attract some level of funding from African governments, Development partners and private sector stakeholders. However, we need to simplify these initiatives to address the most pressing challenges and deep-rooted causes of climate issues that impact several communities across Africa. Our objective in providing below recommendations is to create initiatives that have a direct impact on shaping the behavior of people, scale the impact of small businesses and improve the wellbeing of communities across Africa.

1. To Governments

a. Subsidy: Governments to establish a digital marketplace of subsidized renewable energy and clean cooking products where consumers can purchase directly from distributors and manufacturers of these products.

b. Credit Support and Green Loans - Governments should provide grants/incentive support to Financial institutions and fintechs providing credit-top ups and green loans to consumers with less stringent lending conditions or collateral.

c. Taxes and / or subsidies. Carbon taxes can be put in place by governments to finance sustainable initiatives. Subsidies can also be put in place to promote access to cleaner industrial or individual equipment.

d. One of the main challenges of financial markets is low liquidity, two initiatives currently under deployment should help improve market conditions by improving intra-African capital flows, as part of the efforts to implement the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The African Exchange Linkage Project (AELP) aims at progressively linking African stock exchanges, through brokers' ability to trade on all of them. It is currently entering its pilot phase, linking 7 exchanges, and should progressively onboard more financial markets. Coincidentally,

Afreximbank set up a division called Pan-African Payments and Settlements System (PAPSS), to allow direct intra-African payments. They are working with central banks and have provided a guarantee of 3 bn USD. So far 6 West African countries have been onboarded, and 2 East African central banks are in the process of joining. These two new mechanisms combined should allow for better pan-African funding, and scale-up of sustainable projects. Our recommendation would be for central banks and capital markets to join and invest resources into those mechanisms to ultimately allow for a greater pan-African pool of capital.

2. To Funding Agencies

a. Product and Production Incentives - Funding agencies can provide direct grants and incentives to distributors and manufacturers of renewable energy products if they provide appropriate matching discounts to lower product prices thereby making it affordable and accessible.

b. Accelerator and Incubator for Green Startups - Support renewable energy and clean cooking startups with capacity development and “patient” capital to scale their business models.

c. Funding agencies are crucial to fund PE and VC investments, and, with the new blended finance model, they de-risk and boost lending from local financial institutions, which is key to finance access to sustainable solutions. Our recommendation is to keep on putting in place these mechanisms, which allow for a growing contribution of commercial investors and lending institutions in the funding of sustainable projects.

d. Lease to Own Initiatives: This is a Pay-As-You go model that is working in most parts of Africa. PAYGo is a key driver for renewable energy access and financing especially at the bottom of the pyramid. This model already transformed the lives of over 30 million people with limited savings and cash flow. Funding agencies can direct resources to PAYG companies to lower the cost of renewable energy products and improve access to credit as Pay-as-you-go models have now become a source of.

e. Credit check for low-income earners.

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Education as a Tool for Shared Prosperity and Development.

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Education is an essential catalyst for youth inclusion in social and economic challenges. In 2021, for the second year in a row the COVID-19 pandemic has heavily impacted education systems and left millions of children and youth out of school. The youth unemployment rate is growing and there is an urgent need to create a better transition between education and access to employment, and to develop the tools to provide continuous education even in times of crisis.

After reinforcing primary education systems in Africa, secondary education is a key priority to empower the youth and prepare the next generation of workers. Between 1970 and 2022, countries over the African continent have considerably invested in secondary education with an increase from 11% to 31% of school enrollment (UNICEF, 2019). Nevertheless, secondary education still presents a lot of disparities and for many children access to education stops after primary education. Lack of infrastructures and qualified staff, obsolete equipment are among the many challenges secondary education faces both general and technical. Between urban, peri-urban and rural areas disparities are multiple and young girls are often in the most vulnerable situation and out of the formal education system at a young age. Governments must recognize secondary education as a core strategy of development for improvement and funding.

This paper addresses the right to education from the perspective of the duty bearers, the State.

In view of the future demography of Africa and the challenges facing its youth, we explore how States can strengthen and improve secondary education to make it a tool for shared prosperity and development.

II. THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION IN THE REGION

a) The Role of Information and Communication Technologies in Education.

Information and communication technologies play a vital role in modernizing secondary education in Africa and delivering the appropriate training programs to the youth. ICTs can help address several challenges including access to education, curriculum reform, improvement of the quality of teaching and learning, capacity building and teacher training, and reducing inequality in girls' education. It also has the capacity to provide education to the youth in situations of conflict. For example, UNICEF (2017) estimates that 68% lower secondary age students in Niger are out of school as a result of conflicts.

Most African countries have information and communication technology policy in place and 39 countries in Africa have education ICT plans. Nevertheless, ministries of education and schools often struggle to successfully use technology for instruction and assessment. Technology is often more efficiently used for the collection of data. The main challenge countries are facing is the lack of readiness and the necessary ecosystem to efficiently use ICTs in delivering training or developing curricula.

First of all, most secondary schools lack infrastructure and physical spaces to welcome technologies. Access to energy can also be a challenge jeopardizing the use of technologies. Even if smartphone penetration is growing in Africa, access to the internet stays very unequal and unstable. Moreover, teachers are not necessarily well prepared to use technologies, incorporate them in their teaching methodology and train the students on them. They also face barriers with limited access to the internet and old equipment that are implemented.

Most governments incorporate in their educational policy the importance of ICTs and recognize the use to automate administrative functions, innovate and provide new educational services. Nevertheless, policies must be more focused on what ICTs will bring to the education system and how they can be efficiently implemented with the right ecosystem and human resource development.

b) Girls' enrolment and participation in secondary education.

Parity is the goal of any solid and well-thought-out secondary education. Significant progress has been made by communities, local governments, and NGOs, but many young girls remain deprived of access to secondary education for ideological and financial reasons. As Joachim Chissano, former President of Mozambique, says, "Women and girls are Africa's most important, yet untapped, resource. It is not diamonds, oil and minerals, that will drive real, equitable and lasting progress. Health and development experts, economists, non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies and even banks agree that expanding women's freedoms, education and opportunities is key to an inclusive economic growth."

Girls and young women's access to education and retention are still main concerns for Africa. Especially after primary education many girls drop out of school before or during secondary education. Ensuring access to education for them is their human right and needs to be reinforced at policy level. There is therefore a need to work closely with associating governments, local actors, representatives of traditional and religious communities and schools in order not only sensitize parents and guardians on the importance of secondary education as a logical continuity of primary school, but also to work on all the obstacles that prevent girls from continuing their studies. These obstacles include security, prejudices about sexuality, early pregnancies, the need to work in the face of poverty, dropping out of school due to the unequal sharing of tasks among others.

Having access to education means accessing all careers and being comfortable learning in a safe environment. In low income families, girls' education is not a priority as many of them face difficulty getting to school due to the geographic distance between their villages.

Due to economic hardship, their families can't afford the tuition fees and this may prompt girls to live alone in big towns. Moreover, girls are often facing gender-based violence that threatens their ability to go to school. This violence can appear in school by boys or even teachers that can sexually harass them. Hence, awareness, surveillance, and training of trainers. Awareness, surveillance and training of trainers (and administrative staff) towards these subjects are necessary to create a safe environment. In secondary education the level of drop out is high due to an increase in unwanted pregnancy and a lack of information regarding sexual and reproductive health. Girls must have access to services and information regarding their sexual and reproductive health and rights. Education must also address gender stereotypes and tackle discriminations that exacerbate inequalities. Finally, orientation is key in order to ensure girls and young women employability. They must be able to access all careers and the right level of support to stay as long as possible in education. This can include orientation for their family too.

c) Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) as support to youth employability.

TVET plays two major roles regarding social and economic development. The first role is to provide training and career opportunities for people, in particular for those who are not in education, employment or training. The second role is to help build a generation of skilled manpower, which are needed at all levels of the economies with the increasing urbanization and industrialization in countries. Furthermore, TVET can also be a valuable tool for sustainable development, as it allows the development of environmentally sound skills, critical for shifting toward a more sustainable economic model.

The key challenge of TVET is to provide the youth with the knowledge and skills to be able to carry out a trade in a safe and responsible way, providing them and their families with the means for satisfactory subsistence. Lack of investment and priority at the policy level are slowing down TVET development, only from 2% to 6% in public education expenditure is dedicated to TVET*.

Infrastructure and equipment in training laboratories are often obsolete and programs stay theoretical rather than practical leading to a miss match with the market needs. Trainers are also suffering from this lack of investment and few countries invest in their competency development by creating specialized training of trainers centers and asking for competency validation. Finally, technical careers are not promoted, and few students identify opportunities and pursue in secondary technical education, especially girls that are not encouraged to integrate certain fields. Co-investing and partnering with the private sector could help develop adequate training programs and encourage apprenticeship when possible. Policy makers should also take into consideration that short term training programs can also close the gap for students that are not able to stay in education, by at least delivering certificates to enter the labor market.

TVET plays a vital role in national sustainable development for countries, it fosters employment and entrepreneurship, and promotes economic development. To have better impact and ensure life-long competencies, the TVET systems need partnership between the private and public sectors, and higher investments.

d) Strengthen training of trainers and school leaders, to improve quality education.

The international community has pledged to provide quality education for all by 2030. School leaders and trainers play a key role in delivering quality education. Nevertheless, secondary education systems in sub-Saharan Africa suffer from a lack of qualified teachers and retaining teachers in the system. Teachers do not benefit from long life training and an update of their knowledge, they have no revision of their low paid salary, and have other pressing social issues to address. Only few adequate educational training for trainers exist in the continent. If we look at secondary technical education many teachers were first professional but did not benefit from the appropriate training to learn the pedagogy to become a teacher. The risk is that the skills transmitted to students turn out to be obsolete.

⁴<https://en.unesco.org/themes/skills-work-and-life/action>
<http://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/africa-transformation-vocational-training-underway-13761>

It is important, especially in remote areas, to strengthen the link with all stakeholders and especially trainers and school leaders.

They have a good understanding of the local reality and culture, and are the link with the central educational system. By empowering them with the right tools and training we enable them to encourage the youth to stay in school and pursue their education. They are also key to implement innovation and new technologies in school, as these strategies depend on the employee's ability to implement them. Training of trainers and an appropriate compensation for their work is necessary to deliver quality training to the youth and up to date knowledge. This will be essential for their professional insertion and employability.

e) The place of successful pivotal transitions: from primary school to secondary school and after high school.

