GPInsight

Shaping a Common Future: Perspectives on the German Africa Policy

Results of qualitative interviews with experts from Africa

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Global Perspectives Initiative in cooperation
with the Allensbach Institute for Public Opinion Research

GPI

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The Global Perspectives Initiative
The Global Perspectives Initiative (GPI) supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to make the world a safer and more equitable place by 2030. In doing so, we call for more global responsibility on Germany's part. GPI brings together stakeholders from politics, business, civil society, academia and media to discuss approaches and create actionable goals for sustainable global development. As a non-profit and neutral platform, the initiative raises awareness of the opportunities and challenges of a global society and aims to positively affect public discourse in Germany.

With *The Africa Roundtable*, GPI has established a high-level programme that brings together decision-makers from African countries and Germany who are active in politics, business and civil society to develop joint, sustainable solutions. The three pillars of *The Africa Roundtable* are research, personal encounters and communication. Encounters take place within the framework of a bi-annual high-level conference and in bilateral talks between decision-makers from African countries and Germany. In terms of communication, important topics are addressed and discussed throughout the year through interviews, podcasts and newsletters. *The Africa Roundtable* is accompanied by research: McKinsey & Company wrote a background paper for the first conference on 9 June 2021. Opening speeches were held by German President Dr Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Senegalese President Macky Sall and Director of the World Trade Organization Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

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Disclaimer
The interviews cover personal perceptions, assumptions and attitudes of the experts. The content of this report represents the views of those interviewed, and not those of GPI, the Allensbach Institute for Public Opinion Research or any of the partners.

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STRUCTURE

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FOREWORD BY THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES INITIATIVE

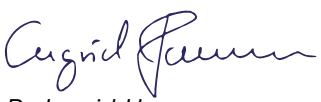
Dear readers,
For the past ten years, the relationship with Germany's neighbouring continent Africa has steadily improved and deepened. Nonetheless, there is much to be done to shape sustainable African-European partnerships and Germany plays a key role in this.

Knowing and understanding each other's perspectives is critical to the success of this relationship. In light of the ongoing pandemic, many countries on the neighbouring continent are looking for strategies of economic recovery that implement the imperatives of sustainability and strengthen the resilience of all sectors of society. Therefore, in this *GPInsight* study, experts and decision-makers from business, academia and civil society from several African states share their perspectives on the continent's challenges and future African - European/German relations. Their statements are remarkable and occasionally surprising. Overall, they form a coherent narrative that offers German decision-makers a great deal of potential for a forward-looking, constructive understanding of foreign and development policy.

This study is part of the GPI programme line *The Africa Roundtable*, which brings together African and German decision-makers from politics, business and civil society to develop joint, sustainable solutions. In the run-up to the first *The Africa Roundtable* in June 2021, a white paper *Reimagining Africa: How the COVID-19 crisis can catalyze change* was published in co-operation with McKinsey & Company. This study is the second research publication stemming from *The Africa Roundtable* and a centrepiece of the series.

My greatest appreciation goes to the 16 experts who gave us their valuable time and expertise in stimulating discussions. I would also like to thank our long-standing partner the Allensbach Institute for Public Opinion Research for the trusting cooperation through which we are now publishing a joint study for the third time. Lastly, my thanks go to the authors of the study, Nora Kiefer and Nica Weidemeyer, for their tireless commitment in writing this report.

On behalf of the entire team, I hope you enjoy reading it.



Dr Ingrid Hamm
CEO and Founder, Global Perspectives Initiative

INTRODUCING THE EXPERTS

This paper brings together 16 influential voices from different African countries to share their perspectives on the challenges and courses of action for Africa and its international partners. To capture the diversity of the continent, experts living and working in the different regions of Africa were interviewed: North Africa and the Horn of Africa, East Africa, West and Central Africa as well as Southern Africa.

The eight women and eight men are established decision-makers from politics, civil society, the private sector and academia with many years of experience in various fields: Trade and economic development, governance and democratic processes, peace and security, climate and environment, health and digitalisation.

When selecting the interviewees, care was taken to ensure an even distribution across different regions and thematic fields. Most of the experts have professional experience in various African countries and can provide interdisciplinary expertise. This reflects the multidimensionality of challenges on the African continent: Regions, sectors and problem areas are intertwined and can only be understood in the context of their interconnectivity.