To reinforce the role and place of secondary education, it is worth considering two types of transitional periods. Firstly, the one which is part of the school continuum, from primary school until leaving university (primary-college-high school-university), then the one from primary school until entry into the labor market (at age 15 or 18). When looking at transition periods, it is necessary to analyze both the factors of student drop-out between these pivotal periods but also the factors of improvement and attractiveness.

About dropout factors, we must particularly focus on those related to transport costs and funding for higher education. Moreover, in some rural areas, adolescent labor is much more accepted than child labor. While some consider the need for basic studies with primary school, there continues to be a prejudice against secondary studies, especially for young girls. To remedy this, working on funding funds and access to scholarships in connection with the communities is particularly necessary. Structuring, securing, and developing the transport network in conjunction with schools is also a key. Displaying a continuum within schools or school complexes is also an idea. By creating educational establishments bringing together primary school and college in certain areas, whether in communication or physically within the same poles, it is possible to guarantee this transition.

Regarding professionalization, close work with the professional world from the age of 15, allows young people to be gradually prepared for the world of work. Vocational program could be a solution. The implementation of apprenticeship leads to structuring the local importance of secondary schools, while guaranteeing a transitional period where the rules for the future worker are learned. Within this partnership, it is important that confederation and work organizations work closely with the education system to make their needs known and work together to overcome them. Access to quality education and the harmonization of teaching at national and then supranational level must be a prerequisite so that pupils from certain communities, particularly in rural areas or in certain places which do not benefit from the same opportunities that large cities do not have barriers to entry due to the skills taught.

f) Standardization of Secondary Education the Continent.

African countries vary in their cultures, languages and teaching methods. It is therefore not a question of having a single version of education in Africa. However, regional harmonization between similar cultures and a global framework to facilitate exchanges are necessary. If education is above all a national competence, which requires the mobilization of local Ministries of Education, it must also be at the heart of Pan-African diplomatic strategies. First of all, it allows an exchange of good practices between the actors of the educational communities, widens the means of action whether financial, technical or symbolic and allows a better overall vision of the challenges. It is precisely in this essential state of mind that the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25 years) of the African Union is located, which is part of its Agenda 2063. With regard to secondary education, this alliance must continue to develop and be strengthened in three main aspects: financial in establishing regional and continental scholarships in order to circulate the best students while giving the opportunity to those who are most disadvantaged to do their studies, standardize lessons at least at the regional level in order to consider regional labor markets beyond the national one and exchanges in order to create the history of an Africa whose peoples talk to each other.

Based on the Erasmus model, transnational exchanges are a great way to make secondary education attractive and to develop skills. In addition, this obliges each of the countries to integrate into these spaces, to improve their education systems to welcome foreign nationals.

g) Integration of the Educational Community around Secondary Education.

Secondary education is not just about students. For it to be cemented as a necessary passage, it is imperative to define, improve and integrate the adults who gravitate in this sphere, particularly parents, school staff such as guidance counselors, supervisors as well as extracurricular professionals such as tutors, doctors or facilitators. Indeed, if we have seen that the training of teachers occupies an important place in the improvement of secondary education, it is important not to neglect the fundamental role that the other actors of the educational communities occupy.

As far as parents are concerned, their role of participation in the governance and transparency of decisions taken by educational institutions is necessary. Neutral elections, little influenced by community and religious visions, must be the key. Not all parents will have the same investment, however, having parents who are fully invested and representing the others makes it possible to have relays within the communities in order not only to perpetuate the message of the importance of school, but to bring up more easily the local problems which can influence the establishment. There is also a facilitated dialogue between peers (from parents to parents, rather than from professionals to parents with the distance that this induces, especially in areas where a majority of parents are illiterate).

The educational community must also be taken as a whole and be regularly trained in the new challenges and problems of the educational world. More guidance counselors need to be recruited and trained. They do not necessarily need to be affiliated with a single school but can be recruited for specific areas.

The establishment of guidance counselors not only makes it possible to formalize the importance of education as a prerequisite either for access to university or for the world of work, but also to have a reference figure in order to identify those who drop out or recurrent markers within an establishment. These recurring markers and processed data make it possible to refine local policies for a better educational response. The establishment of supervisors as “young” referents within the establishments also makes it possible to transfer between higher education and secondary education with models with whom secondary school students can identify. This also makes it possible to create an economic model allowing certain numbers of young people to finance their studies, while transmitting to the younger generation, the rules of common life of the school.

Also, extracurricular communities lead to reinforcing the secondary period as an age of transition and learning. For those who can afford it, or for the municipalities or communities that set them up, the supervision of tutors helps to reinforce the learning of school fundamentals. They come in addition with the cultural and sports organizers who allow the pupils to diversify their learning and to develop useful skills and different values. By offering free time activities to students that they can value in the school setting, we allow better student motivation and a narrower school-outside school continuum.

h) Develop public-private partnerships to support secondary education

The development of public-private partnership regarding secondary education is relevant in both ways. First, for the content and the quality of the programs with an alliance between public authorities (Ministry of Education, social ministries, local authorities, public schools) and private educational partners (private schools, tutors, solidarity funds, funding bodies). Second, for the physical establishment and development of school buildings in association with urbanist, architect, relevant professional business, and associations. To develop this partnership, each African country must have the best understanding of the relevant private partner available and how it could mobilize them.

¹⁴https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=5&ved=2ahUKEwiJuMIH-Jr3AhXHxIUkHfUSBMcQFnoECBBQAQ6url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.macrotink.org%2Fjournal%2Findex.php%2Fije%2Farticle%2Fdownload%2F4262%2F3528&usq=AOvVaw3hb7w1Mgzny8rC_r59rQOB
<https://learningportal.iiep.unesco.org/en/issue-briefs/improve-learning>

Use wisely, developing public-private partnership makes it possible to resolve both within (school maintenance, school catering, transport) and out (internship, travels, professional guidance) schools problems. In addition, organized in a structured framework, the private sector could be quicker than the public education to build more and more new schools. In this matter, we could underline the role of the diaspora.

To develop this partnership, three prerequisites are necessary. States must be in a process of co-construction by recognizing the important role of non-public partners in education. However, this recognition must induce these actors to reinforce a code of conduct within a framework defined by laws and decrees. The development of this partnership must also be considered beyond the purely financial aspect, it can also be of the share of experience, intellectual guidance, or non-monetary material contribution. The participation of the private sector must be favored by the State by putting in place the conditions for secondary education to be a place of innovation and return on investment. This close involvement of the private sector, in conjunction with state and government action in secondary education, is the most likely to respond to the challenges of the continent.

i) Make schools and training centers, administrative and health relays within the communities.

Schools have always played a crucial role in the cohesion of communities, mainly as a means of access to education but also to a job. They also make it possible to develop social skills to fight against inequalities and are privileged places for promoting living together and diversity. The success of secondary education depends on its ability to fit into this narrative. However, in the post-Covid-19 era and in line with many expert reports, the school cannot limit itself to this.

Thus, particularly in rural and inaccessible areas, or when the host population requires it, secondary education establishments must be considered as digital, administrative and health hubs.

²⁴<https://learningportal.iiep.unesco.org/fr/bibliotheque/public-private-partnerships-and-private-actors-in-secondary-education-in-sub-saharan>

Access to these three types of services, which are essential today, makes it possible to better integrate the school into the life of the communities, and therefore makes it possible to better establish the need for education in mentalities. Indeed, it will be easier for parents to let their children go to a school when they know that they will have additional benefits such as being treated there, having access to their rights (identity card, civil rights) or having access to the internet, to clean water etc...

Education is an objective on its own, but it is part of a larger whole. It is therefore very relevant to consider secondary schools as centers for achieving the goals of sustainable development. Indeed, whether it is access to health, the fight against extreme poverty, the fight against hunger, access to cleanliness as well as to local state services, they can also find their translations within secondary schools. This would lead not only to a pooling of resources and public policies on determined superstructures, but to consider education not as something secondary, but indeed an obligatory passage. This idea is particularly in line with the experience of “educational cities” which sees schools as places of learning, development, and opportunities, but also as resource places identified by the communities.

j) Adapt school programs with local realities, histories and challenges

To be places of reference within communities, secondary schools must be deeply rooted in local realities, issues, and histories. First, it means that public authorities must offer quality curricula that make secondary schools privileged places for civic learning and human development. Secondly, this means that the colleges, particularly in their professional sections, must be particularly aligned with the labor needs of the region or advanced skills particularly recognized with its history. Finally, schools must take into account urban, social and economic realities in order to provide innovative solutions to accommodate a maximum number of students in the best conditions. Secondary schools, because they train adolescents, and at the same time future workers, students and voters, must be places for learning local history, citizenship and the intrinsic values of the country and the way of life.

To do this, it is necessary to rely on traditional communities and associations but by supervising them within a specific framework, so that they are the privileged places for the transmission of secular knowledge. Thus, the school is no longer only the place of learning basic knowledge but becomes the principal place of a social construction where everyone finds their place.

On the consideration of urban and social realities, local governments must structure the places of education, and this reflection must be done in a holistic way, not only concerning public places of education, but also private. In some countries such as Mali, several private kindergartens or primary schools exist, without maximum state supervision. However, an overview is necessary from kindergartens and primary schools to make projections on the construction of secondary establishments necessary for the coming years, and the adaptation of certain places into a real school city. This work must be done in conjunction with urban planners, sociologists, and education professionals.

III. CONCLUSION

We cannot think about the future, the resilience, and the future of a continent without thinking about its youth. In Africa, this reflection is more relevant as it is based on demographic ascertainment and the challenges that arise and will continue to arise on the continent. Africa is already the second most sparsely populated continent. In 2050, it is estimated that it will be home to 40% of children under 18, that to say 1 billion people. To cope with what UNICEF calls “the demographic dividend”, it is important to invest in African children by giving them the conditions and tools to develop their capacities, flourish and fully take their destiny into their own hands.

If primary school (and kindergarten) make it possible to respond to several challenges on the continent by inculcating the basics and correcting certain birth inequities, secondary school must also be there. This appointment must take place within the framework of a quality apprenticeship that allows the youth to face the labor market of contemporary Africa.

Principle 7 of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child proclaims that the child "shall benefit from an education which contributes to his general culture and enables him, under conditions of equal opportunity, to develop his faculties, his personal judgment and sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of society".

To make it a reality, public decision-makers must rely on the traditional educational ecosystem but also broaden the horizon by integrating communities and para-educational actors. African countries must also unite to strengthen the educational systems at all levels: national, regional, or international. One of the best-known proverbs of African wisdom is that it takes "a whole village to raise a child". The challenge of secondary education is an incredible opportunity for Africa to offer its future citizens, future leaders, future workers and future decision-makers the keys to enable their potential and thus contribute to the future of the continent.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.** Place Information and Communication Technologies at the center of education policies and plans.
- 2.** Enhance girls' enrolment and participation in secondary education.
- 3.** Strengthen technical and vocational education and training (TVET) to support the youth employability.
- 4.** Strengthen training of trainers and school leaders, to improve quality education.
- 5.** Work on successful pivotal transitions: from primary school to secondary school and after high school.
- 6.** Improve alliance of African countries around secondary education (standardization, exchanges, scholarship).
- 7.** Better integration of the educational community around secondary education (guidance counselors, parents).
- 8.** Develop public-private partnerships to support secondary education.
- 9.** Make schools and training centers, administrative and health relays within the communities.
- 10.** Adapt school programs with local realities, histories and challenges.

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Digital Democracy and the Fight against Fake News

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Digital democracy is the use of information and communications technology (ICT) tools to carry out, or improve, political and governance processes, with a view to allowing more direct and transparent access by citizens to democratic decision-making. It assumes the need to ensure that a level playing field exists for all citizens, to influence their governments, using the internet and other digital tools. It has gained significance in the 21st century, with the rise of digital technologies like the mobile phone, Internet and social media, all of which have in their various ways shaped the behaviors and expectations of citizens.

Over the last two decades, Africa has gone from an underserved telephony market to becoming the world's fastest growing market for mobile phones. The continent has largely leap-frogged the era of land lines, such that for most people their first access to a phone has been a personal mobile line. Digital media has indeed been heralded as inherently democratizing, with people enjoying direct access to each other, and to their elected representatives, across geographic and cultural boundaries.

In many African countries, access to social media has given greater visibility and leverage to civil society, enabling them to bypass traditional modes of censorship. Whether it's Abuja, Dakar, Abidjan, Bamako, Kampala, Luanda or Kinshasa, citizens are increasingly mobilizing to collect, produce and spread information on the web, and engender debate about governance.

Internet in Africa: Progress and Potential

Share of population using the internet in 2010 and 2020 (or latest)

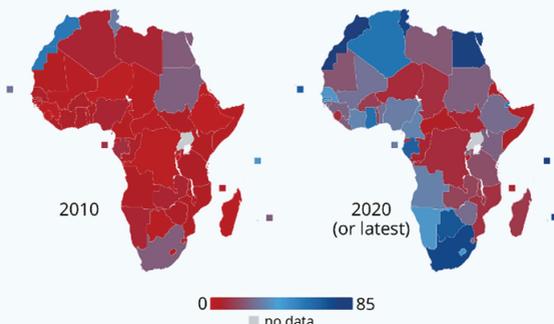


Figure 1: Internet in Africa, Progress and Potential

The trend has not escaped political leaders, who are themselves increasingly driven by the desire to reach voters directly through new technologies. In 2008 Barack Obama, as Democratic candidate for the American presidential election, inaugurated the era of the use of social media by politicians. In Africa, it was Goodluck Jonathan, former president of Nigeria, who, on September 15, 2010, took the most unlikely - and unprecedented - step in this regard by announcing his presidential candidacy to his 217,000 Facebook followers. Twenty-four hours later, his page had registered 4,000 additional followers. On election day, April 16, 2011, they numbered more than 500,000. It is correct to say that Goodluck Jonathan was Africa's first social media President.

In Senegal, political parties invested heavily in terms of website creation and social media presence in the 2012 presidential election, with the sole aim of reaching as many citizens as possible thanks to this newly acquired digital interactivity. However, as digital tools and technologies have proliferated, so have the ways of exploiting them in nefarious ways and deploying them to undermine such deals as democracy and national security.

II. THE RISE OF MISINFORMATION IN A DIGITIZED ERA

Researchers argue that trust, informed dialogue, mutual consent, and participation fundamental features of democracy are being eroded by the very features that make social media so profitable. The Internet was hailed upon its introduction as a force for unparalleled good, creating opportunities for marginalized voices and perspectives to be heard, for transparency to be entrenched in politics and civil society.

Digital democracy also held the promise of being a solution to the legacy issues of political and democratic participation in Africa. For example the difficulty of access to reliable and quality information by the electorate, which prevents informed decision-making, the lack of public sector transparency, and the existence of archaic electoral systems associated with suspicions of fraud and manipulation. However, the way in which information is distributed on digital platforms (“horizontal, decentralized and interactive” increases intolerance of others, polarization and skepticism toward democracy. Political misinformation in particular has been found to have a significant direct and indirect impact on democratic participation and engagement.

Thus, while digital tools and technologies have helped make a difference in many ways, they have come with their own challenges, such that, instead of being guaranteed to strengthen elections and democratic participation and processes, they present the strong possibility of being used to achieve the very opposite. We have seen examples of this from around the world, including how social media manipulation impacted the course and the outcomes of the 2016 United States Presidential election. It is now very clear to all what malign actors, local and foreign, can achieve in terms of controlling and manipulating the outcomes of electoral processes and the overall running of a country.

There have been many studies exploring the impact of emerging and existing digital tools and platforms on the health of African democracies. A multinational research study by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 2018 , focusing on fake news, found an African peculiarity: “Whilst nationalism is driving the spread of fake news in India, the research tells a different story in Kenya and Nigeria.

There, fake news stories that get shared largely reflect national anxieties and aspirations, with scams related to money and technology contributing to an estimated third of fake news stories in WhatsApp conversations in Kenya. In Nigeria, stories relating to terrorism and the army are also widely shared within WhatsApp. Misinformation and disinformation is a significant issue whose context naturally varies from country to country. The challenge for African democracies is to figure out how good and wholesome digital practices can facilitate citizens' access to information, and also help tackle misinformation and disinformation, and other forms of manipulation.

III. CONCLUSION

The right to access to information is fundamental for democratic governance, transparency, accountability, and to combat corruption and impunity. It allows citizens to participate, exercise and protect their rights and contribute to building a democratic environment. In recent years, significant progress has been made in the area of access to information in Africa. Liberia was the first to adopt an access to information law in 2010, followed by Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo, demonstrating some willingness to move towards a more open and transparent system.

However, the march towards democracy in Africa is far from over. Digital democracy is now challenged by what Freedom House has termed 'Digital authoritarianism.' According to the 2018 Ibrahim Index for African Governance, the initial upward governance trend has reversed into decline in 27 countries, more particularly in the categories of transparency and accountability as well as human rights, which speaks to a democratic deficit between the continent's leaders and those they lead. The roles and responsibilities of governments, civil society, Internet providers and regulators will need to be re-assessed, and good analogue practices, supported by technical solutions.

¹⁸Nanjala Nyabola, Digital Democracy, Analogue Politics: How the Internet Era is Transforming Politics in Kenya (African Arguments) 2021.

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¹⁹<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/mono/10.4324/9781315438177-9/technopolitical-sublime-spanish-indignados-emiliano-trer%C3%A9?context=sub&refId=b7122150-7c02-47a0-bf6b-99385ebfc453>

²⁰The technopolitical sublime of the Spanish Indignados By Emiliano Treré

²¹<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/mono/10.4324/9781315438177-9/technopolitical-sublime-spanish-indignados-emiliano-trer%C3%A9?context=sub&refId=b7122150-7c02-47a0-bf6b-99385ebfc453>

²²<https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2018/bbc-beyond-fake-news-research>

²³BBC, Nationalism a driving force behind fake news in India, research shows.(November, 2018) <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-46146877>

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BETTER ONLINE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Some of the factors and conditions that create the environment for fake news to thrive in African political systems. These include firstly, difficulty of access to reliable and quality information which prevents informed decision-making; secondly, lack of transparency in terms of governance and decision-making process; thirdly, archaic/outdated electoral systems and processes that undermine trust in the electoral process and illiteracy and Poverty, which limit the capacity of citizens to understand the issues that matter the most, and make them more susceptible to financial inducements by unscrupulous political actors.

The following recommendations are fronted to African democracies, to aid in tackling the scourge of disinformation, and instead, encourage the use of technologies to promote good governance.

- 1.** Strengthening the existing regulatory and self-regulatory mechanisms of the media and of digital technology companies, including identifying and seeking to replicate global best practices and enhancing cybersecurity.
- 2.** By teaching African journalists how to fact-check and providing them with the tools to do so.
- 3.** By ensuring security in internet e-voting systems.
- 4.** Promoting media, information and digital literacy by integrating digital and media literacy into public schools, universities.
- 5.** Strengthening existing legislation on misinformation, disinformation and hate speech. Also, the judiciary and other key state actors should be provided with training on standards on issues concerning online hate speech. Additionally, a State Agencies to be set up to combat disinformation.
- 6.** By enforcing independence and trust: Regulatory authorities must be independent from the government and operate transparently. At the same time, courts must be independent and have trust of the citizens.

- 7.** Supporting and financing the development of credible independent media, firstly by constitutionally guaranteeing press freedom and removing government censorship, secondly, by generating content in local languages so it is accessible to a majority of citizens who are not literate in the languages frequently used by media outlets, and by building digital media partnerships across Africa and internationally.
- 8.** Supporting and strengthening citizen initiatives and awareness campaigns to tackle fake news and the manipulation of information.
- 9.** By partnering with media and tech companies to bring local and national news media more fully into education programs in ways that promote civic engagement.
- 10.** By engaging the entertainment industry to raise awareness regarding ethical behaviors in using online and social media.