Faten Aggad, who is from Algeria, has been Senior Advisor to the **African Union High Representative for AU-EU Relations** in Ethiopia since 2018. She holds a degree from Columbia Business School and has worked as a consultant for the United Nations Development Programme and in various think tanks on governance. At the South African Institute for International Affairs, Aggad conducted research on the African Peer Review Mechanism. At the European Centre for Development Policy Management in Brussels, she led the Governance Programme.
#North/HornOfAfrica #Governance #Trade

Dr Kojo Asante is a researcher and **Director of Advocacy and Policy Engagement** at the **Ghana Center for Democratic Development**. He is a lawyer and member of the Ghana Bar Association. He also studied Africana Studies in New York and received his PhD in International Development from the University of Manchester in 2016. Asante is a specialist in legal policy and governance and has expertise in anti-corruption, accountability, resource management and local politics.
#West/CentralAfrica #Governance

Prof. Awa Marie Coll-Seck is a medical doctor and specialist in infectious diseases, bacteriology and virology. She is the former **Senegalese Minister of Health** and current **Minister of State of the Republic of Senegal**. She is Chair of the National Committee of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative CN-ITIE. Previously, she headed the UN Programme on HIV/AIDS from 1996 to 2001 and then the UNAIDS Division, where she coordinated all UN efforts to combat the AIDS pandemic. In 2016, Coll-Seck was appointed by then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to the advisory panel of the UN *Every Woman, Every Child* campaign.
#West/CentralAfrica #Health

Dr Fatima Denton has been the **Director** of the **United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa**, based in Ghana, since 2018. Previously, she was Director of the Climate Change, Green Economy, Minerals and Extractives, Technology and Innovation Division, an initiative of the UN Economic Commission for Africa. After studying humanities and linguistics in Senegal and France, she completed her PhD in Politics and Development at the University of Birmingham. Denton has served on numerous scientific panels, including the CIGIAR Independent Scientific Committee on Climate Change and Food Security. She currently sits on the board of the international research initiative Future Earth and is a trustee of the International Institute on Environment and Development.
#West/CentralAfrica #Climate

Obiageli Ezekwesili is an **economic policy** expert, human rights activist and former presidential candidate of Nigeria. She is **Senior Economic Advisor** at the **Africa Economic Development Policy Initiative** and Chair of FixPolitics. She studied Public Policy and Administration at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and holds a master's degree in International Law and Diplomacy. Ezekwesili has served as World Bank Vice President for the Africa Region, Nigerian Minister of Education and Minister of Minerals and was one of the founders of Transparency International in 1994. She is a co-founder of the #BringBackOurGirls movement and the #RedCardMovement. In 2018, she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and in 2020, Forbes ranked her among the 50 most influential women in Africa.
#West/CentralAfrica #Economy

Dr Githinji Gitahi has been the **Group Chief Executive Officer of Amref Health Africa** since 2015, a Nairobi-based non-governmental organisation that promotes universal health coverage in African countries and works in 35 African countries. He also sits on the Board of Directors of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and is a member of the AU Commission's Corona Task Force. Previously, he served as Vice-President of the WHO's Universal Health Coverage Initiative, For his commitment to health, Gitahi was awarded the *Moran of the Order of the Burning Spear* by the President of Kenya in 2018.
#EastAfrica #Health

Dr Acha Leke is a senior partner in **McKinsey's** Johannesburg office, a member of the McKinsey Shareholders Council and leads the **Private Equity & Principal Investors Practice in Africa**. Leke is from Cameroon and holds a PhD in electrical engineering from Stanford University. He is a co-founder of the African Leadership Academy, a pre-university training centre for future leaders, and an author and advisory board member of the **World Economic Forum** and the development organisation ONE. He has won numerous awards, has been listed several times as one of the most influential Africans today, and writes regularly for prestigious publications such as the Harvard Business Review.
#SouthAfrica #Economy #Trade

Kenyan environmental activist **Wanjira Mathai** is **Vice President** and **Regional Director of the World Resources Institute**, a non-profit research organisation in the field of food, water, energy and climate. She is also the chairperson of the Wangari Maathai Foundation and the former chairperson of the Green Belt Movement, a Kenyan non-governmental organisation that promotes reforestation and water harvesting and social community building. Through her work at the World Resources Institute, Mathai has been a major contributor to reforestation efforts in Kenya. In 2018 and 2020, she was on the list of the hundred most influential African women.
#EastAfrica #Climate