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The technopolitical sublime of the Spanish Indignados By Emiliano Treré

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/mono/10.4324/9781315438177-9/technopolitical-sublime-spanish-indignados-emiliano-trer%C3%A9?context=ubx&refid=b7122150-7c02-47a0-bf6b-99385ebfc453>

The Role of Audiovisual Production on Development in African Countries

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

According to the WIPO Magazine, the cinema and audiovisual industries play a significant role in the promotion and preservation of cultural heritage. These industries also provide employment, promote innovation and contribute to national economies. The audiovisual industries in many developing countries have huge potential to support national economic development, for instance, audio visuals play a huge role in business through advertisement, communication, consumer education, entertainment among others. How can African Governments tap into this very important industry to change how business is done for the better? What can the governments do to protect those who work in this industry and to support them to make the best out of their creativity, for the good of the continent? This chapter attempts to answer this question and many others.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE AUDIOVISUAL INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS

The audiovisual sector gathers all the entities and professionals who take part in the production, distribution and broadcasting of feature films, animation films, TV shows, TV commercials. For the sake of simplicity, this chapter will focus on feature films and series. Considering this narrowed scope, the stakeholders include producers; professionals such as film directors, actors, directors of photography, music composers, makeup artists, camera assist, light technician, movie editor,

The third category of stakeholders are co-Producers who may be individuals or companies. Donors and or funders such as government entities (e.g. a Ministry of Culture) or institutions (UNESCO, Francophonie) are the fourth group. Broadcasters (including Streamers) who make the content available to viewers, and distributors who help producers to sell the broadcast rights of their movies to broadcasters are also key stakeholders.

III. A HUGE MARKET AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The continent's film and audiovisual industries, which currently employ an estimated 5 million people and account for \$5 billion in GDP across Africa, has an estimated potential to create over 20 million jobs and contribute \$20 billion to the continent's combined GDP.

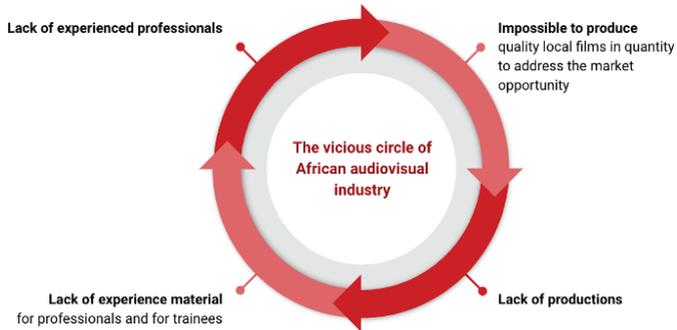
African viewers want more and more African contents, made in Africa by Africans. Content broadcasters are aware of it and want to address this market. As a result, the biggest worldwide streamers are now starting to invest in Africa with the arrival of Netflix and Amazon signing deals with Nigerian and South African studios. At the same time, Canal+ the biggest broadcaster in french speaking africa is investing more and more in content and recently bought stakes in MultiChoice, Africa's largest satellite television company, based in South Africa. This opportunity represents an important employment potential. Broadcasters are definitely aware of the opportunity and they actually do want to invest in more feature films and series projects.

IV. CHALLENGES FACING THE AUDIO VISUAL SECTOR

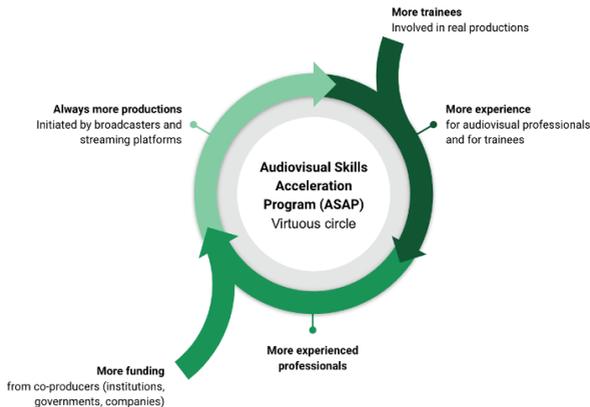
a. Lack of experienced professionals

This problem is predominant in the French-speaking Sub-Saharan countries. The market has really evolved but the professionals are unable to create the expected contents, thereby not meeting the viewers demands. Indeed, in the sector, a professional is considered as an experienced professional if he has worked on at least 3 movies films (or 2 series of 8 episodes x 52 minutes each, or 2 seasons of 20 episodes x 26 minutes each episode) within the past 24 months.

Since there are not enough productions, and as long as it will stay so, Professionals will not gain experience. It's the snake that bites its own tail. Some of the questions that arise include; at what pace is the number of new experienced professionals growing ? Are enough people getting trained to maintain and renew and grow the experienced professional pool and meet the industry growth?



- b. Lack of governmental incentives in some countries
 - c. Limited potential for co-production between countries in the same region and with countries in other regions in Africa.
 - d. Weak film and digital infrastructure in some countries.
- It is necessary to mention that the industry is not all gloom. There are opportunities that can be exploited.



For instance, opportunities for policymakers and regulators to strengthen the bargaining position of audiovisual creators and producers in relation to broadcasters. Currently, broadcasters often buy works at knock-down prices and can even require producers to pay for broadcast time – or source advertising for it – and to share any advertising revenue with them. The time is ripe to recalibrate the business negotiations between these parties and to agree on fair and decent terms of trade.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

A thriving audiovisual sector allows creative professionals to reap the economic benefits of their work. This is further dependent on the levels of awareness of, and access to, an effective intellectual property system and detailed knowledge of audiovisual markets. The following recommendations are made towards a stronger sector that will have an even bigger impact on development.

1. Research

It is important to map audiovisual markets in order to create the knowledge and understanding required to elaborate coherent and effective policies and strategies for audiovisual sectors to realize their economic potential.

2. Creation of experienced professionals more quickly and in a sustainable way.

The facts are quite simple. Africa does not have a proper audiovisual ecosystem, it is almost non-existent. There is a need to create an ecosystem that will solve the issue of the lack of experienced human resources, unlock massive and qualitative local content production and boost employment in this sector. There is further need to find which part of this vicious circle of African audiovisual and turn things around to ensure there are enough experienced professionals, enough local quality productions to maintain and improve their skills, and meet the market demand.

Among the different stakeholders of this industry, broadcasters are at the front line of the need for African contents since they serve their contents, and they are more likely to have the money to invest in content production. Thus, broadcasters stand as the best candidates to play a key role in the birth of this new ecosystem that has to be created : in conjunction with the few films they invest in as of today, we must strongly encourage them to invest in training and audiovisual schools.

3. Invite audiovisual stakeholders, mainly broadcasters, to invest in training and audiovisual schools.

Main broadcaster such as Canal+, TV5 (French-speaking broadcasters), national channels that invest in local productions (RTI, RTS) should have more productions on a regular basis so as to hire more audiovisual students, thus augmenting their experience and turning them into trained professionals in a short time.

4. Fast-track Employment

Once young professionals are trained, a mechanism has to be put in place as it needs to lead directly to a job on a set: the broadcaster needs to invest in more production so as to have a non-stop constant stream of productions throughout the year, leading the technician to have more experience and be perfectly trained.

5. Creation of a hybrid structure for Training and Employment

The recommendation consists of creating a hybrid structure regrouping both training and employment. One would be based in West Africa, the other one in Central Africa: parts of Africa that are the most fragile. This structure would need to be backed and funded by governments and the private sector, especially the audiovisual one here as it would be the one which would benefit it the most. In a very fragile industry in some parts of Africa to quasi inexistant in other parts, this hybrid structure would allow to strengthen, structure or even create an industry by finding a solution to two main dilemmas that prevent its growth: trained human resources and employment.

In a span of only two years, trained young professionals could be already integrated into the audiovisual industry. The idea would be on one hand to train the young professionals for a year and the second year to already integrate them into audiovisual productions that would be shooting throughout the year on a regular basis relying on the broadcasters and streamers mainly. Indeed, experience and regular practice is the key to have a trained workforce in this industry.

By signing an agreement with broadcasters/streamers to integrate young professionals into their productions as interns at first and then trained professionals, we make sure their training goes directly into practice. For instance a broadcaster like Canal+ which aims at producing 10 original creations per year cannot achieve that goal as of today, due to the lack of human resources. They can have in their regulations that all production companies working with them must integrate interns/technicians from the hybrid structure.

In order to have no reluctance from producers who might feel forced to engage in extra expenses, the structure would finance the budget of integrating those interns (wage, defrayal, etc), meaning it would cost nothing to the producers. Having broadcasters, private sector in audiovisual funding and or being partners of the hybrid structure is essential to make it work and ensures that all the trained human resources will immediately find a place in this industry while building it at the same time.

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Digital skills and Innovation to tackle Unemployment and Development Challenges in Africa

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Digital, like other technological innovations, constitutes a factor of improving productivity and well-being. This point has been emphasized by many organizations that have recognized the role of technology as a catalyst for structural and qualitative transformation for developing economies. To achieve transformation, it is necessary to develop the digital skills of individuals and users which are low level, so that they can fully exploit this technology and then innovate by adapting it to their environment. The need for digital skills in Africa has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic which has accelerated the supply and use of digital tools or platforms. Digital technologies can lead to job destruction, but they can also enable African countries to build an inclusive working environment.

This chapter attempts to answer how digital skills and innovation can be leveraged on to address development challenges and prepare the future of work in Africa. The chapter outlines the decisive role of digital skills to improve employability and stimulate innovation for inclusive growth and stresses the main challenges while the third section is a collection of good practices from the experience of countries that have strengthened their digital competitiveness. Recommendations are made.

II. THE ROLE OF DIGITAL SKILLS IN IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY AND STIMULATING INNOVATION FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH.

Economic literature teaches that the main instrument for a sustainable and inclusive growth is assumed to be productive employment (Ianchovichina and Gablee, 2012). Indeed, employment allows people to contribute to and benefit from economic growth. Also, employment generates income for individuals which allows them to raise their revenue and their standard of living.

Digital skills are of crucial importance for today's labour market. Any job in any industry requires having digital skills to be competitive or more productive. So that today, in all modern job offers, having digital skills is an integral part of the selection criteria for recruiters. In addition, more and more jobs advertising now are made from Internet. So, job seekers who have no internet skills are since then excluded or eliminated as they can't be aware of job vacancies or apply even if they get the information. It is important to underline that any level of digital skills, even basic, can have a significant impact in Africa. The rise in using digital technology in the African informal sector can improve economic performance, market access or financial inclusion and can facilitate the transition of actors to the formal sector. This was particularly emphasized by experts participating in a research seminar organized by the ILO in Dakar in 2018 through studies carried out on the informal sector in Senegal. Also, the extraordinary development of mobile money in Africa highlights the positive impact of the use of digital technology on living standard and financial inclusion.

Digital skills are not only relevant for consuming technologies. They are also fundamental to stimulating innovation and enabling the African economy to be more competitive. Alongside employment, innovation can be a major driver of inclusive growth in Africa by increasing income and well-being in the long term and creating opportunities to integrate marginalized groups into circuits of economic activity (OECD, 2015).

Digital skills constitute a major component of human capital which is the core basis of innovation.

Especially in developing economies, digital skills enhance innovation capacity of individuals or companies, enabling them to develop new products and services or adapt their offerings to consumers in a globalized and fast-changing market.

III. THE CHALLENGES OF ACQUIRING DIGITAL SKILLS AND PROMOTING DIGITAL INNOVATIONS.

The main challenges identified for the acquisition of digital skills can be classified into two categories. One related to the necessary ecosystem (electricity, ICT infrastructure and regulatory framework) and the other related to individual capabilities (literacy and affordability of digital tools and services).

Challenges Relating to the Ecosystem

Due to the significant financial cost, Africa is lowly endowed with electricity and ICT infrastructure. Governments have difficulties to meet these costs and weak regulatory frameworks in many African countries don't facilitate private investment in these areas either. Low access to electricity is the first major constraint for African countries to develop an ecosystem to accelerate the use of digital tools and services. According to the World Bank, nearly 54% of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa does not have no access to electricity. A good energy supply is also necessary to take advantage of and foster digital innovation.

Beside electricity, ICT infrastructure (mainly telephone and Internet networks) are also essential for training and the development of digital skills. However, in sub-Saharan Africa, 19% of the population still lives in areas without internet coverage in 2020 (GSMA, 2021). This limits digital adoption by the population and businesses.

The regulatory framework constitutes also one of the main challenges for African countries' digital development. In general, the business environment and the investment protection framework are not sufficiently attractive to investors in various sectors, including the digital.

Specifically, in the ICT sector, current regulatory frameworks don't facilitate the interconnection of networks across borders (including national and commercial backbones) necessary for the digital transformation of Africa.

Challenges Relating to Individuals

Infrastructures (energy and telecom) and appropriate regulatory framework are necessary but not sufficient to facilitate the acquisition of digital skills or bring a surge in innovation. There are other factors such as illiteracy and unaffordability of digital tools and services which can slow digital adoption and limit innovation. With an illiteracy rate of 33%, Africa faces an important obstacle for digital skills training and adoption. Indeed, ordinary literacy and numeracy proficiency are the foundation of digital skills acquisition.

The low income of most households in Africa makes some digital tools and services unaffordable. This situation limits the exploitation of available digital technologies or innovations. The price is a key factor for digital adoption by individuals and businesses. For instance, the adoption of mobile telephony in Africa has accelerated with the significant drop in communication costs. However, the adoption of the mobile Internet is not yet at the expected level (there is a large gap between the number of inhabitants living in a served area and the actual users) due in large part to the costs still considered high for smartphones and the internet service. In sub-Saharan Africa, people who live in areas covered by mobile broadband networks but do not yet use mobile internet services represent 53% of the population.

IV. WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM COUNTRIES THAT HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED THEIR DIGITAL COMPETITIVENESS OVER THE LAST DECADE?

A growing number of African countries have put in place digital development strategies. This is the case, for example, of Morocco with the "Numeric Morocco 2020" plan, which aims to position this country as a regional digital hub. There are other examples of African countries that have put in place national digital strategy plans emphasizing various aspects of digitalization.

This is the case of the Digital Tunisia 2025, or Digital Senegal 2025 plans with the objective to promote the digital economy and promote the use of digital tools among citizens.

Some countries, such as Rwanda, have focused above all on the development of Internet access thanks to the leadership of its President Paul Kagame who declared in 2014 "The Internet is a basic necessity, just like water and electricity. And in fact, the Internet penetration rate recorded a growth of 8900% between 2005 and 2010. This favourable development prompted UNESCO to cite Rwanda as a success story of Internet growth in the world. We can also highlight Uganda, which has developed a national strategy for the development of the Internet network in the country and which ranks seventh among African countries in terms of Internet use.

The digital transition of African countries therefore goes through the uses of citizens, but it is also done through an internal evolution. This is why some African countries have put in place strategies for the digitalization of their public services, operating a real digital transformation at the government level. A strategy implemented in particular by Gabon, which launched a major civil service reform in 2017, through its digitization, or Djibouti, which since 2015 has implemented the process of modernizing the functioning of administrations and the establishment of good electronic governance (e-Government).

However, if the digital transformation of Africa has started, with its share of developments in all economic sectors with significant social advances, a significant digital divide remains. Indeed, it is estimated that 900 million people still do not have an internet connection; for those with a connection, prices remain high most of the time and bandwidth is severely limited in many areas. Assessing the progress of digitalization in Africa is therefore globally complex due to the strong disparities between the 54 countries that make it up. Thus, as the 2017 report on digital maturity in Africa[2] shows, its assessment can vary from one to two between two countries and is based on four pillars:

- *The economic maturity of the country: assessment of the size, growth and diversity of the economy.*
- *The environment: analysis of the regulatory and legal framework and the business environment.*
- *Infrastructure: assessment of national investments in telecommunications infrastructure.*
- *Digital knowledge: study of skills and knowledge relating to digital, at the national level.*

V. CONCLUSION

The population of the continent, which today stands at 1.2 billion people, is expected to more than double by 2050 and then represent a quarter of the world's population. Africa will remain the youngest region in the world, with a population with a median age of less than 25 years. If we know how to take advantage of it, this growing population of the working age could be the engine of the economic transformation of Africa. However, this opportunity risks turning into a missed opportunity. The majority of young people have neither stable employment or economic prospects.

The development of digital skills is essential for improving employability and stimulating innovation in order to achieve inclusive growth in Africa. However, the development of digital skills and the promotion of digital innovation face several challenges which can be classified into two categories. The first relates to the ecosystem necessary for the development of digital: low access to electricity, low endowment in digital infrastructure and weak regulatory frameworks. The second is related to the capacities of the individual, namely illiteracy and unaffordability of digital tools and services which can slow digital adoption and limit innovation. To deal with these challenges, collaboration between government, business, employees and academia has the ability to change mindsets, implement policies and create an enabling environment for knowledge sharing and execution. With these changes, it is possible and very likely that digitalization will happen quite quickly in Africa and lead to development changes in the continent.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

To make digital transformation the engine of more innovative, inclusive and sustainable growth in Africa, it is essential that it generates job creation and new opportunities, sources of fulfillment for young people, especially girls. This digital transformation can therefore accelerate the opening up of African societies, encourage productive entrepreneurship, promote transparent governance, diversify economies to make them more resilient to macroeconomic shocks, and promote regional integration.

- 1.** Ensure universal access to digital solutions best suited to local contexts. This includes reducing inequalities, in particular between women and men, and between cities and villages, as well as the cost of access to data, which is often higher than in other regions of the world.
- 2.** Make digital a lever for productivity, especially for SMEs and Startups. Several African countries are setting an example by protecting intellectual rights and digital security, and by facilitating financing solutions, within a legal framework that encourages innovation.
- 3.** Develop digital skills specific to the fourth industrial revolution so that the qualifications of the African labour force are in line with 21st century markets, while facilitating the adoption of digital innovations by the informal sectors.
- 4.** Coordinate the various digital strategies at continental, regional, national and local levels to better prioritize, implement, monitor and evaluate progress.

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Developing Entrepreneurship in Africa through Private Equity: Opportunities and Challenges

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

It is commonly accepted that Africa is the continent of resources, not only natural resources such as oil and gas, and minerals, but a no less important resource which is not yet sufficiently valued: African human resources. With 70% of the population under the age of 30, Africa is the world's youngest continent, with significant opportunities for growth if its young population is recognised and empowered to realize its potential. While on the one hand this young and promising African population faces a lot of challenges including, without limitation, unemployment, poverty, and limited access to financing opportunities, it also brings a lot of hope if their tremendous potential is properly channeled. The public sector cannot on its own absorb this important workforce. This is the reason why African states are promoting private initiatives through the development of entrepreneurship programs and institutions.

Private equity is understood as an alternative investment class consisting of capital that is not listed on a public exchange. It is composed of funds and investors that directly invest in private companies, or that engage in buyouts of public companies, resulting in the delisting of public equity. Institutional and retail investors provide the capital for private equity, and the capital can be utilized to fund new technology, make acquisitions, expand working capital, and bolster and solidify a balance sheet. There are several benefits of private equity, including cash infusion - as private equity groups can provide the financial resources to fuel growth, expertise - private equity can supply talent to a business business where it is lacking, and connections-connections. Some PE groups host annual mastermind events.

Designed for CEOs and company leaders, these sessions are an opportunity to share best practices. More often than not, private equity is a path to a new community of peers and valuable business connections.

II. REALITY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP ON THE CONTINENT

One of the challenges of promoting entrepreneurship is, among other things, limited capacities of both individuals and governments to access or, as the case may be, facilitate access to financing. With a very low bank account penetration in some parts of Africa (only 18% of the population in West Africa has a bank account) financing private initiatives through classical financial institutions is a very limited option.

Also, access to the bank financing for entrepreneurs is usually very difficult as it requires a solid financial base and/or strong guarantees, which is often contradictory with promoting private initiatives. Finally, the legal requirements to get access to a public exchange market to raise funds is very challenging. Nonetheless, in markets where entrepreneurs have successfully accessed these exchanges, the capital market structure is such that access on its own may not be sufficient to ease the financing constraints typically faced by entrepreneurs.