The Zimbabwean lawyer **Ottilia Anna Maunganidze** is an expert on criminal law, human rights, **peace and security** as well as being a freelance author and speaker. She also heads the Special Projects Department of the **Institute for Security Studies**, a think tank based in Pretoria. In 2017, Maunganidze was selected by the Munich Security Conference and the Körber Foundation as one of 25 Munich Young Leaders.
#SouthAfrica #Peace&Security

Dr Matshidiso Moeti, a doctor from Botswana, has been the **World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Director** for Africa since 2015. After working in the Botswana Ministry of Health, she led the Africa and Middle East team for UNAIDS for two years and worked as a consultant for UNICEF's Eastern and Southern Africa offices. Since 1999, Moeti has been part of WHO and is mainly dedicated to the area of non-communicable diseases. She is also a member of the Advisory Board of the World Health Summit.
#West/CentralAfrica #Health

Prof. George Mukundi is a **human rights lawyer** from Kenya and Professor of Public Law at the University of Cape Town. From 2014 to 2016, he headed the AU Secretariat of the **African Governance Architecture**, which is mandated to promote good governance and democracy on the African continent. Since 2016, he has been the Managing Director of Maendeleo Group, a policy and development consultancy based in Cape Town. In addition, Mukundi is a member of the African Leadership Network and the Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law of the Dutch Ministry of Development and Economic Affairs.
#SouthAfrica #Governance

Murithi Mutiga, who is from Kenya, heads the Horn of Africa research unit of the **International Crisis Group** a think tank in the field of **conflict analysis and prevention**. After graduating in Comparative Politics from the London School of Economics, he previously worked as a writer and journalist for the New York Times as well as East Africa correspondent for The Guardian.
#North/HornofAfrica #Peace&Security

Dr Kumi Naidoo is a South African **environmental and climate activist** and currently **Richard von Weizsäcker Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy**. He was Secretary General of Amnesty International from 2018 to 2019 and **Director of Greenpeace** from 2009 to 2015. Naidoo was a fellow at Oxford University and earned a PhD in political science. Today, he is an honorary professor at Oxford University and Arizona State University. He is also an advisory board member of Transparency International and an ambassador for the *Africans Rising for Justice, Peace and Dignity* movement. In 2014, he was awarded the James Lawson Award for Peaceful Activism
#SouthAfrica #Climate

The Kenyan author **Nanjala Nyabola** studied political science, African studies and migration in Birmingham and Oxford and publishes academically and non-academically on literature, society, international law, feminism, media and **digitalisation in Africa**. As a **journalist**, she has worked for BBC, Al Jazeera, The Guardian, and OkayAfrica, among others. Nyabola is a member of the Board of Directors of Amnesty International Kenya and is invited to speak on digital policy at numerous international conferences, including re:publica 2018 and 2019, the Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa 2018, and RightsCon in Tunisia 2019.
#EastAfrica #Digitisation

Kenyan entrepreneur **Vimal Shah** is chairman of Bidco Africa, **the largest producer and distributor of household goods** in East and Central Africa. Together with his two brothers, he founded Bidco in 1985 as a soap manufacturer and grew the company to its current size with 13 sales markets and a turnover of over USD 500 million.
In 2006, he was awarded the title of ***CEO of the Year*** by the Kenya Institute of Management. In the past, Vimal Shah also chaired the East African Business Council and the Kenya Private Sector Alliance. Since 2017, he has been running a blog and mentoring small and medium enterprises in Kenya.
#EastAfrica #Economy #Trade

Dr Youssef Travaly from Senegal and Rwanda is **Senior Fellow for Digital at the Friends of Europe/Africa Europe Foundation**. With a PhD in materials science and entrepreneurship, he has many years of experience in sustainable product development and technologies.
In 2020, he founded **AllSightsAfrica**, a think tank to advise governments, NGOs and the African private sector on issues of socio-economic transformation on the continent.
In 2021, he also co-founded EDPU Africa in Kigali.
EDPU Africa is a **health service provider** specialising in the early detection and prevention of infectious diseases.
#EastAfrica #Digitisation #Health

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of *The Africa Roundtable*, a forum for decision-makers from politics, business and society on African–European cooperation, this publication aims to highlight African solutions to African challenges and to strengthen dialogue and mutual understanding between the neighbouring continents of Europe and Africa. To this end, we spoke with **16 experts** from the various regions of Africa about **trends on the continent** and partnership approaches to a new policy on Africa in Germany and Europe.