As an alternative scheme, the western practice developed a financing system through private equity funds – a fund made up of private investors that directly invest in private companies. Private equity can take two major forms: Firstly, venture capital where investors who believe in the long-term growth potential of a start-up companies and small businesses, provide financing; and buyout, where investors take the control of existing companies often in view of going private. In this chapter we will only focus on the venture capital as it mainly concerns the early-stages companies (seed, early-stage).

Most of the venture financing directed to start-ups in Africa is concentrated in early-stage funding rounds. In 2020, US \$ 5.2 billion was raised by 604 unique companies in Africa . As shown in Figure 1 below, in 2021 West Africa attracted the highest volume (33%) of the deals.

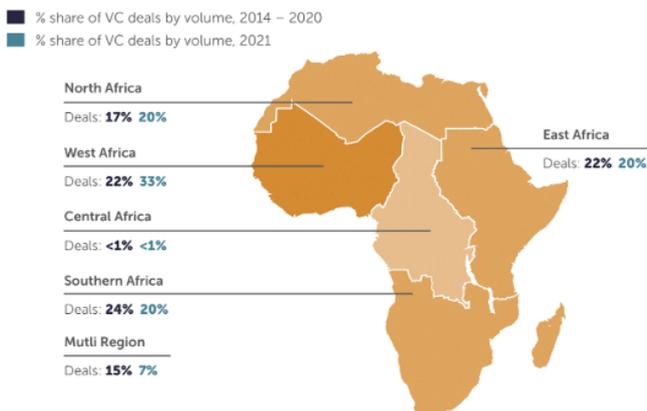


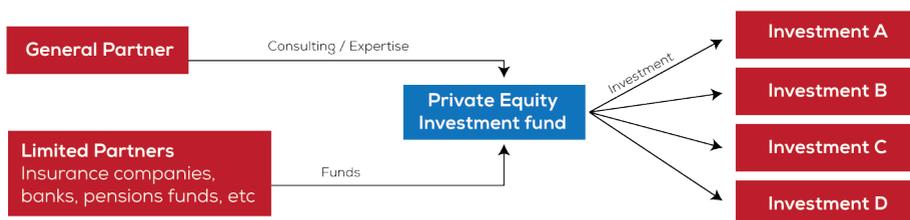
Figure 1: Share of VC Deal Volume in Africa, by Region, 2014 – 2020 vs. 2021.

Source: 2021 Venture Capital in Africa Report – African Private Equity and Venture Capital Association.

In addition to the foregoing, it is noteworthy that access to finance for entrepreneurs enables businesses to grow and create jobs. It promotes entrepreneurship and trust in the African youth’s potential.

III. THE PRIVATE EQUITY SCHEME

Private equity is based on the participation of the investor in the company. This participation could be made mainly through the acquisition of shares and/or a participation in the increase of capital. This participation is limited to a certain period of time (up to 8 years mostly). In addition to its funds, the investor also brings its know-how and participates to structure the activity and to build good practices in the way the entrepreneur runs the affairs of the company. To illustrate, a private equity transaction is made as follows:



IV. LEGAL CHALLENGES FOR PRIVATE EQUITY IN AFRICA

To improve access to the private equity financing and incentivise entrepreneurship, a number of African states have taken several measures to modernize their legal frameworks and to encourage financial institutions to develop private equity funds. More importantly, some countries passed critical start-up legislation aimed at creating an enabling local environment for innovation and entrepreneurship. The question is to assess whether these measures are sufficient to reach the target of developing entrepreneurship in Africa? With 54 countries, multiple civil law, common law and mixed law systems that are difficult to reconcile come into play.

As a result of the aforementioned challenges, a one-size-fits-all approach is impracticable when structuring private equity transactions. Where parties default to foreign laws, particularly for cross border transactions, there are local law elements and nuances (particularly around the taking of security, perfection, local content requirements, public policy related restrictions, and recognition and enforcement of foreign judgments/arbitral awards) that could come into play thereby complicating execution.

Thirdly, most country legislation across the continent is not equipped to offer the sophistication required for the private equity transaction. Further, in the event of disputes, it is difficult to have access to reliable case law that might express a clear position on certain rules applicable for the private equity transactions. This is a source of legal uncertainty and could prevent investors, especially foreign ones, from taking part in these transactions. In addition to the absence of a modern legal framework to encourage the development of private equity transactions, in some countries the foreign exchange regulation (including foreign exchange controls and limitations around offshore repatriation of funds) and foreign investment regulations constitute serious obstacles to the entry of foreign direct investment.

²⁶Khaled IGUE, Time for Africa, Hermann, page 57. See also: <https://www.un.org/ohrls/news/young-people-s-potential-key-africa-s-sustainable-development>
²⁷<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/p/privateequity.asp>

²⁸Report annuel situation inclusion financiere UEMOA - 2019.pdf (bceao.int)

²⁹See: <https://www.kauffman.org/entrepreneurship/reports/access-to-capital-for-entrepreneurs-removing-barriers/>

³⁰2021 Venture Capital in Africa Report – African Private Equity and Venture Capital Association

³¹Senegal and Tunisia. See: <https://www.privateequityinternational.com/the-rise-of-venture-capital/>

Indeed, the authorization policy for the acquisition of shares by foreigners, restrictive local content requirements, sector specific shareholding restrictions, the difficulties to transfer/exit of the participations of the fund in some countries (including punitive taxation regimes especially withholding tax, including on dividend payments and capital gains tax), and the regulatory framework related to the establishment of foreign/local funds are the major factors that prevent the development of private equity in Africa. In addition, 76% of limited partners have cited limited exit opportunities as one of the greatest impediments faced by private equity investors in Africa. . This limitation in options complicates divestment and can, understandably, constitute a significant barrier to entry.

From the foregoing, it is apparent promulgation of enabling legislation, liberalization of foreign investment and the implementation of freedom of investment's principles for both national and foreign investors are key to developing the private equity activities in the continent.

VI. LIMITS OF THE REFORMS IMPLEMENTED

Some countries are aware of the importance of the modernization of the applicable legal and institutional frameworks. Over the last few years, a number of governments across Africa established new regulations dedicated to start-ups and specific institutions to promote its creation (incubators, hubs, etc.) For example, in Egypt, a new legislation was introduced in February 8, 2022, permitting the Central Bank to allocate banking licenses to FinTech and digital commerce firms. This regulation will attract entrepreneurs and investment funds to the state's fintech ecosystem.

Countries such as Senegal and Tunisia have passed laws aimed at enabling start-ups.

These initiatives provide more clarity on the ecosystem which is key to attracting investors. They also allow stakeholders to identify business opportunities and to allocate the proper resources to develop industries' growth potential. In this regard, digital and technology were identified as two industries with a high potential for growth in Africa.

Consequently, between 2015 – 2020 the total value of reported private equity and venture capital investments in technology in Africa was US \$ 6.5 bn.vWhile these reforms are laudable, a lot more still needs to be done. It is important that the transparency of the transactions improves, rules are simplified, and there is greater flexibility particularly with regard to execution of transactions and enforcement of judgments and awards. Notably, improvement of the quality of justice and the rule of law will be a significant advantage.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Private equity can fill the unmet funding gap if the environment is conducive. Studies showed that private equity in Africa remained resilient and largely survived the COVID pandemic induced slowdown, particularly in 2020, with the trend expected to continue. While this is encouraging to note, a lot more can be done.

Some countries have taken critical steps aimed at creating an enabling local environment for innovation and entrepreneurship . It would be beneficial if a lot more countries could affect similar changes to the legislative and business environment with a view to facilitating the flow of private equity investment into their countries. Rationalization of taxation regimes, rules on entry and exit, repatriation of funds and restrictions on ownership would be helpful.

These changes would not just improve the operating environment for the providers of the much needed financing but also help realize the potential of African entrepreneurs, thereby contributing to socio-economic development.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the outset, it appears that modernizing the legal framework and liberalizing the market would go a long way in enhancing private equity. It is commonly agreed that the role of government is to create favorable conditions to encourage private initiative. The said improvement of the climate of business should be done in a continuous manner in the following ways:

1. Creating a business enabling environment: Removing unnecessary pre-entry authorizations, and generally simplifying the procedures of creation of business, acquisition of share.
2. Law reform: Amending the laws regulating operations of companies in order to improve the corporate governance and the flexibility in the relation between partners.
3. Improving the quality of justice (creating specialized jurisdiction courts capable of resolving commercial disputes in a swift, unbiased and secure manner).
4. Improving the rule of law, which creates a secure climate and builds trust between investors/entrepreneurs and government bodies.
5. Transparency and accountability: It is also important to bear in mind that the relationship between the investor and the entrepreneur is based on trust. In this regard, loyalty and transparency are keys for the success of any partnership. Building the capacities of both parties goes a long way in promoting business.

²¹<https://www.avca-africa.org/newsroom/afri-spective-blog/2022/addressing-the-exit-challenge-in-africa/>

²²<https://www.privateequityinternational.com/the-rise-of-venture-capital/>

²³Law No. 5 of 2022 Regulating the Development and Use of Financial Technology in the Non-Banking Financial Activities

²⁴Sector Snapshot: Technology - AVCA

²⁵<https://www.whitecase.com/publications/insight/africa-focus-spring-2021/private-equity-africa-trends-and-opportunities-2021>

²⁶<https://www.privateequityinternational.com/the-rise-of-venture-capital/>

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Economic Empowerment of Women as a Catalyst of Africa's Sustainable Development.

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

There has never been a better time to call for the equality of women, so much so that this year's International Women's Day, a day for celebrating achievements of women the world over was themed "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow." A campaign launched together with this theme was dubbed "#BreakTheBias," invited all people to work to achieve a world that is equitable, inclusive, and free from bias and discrimination against women. The need to ensure the playing field is leveled for women moving forward has been alluded to by the Sima Bahous, Executive Director of UN Women in her statement; 'We have today the opportunity to put women and girls at the center of our planning and action and to integrate gender perspectives into global and national laws and policies. We could re-think, re-frame and re-allocate resources. We could benefit from the leadership of women and girls...'

Africa is home to over 1.37 billion people, 51% of which are women. The Continent continues to grapple with gender inequality issues that impede the it's development agenda. However, despite the strength in numbers, women hold very little resources, as on the average, 70% of the women of Africa work in the informal sector. This is attributable to many things, the major being gender inequality, emanating from a patriarchal society that does not hold men and women at par.

³¹UN Women, International Women's Day 2022: "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow" <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/announcement/2021/12/international-womens-day-2022-gender-equality-today-for-a-sustainable-tomorrow> accessed on 23/03/2022.

³²UN Women, Celebrating Solution Multipliers

³³Worldometer, Population of Africa, <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/africa-population/>, Accessed on 26/04/2022.

³⁴International Women's Day, <https://www.internationalwomensday.com/theme> accessed on 23/03/2022.

This has seen the playing ground being uneven for the womenfolk, the women have been discriminated upon and their efforts in the community not given due regard. The Graca Machel Trust, alludes to this, positing that gender inequality remains a stumbling block to development on the continent, calling for the need to acknowledge and celebrate the critical role women play in shaping Africa's development agenda and economic transformation. Early marriage, domestic violence, skewed property and family rights are just a few of the manifestations of the inequality of men and women, which impede women's right to self-determination, economic and social well-being. Research reveals that the prevailing poverty in less developed economies is directly linked to economic exclusion. Amatus and Alireza (2019) agree that economic inclusion is a core objective of many developing nations as a strategy to further develop their economies and financial systems. For sustainable development of the continent to be realized, no one should be left behind, especially the women.

Dismantling gender inequality and other structural barriers leading to the economic exclusion of women are critical to driving change. The other way is to go to the next level to support women with the technical knowhow and the resources they need to effectively participate in the economies of their countries. Lack of financing is widely understood to be a major reason for slow progress in advancing gender equality and in enacting the women's rights agenda of the 1995 Beijing Conference. The overall objective of this analysis is to assess women's economic inclusion in Africa, bringing out the challenge experienced by the different stakeholders involved, to put forth recommendations that when implemented, will cause the change that is desired.

II. THE HUMAN COST OF GENDER INEQUALITY

That gender equality is a critical enabler of all development is explained in the Africa Human Development Report 2016 which revealed that Gender inequality cost sub-Saharan Africa up to US\$105 billion in 2014 alone, the figures are most likely higher today. This loss is seriously jeopardizing the continent's efforts for inclusive human development and economic growth.

⁴¹Monique Essed Fernandes, Gender Equality and Sustainable Development (2021).

⁴²<https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/gender-equality-and-sustainable-development>. Accessed on 26/04/2022.

⁴³UNDP, Africa Human Development Report, Accelerating Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Africa, 2016. <https://www.undp.org/publications/africa-human-development-report-2016> accessed on 22/03/2022.

This position is alluded to by Andrea, asserting that the exclusion of women in development comes at a high cost. Without women's equal participation, economies are less prosperous. This is buttressed by a study conducted by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) revealed that greater inclusion of women in the economy would allow gains in GDP of up to 3.5% in some cases. Despite these advantages, more than 1.3 billion women worldwide remain largely outside the formal financial system.

Over the past few years many countries in Africa have recognized the place and contribution of women in the society, evident from the varied laws that have been passed at the domestic level, law reforms and several policy recommendations at the continental level. These efforts have been augmented with conferences and forums such as the Generation Equality Forum in Paris (2021), in which bold gender equality commitments were made, including \$40 billion of committed investments and the launch of a global 5-year action journey to accelerate gender equality by 2026. Consequently, currently women are redefining the socio-economic landscape and taking up space in various sectors of the economy, as more women are becoming entrepreneurs, building brands, and shaping society. However, gains have remained slow, begging the question as to what factors hinder women from effectively participating and contributing to the economies of their communities? What policy or other gaps exist? What can be done to bridge these gaps?

III. LEGAL, POLICY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS IN SUPPORT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN ON THE CONTINENT

Legal and policy Framework

The continent has several laws and regulations that recognize the role of, and the need to include women in the growth of the economic sectors of their countries. To begin with, the universal adoption of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, embodies a roadmap for progress that is sustainable and leaves no one behind.

⁴⁰UNDP, Africa Human Development Report, Accelerating Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Africa, 2016.

<https://www.undp.org/publications/africa-human-development-report-2016> accessed on 22/03/2022.

⁴¹Andrea Ó Súilleabháin, Investing in Inclusion: Women, Peace, and Development in Africa.

<https://theglobalobservatory.org/2016/11/peace-development-women-undp-africa/> accessed on 22/03/2022.

Gender equality and women's empowerment is integral to each of the 17 goals. Subsequently, the African Union developed a Strategy for Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment (2018–2028) which emphasizes the need for economic empowerment of women for Africa, to enable the continent to realize its goals for inclusive and sustainable development as envisioned in Agenda 2063.

The African Union's Agenda 2063 is the continent's plan to end poverty and bring peace and prosperity to all. The first aspiration of Agenda 2063 is 'A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development,' and aspiration 6 envisages 'An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women' In 2019, the Global Gender Summit held in Kigali, advocated for a dedicated period for Africa to work towards the financial inclusion and economic empowerment of women, and to eliminate obstacles that impede equality between men and women, through the implementation of innovative solutions.

In 2020, African Union the Assembly of Heads of State and Government declared 2020 - 2030 as the 'Decade on Financial and Economic Inclusion for African Women' and recommitted to scale up actions for progressive gender inclusion for sustainable development at the national, regional and continental levels. This would include doing away with retrogressive socio-cultural norms and gender barriers. Shortly thereafter, the African Union partnered with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) to launch the African Women Leadership Fund (AWLF) aimed at strengthening women's economic empowerment through multi-layered prioritization of women, in both economic and leadership positions.

At the domestic level, States have made steps to domesticate international laws that prohibit gender inequality such as the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), prohibition of harmful cultural practices, domestic violence and even labour laws.

⁴⁶See generally, African Union, Strategy for Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment (2015-2018)

https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/36195-doc-au_strategy_for_gender_equality_womens_empowerment_2018-2028_report.pdf

⁴⁷African Union Commission, Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/33126-doc-01_background_note.pdf

⁴⁸African Development Bank, Global Gender Summit - Building today, a better Africa tomorrow.

<https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/events/global-gender-summit-global-gender-summit/#:~:text=The%20African%20Development%20Bank%20and%20Convention%20Centre%2C%20Kigali%2C%20Rwanda>

⁴⁹UN Economic Commission for Africa, Launch of the African Women Leadership Fund (AWLF) Online Platform.

<https://archive.uneca.org/stories/launch-african-women-leadership-fund-awlf-online-platform>

A recent World Bank Reported noted that of all the regions, the sub-Saharan Africa had made the most reforms towards promoting gender equality in Africa, singling out six of the top 10 reforming countries to be the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Malawi, Mauritius, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Zambia. This is not to say that women in the said countries have it all good, rather, this merely points out progress. However, in the wholesome, if the low level of impact is anything to go by, one would say that many States are yet to place gender at the center of their laws. From the foregoing, it is clear that Africa is not short of policies that support the inclusion of women in the development of the continent.

Theoretical Frameworks

Economic empowerment of women is currently a front-burner topic in development literature. According to the World Bank, women's involvement in economic development can be looked at from four angles, viz human capital, economic productivity, access to finance and empowerment. To begin with, gender gaps in human capital are well-documented, and attributed to the lack of access to healthcare services and education, and women's exposure and or vulnerability to shocks that disrupt human-capital acquisition. Women's access to economic opportunities is undermined by their lower access to production inputs. Businesswomen and female workers have less access to information, as most networks are dominated by men. Women's access to productive assets constrains women's economic opportunities, whether women farmers or micro-entrepreneurs.

African women are still disproportionately affected by poverty, and the coronavirus pandemic is exacerbating gender inequalities. Inequality is seen in the deeply rooted structural obstacles such as unequal distribution of resources, power and wealth, combined with social institutions and norms that propagate and sustain inequality. These gender stereotypes negatively impact on women's lives and livelihoods, leading to a rise in gender-based violence, the heightened load of unpaid work, and loss of livelihoods due to over-representation in the informal sector.

⁴⁶(1985). The work of CEDAW: Reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). New York: United Nations.

⁴⁷World Bank Group 'Women, Business and the Law 2019: A Decade of Reform states that sub-Saharan Africa'

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/31327/WBI2019.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y> accessed on 29/03/2022.

⁴⁸The World Bank, Gender Equity for Development. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/research/dime/brief/dime-gender-program> accessed on 21/03/2022.

⁴⁹The World Bank, Gender Equity for Development. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/research/dime/brief/dime-gender-program> accessed on 21/03/2022.

Gender stereotypes are also evident when most women on the continent spend most of their time taking care of the family and domestic chores, a job mostly unrecognized by their society. Yet in monetary terms, women's unpaid work accounts for up to 39% of GDP. Since 1% increase in gender inequality reduces a country's human development index by 0.75%, its net effect is that women are held back from progressing economically, and so is the rest of the continent.

IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the literature review above, it appears that the continent for the longest time has not put its women at the forefront of its economic, social, and cultural life, evident from the fact that women have always lagged. This may have been because of gender discrimination taking the form of retrogressive and sometimes harmful cultural values and belief system that view the female person as a lesser human being.

Such discrimination is symptomized by gender-based violent practices such as early marriage, female genital mutilation, denial of women from inheriting from their parents, denial of women the right to own land among others, which have systemically skewed women's life experience and outcomes, hindering their meaningful participation in community life and eventually leading to poverty. The result is a continent that is not progressive. However, African States have now come to the realization that crises multiply threats, women are the solution multipliers.

Governments are faced with the reality that funding women's empowerment leads to gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth, and no tangible growth for the continent can be achieved when women are not involved.

At the United Nations level, there have been calls for the continent of Africa to empower women to enable them to thrive, evident in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs.

⁵²The World Bank, Gender Equity for Development.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/research/dime/brief/dime-gender-program> accessed on 21/03/2022.

⁵³Milazzo, Annamaria; van de Walle, Dominique. 2015. Women Left Behind? : Poverty and Headship in Africa. Policy Research Working Paper: No. 7391. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/22212>

⁵⁴UN Women, Redistribute Unpaid Work, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/news/1/redistribute-unpaid-work> accessed on 23/03/2022.

⁵⁵UNDP, Africa Human Development Report, Accelerating Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Africa, 2016.

<https://www.undp.org/publications/africa-human-development-report-2016> accessed on 22/03/2022.

⁵⁶UN Women, crises multiply threats, women are the solution multipliers.

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/speech/2022/03/speech-crises-multiply-threats-women-are-the-solution-multipliers> accessed on 22/03/2022.

⁵⁷UN Women, Economic Empowerment <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment> accessed on 23/03/2022.

This call has been taken seriously the African Union agencies which thereafter developed policies and strategies such as the Strategy for Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment (2018-2028), Agenda 2063, the Declaration of 2020 - 2030 as the Decade on Financial and Economic Inclusion for African Women, and the Global Gender Summit (Kigali) are just a few examples of the steps taken by the AU State Parties to eradicate gender discrimination, and to eventually enable women to play their part in the development of this great continent. In addition to the steps taken at the UN and the AU levels, policy and legal framework supporting the inclusion of women and their income generating activities are now in place in most countries.

Upon the realization that women's economic empowerment is anchored by education, most African Union State Parties have put measures in place to ensure all children (including girls) access free primary education. This has seen the enrolment of more girls in schools including affirmative action for the admission of women in institutions of higher learning. In addition to education, there is a need to transform institutions to bring women to the center of the development agenda and to remove structural barriers within our economies. Nurturing female entrepreneurs to grow in large numbers and including women in leadership capability are just a few of the many opportunities that could be explored.

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, a former president of Liberia, suggests affirmative action or preferential treatment as one of the ways through which women empowerment can be upscaled. For instance, in the case of Kenya in which, through the UN Women's Economic Empowerment programme, 1,500 women female vendors were successfully trained and benefited from the government supply chain.

The success of women's economic and social advancement is also dependent on the women's financial stability to expand and grow their business, and an enabling environment such as laws and policies that support and protect their business.

⁵⁹Milazzo, Annamaria; van de Walle, Dominique. 2015. Women Left Behind? Poverty and Headship in Africa. Policy Research Working Paper, No. 7331. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/22212>

⁶⁰Kingsley Ighobar. Economic empowerment of women good for all <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/april-2019-july-2019/economic-empowerment-women-good-all> accessed on 22/03/2022.

⁶¹Public Procurement and Disposal Act No.3 of 2005.

⁶²Affirmative action, presidential circular No.1 of Sept 2014, Executive Order 2 of May 2013 and Presidential Director on implementation of gender, youth and People with Disability 30% for all government procurement opportunities.

⁶³Women and Leadership "Obstacles to Female Leadership" <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2015/01/14/chapter-3-obstacles-to-female-leadership/>.

Accessed on 26/04/2022.

⁶⁴Ibid.

Here again, Kenya is leading by example, having amended the Public Procurement Act (2013) to reserve 30% of the annual government spending to women through affirmative action. In addition to law reforms, African governments need to avail both institutional and technical support for the women, such as for partnering them with financial institutions to expand access to finance and increasing digital financial inclusion for women across the African continent. This may include facilitating the flow of capital to women-led enterprises to meaningfully boost their economic growth and facilitation of their access to the internet and new technologies.

Finally, Women have been systematically excluded from decision-making spaces. Making space for women in leadership would go along way in the empowerment journey, as women are not only more affected by these problems, but also possess ideas and leadership to solve them. A few countries have done exemplarily well in Affirmative Action for women in leadership for instance Rwanda (61.25%), South Africa (46.35%), Senegal (41.82%), and Ethiopia (38.76%). This is a great example to be emulated. More women in leadership translates to more women in employment and consequently a reduction of poverty among women.

V. CONCLUSION

Economic empowerment of women is not a zero-sum game in which women win and men lose, rather, both genders and the society and continent benefits. From the foregoing sections, it is evident that the continent has lost significant sums of money by excluding women in economic development because of gender inequality and gender discrimination. Governments have now realized the important role women play in development, leading to the decision to take steps to ensure that more and more women are able to engage in the economic and development processes.

This realization has birthed the goodwill to stop gender discrimination, to remove all structural and systemic barriers that stand in the way of empowerment of the women of Africa, to enable them to play an effective role in development of this great continent. This is evident from the information available on the legal framework that prohibit gender discrimination as well as the theoretical framework, which points out that a very strong legal framework is now in place to support women.

At the same time, some states have made great strides in putting in place institutional frameworks including affirmative actions to catalyze women's economic advancement and development. However, the reality on the ground does not reflect women empowerment, as in many countries, women are still lagging despite the existence of beautiful and solid laws. There appears to be a disconnect between the actual laws and enforcement. The following recommendations are made to remedy this status quo.

VI. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Concerted effort is required as follows:

i. To the African Union Commission on Peoples' and Human Peoples' Rights.

- a)** To urge State Parties to enforce both international, regional laws and domestic laws that prohibit discrimination against women and gender inequality.
- b)** To implore State Parties to take measures to ensure that women effectively participate in the social life of their communities through affirmative action.
- c)** To demand the accountability of Partner States on what they are doing to support Women in their jurisdictions, through periodic submission of reports.

ii. Governments/State Parties

- a)** To domesticate international, regional laws, policies and strategies that prohibit gender inequality and to enforce the same to the letter.
- b)** To enforce the existing laws to ensure equality of men and women.
- c)** Law reforms – This can take 3 forms:

Firstly, Governments must expunge laws that perpetuate gender discrimination and go a step ahead to criminalize cultural practices that are obstacles to women’s social advancement, including those that prohibit women from owning land. Sexual harassment at the work place is an example of obstacles to social advancement.

Secondly, Governments must address the contradictions between legal provisions and practice in gender laws; breaking down harmful social norms and transforming discriminatory institutional settings; and securing women’s economic, social, and political participation. In addition, the Governments must design and implement fiscal policies that promote gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls by investing in essential infrastructure (ICT, sustainable energy, sustainable transport and safely managed water and sanitation).

- d)** Financing/funding- To develop a diverse range of financial institutions and systems to respond to the needs of diverse women in an inclusive manner, and to enable access to financial products and services as well as wealth creation.
- e)** Leadership - To support women to occupy management and leadership positions across sectors in the economy through affirmative action. Best practices of inclusion of women in leadership, specifically in parliament include Rwanda (61.25%), South Africa (46.35%), Senegal (41.82%), and Ethiopia (38.76%). This is a great example to be emulated.
- f)** Capacity Development of Women - to enable women to effectively play their role, improvement of their capacity to engage in wealth creation is vital.

This can be done through strengthening their confidence to drive scalable, inclusive, innovative projects and financing models that increase access to finance, market opportunities and productive assets.

g) Investing in women's education and health: Women's economic empowerment is anchored on education and well-being.

h) Sharing of best practices- States should learn from each other's experience, leading by examples and sharing notes on what models they have found to work for them. For instance, Kenya has a lot to teach other African countries in terms of how the government has set a side quotas within public procurement for women.

iii. To Private and Non-Governmental Organizations or Institutions

a) Influence governments, regulators, the private sector, and civil society and development partners to be more responsive to the needs of women.

b) To demonstrate commitment to change by making pledges and supporting women to achieve gender equality, which leads to broader impact.

c) Advocate for the removal of structural barriers and contribute to instructional transformation.

d) To create dynamic networks to support and mentor women, and to generate opportunities for them as well.

e) Women Leadership: To develop leadership capabilities of women to accelerate the adoption of cross-cutting gender approach and support robust knowledge management that can inform replication of successful interventions and learning from unsuccessful ones.

f) Identify a critical mass of women leaders in key sectors to champion and drive transformation in the economic, social and political spheres.

g) Cross-country learning from successes in other African countries that have advanced in promoting women's financial inclusion provides an opportunity, including leveraging of digital finance further.

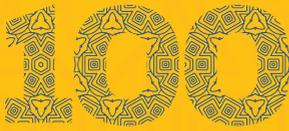
h) Private sector to improve the work environment to help in the career progression of women in the corporate sector, e.g. breastfeeding programmes at work, 6 months fully paid maternity leave, loan facilities etc.

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Africa - Europe **YOUNG LEADERS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESILIENCE.**

The program of the French-African Foundation "Young Leaders", for its 3rd edition, has seen things in a big way! At a time when Africa is aiming to diversify its partnerships and alliances, France and the European Union see this as an opportunity to renew and redesign their relationship with the African continent. It is no longer 20 but 100 young Africans and French, who, with their potential, their demonstrated expertise, and their thirst to serve the African continent, have responded. This edition was meant to be exceptional by the number of young talents gathered, but also by the high level of its patronage endorsed both by The French President Emmanuel Macron, who currently holds the presidency of the European Union, and by The Senegalese President Macky Sall, who currently holds the presidency of the African Union. In October 2021, the tone was set and the 100 Young leaders during their first seminar in France had the opportunity to attend and participate in the New Africa-France Summit called by President Emmanuel Macron. This summit provided an opportunity to take stock of France's priority projects in its relationship with the African continent, namely :

1. Facilitate access to education and higher education, in particular by increasing mobility;
2. Provide support for entrepreneurship and innovation;
3. To allow the construction of a new common imagination, in particular by strengthening and reinforcing the links of memory;
4. Supporting the continent that is at the forefront of the climate transition;
5. To work for the refoundation of development aid for the benefit of a partnership relationship.

In the wake of this summit, the EU-AU Summit was held on 17 and 18 February 2022, where the final declaration adopted unanimously, also went in the direction of a common vision to consolidate a renewed partnership for solidarity, security, peace and economic development. A new alliance between Africa and Europe therefore seems to be emerging and will be endorsed by this generation of Young Leaders, lucid and aware of the past history uniting the two continents, but also ambitious and eager to see it as an opportunity to promote development.

On the occasion of this synergy of approaches to create a new relationship, the Young Leaders of the French-African foundation wanted to be actors of change through the 100 recommendations contained in this collection, and to shed new light on the dynamics of partnership between Europe and Africa. These 100 recommendations, presented to President Macky Sall on the occasion of the second seminar of the cohort of Young leaders in Senegal, are intended to be anchored in the current concerns of African, French or diaspora youth and are addressed both to leaders, heads of states and organizations and also to future generations. These recommendations are the result of the numerous exchanges, dialogues and field experiences shared by the Young Leaders and represent for them the opportunity to contribute to meeting common challenges so that the change in relations between Africa and Europe corresponds to the needs and desires of the first concerned.