Europe and Africa: Partners at last?
According to the experts, the colonial pasts still shape relations between European and African countries. **Historical injustice** and old-fashioned belief systems continue to have an impact today. At the same time, the interviewees welcomed **Germany's reorientation** of African–European cooperation towards establishing a partnership of equals. These positive approaches must be further expanded and made sustainable.

Our interview partners collectively agree that Germany and Europe must realise that they need Africa. Not only to cope with global crises, but also as a trading partner. Germany's policy on Africa is generally perceived as a "house divided". More **inter-ministerial coordination** and agreements between different actors in German-African cooperation are needed. In addition, the experts comment that coordination of the national with the European level should be enhanced to avoid **duplication of structures**.

Africa and Germany in the world
The experts see Africa as not adequately represented in **multilateral organisations** such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the United Nations Security Council, and call for institutional reforms. Here, support from the German government is desired. In addition, Germany is perceived as a **representative of liberal values** that should assume more global responsibility and become a stronger voice in international discourses.

Approaches according to clusters
The challenges described by the experts can be broadly grouped into the following clusters: 1) Economy and employment; 2) Trade and economic integration; 3) Climate and environment; 4) Peace and security; 5) Good governance and democratisation; 6) Covid-19, health and research.

Economy and employment
According to the experts, economic growth is the key factor for development. They point out that **Africa's economy is growing**, but that few jobs and **limited added value** are being created locally. Population growth, (youth) unemployment, low productivity and the persistent image of Africa as an unattractive investment location are seen as fundamental challenges to economic development. The interviewees consider the international and African private sectors to be the principal actors in this regard. Although it is the task of African governments to create investment-friendly conditions in their countries, the activities of German or European companies in Africa could be made more attractive through government protection programmes.

Trade and economic integration
The interview partners voice criticism that **high tariffs and agricultural subsidies** from the European side continue to prevent Africa's equal participation in the world market and also weaken local producers. According to the experts, these trade barriers must be removed and the sale of European food at dumping prices in Africa must be stopped. The planned **carbon pricing** as part of the **European Green Deal** could also make it more difficult for Africa to access the European market and should therefore be reconsidered.

Climate and environment
A fundamental issue for the interviewees is **climate (in)justice**: Although African countries contribute less than 4 % of global greenhouse gas emissions, the continent suffers massively from the consequences of climate change. Simultaneously, the expansion of renewable energies should not come at the expense of urgently needed economic growth in Africa: the experts propose **compensation payments from emitters** in the Global North.

Peace and security
According to the experts, wars, conflicts and migration have complex causes and can ultimately only be solved with **development policy strategies** that involve local populations and create **prospects on the ground**. They reject approaches focussed on military or security policy and consider them short-sighted. In the eyes of our interviewees, Germany has built political capital in Africa and should use this when acting as a **mediator in conflicts**.

Good governance and democratisation
Two perspectives emerge from the discussions: Firstly, that the demand for good governance should arise from **the national population itself**. Secondly, that – in rare instances – political conditionality can provide an effective incentive for governments to implement reforms. The experts believe that external partners should primarily support civil societies on the ground to create sustainable and **context-specific solutions** with local expertise. Access to information, communication and digital services is particularly important for the development of civil society.

Covid-19, health and research

As the interviewees point out, the coronavirus pandemic has shown that pandemics can only be effectively combated through the production of medicines and vaccines in African countries. The necessary production capacities should be expanded with **investments from foreign pharmaceutical companies**. To enable local production, European countries should reconsider their restricting stance towards the **release of vaccine patents**. Temporary **labour migration** in the health sector would promote knowledge transfer and at the same time compensate for the shortage of skilled workers in Germany.

1 AFRICAN – EUROPEAN/GERMAN RELATIONS TODAY

Highlighting African expertise

The Global Perspectives Initiative (GPI) used the change of government in Germany in the autumn of 2021 as an opportunity to talk to 16 selected African experts about their views on the African continent, relations with international partners, and expectations of the new German government. Among other things, the following questions were discussed:

- What are the biggest challenges facing African states?
- How can Africa's potential be harnessed?
- How can the international community, in particular Germany and Europe, contribute to a cooperative partnership with the African continent?

The aim of this report is to shed light on new and existing challenges, approaches to solutions, and African–German cooperation from an African perspective. Through this, local knowledge is brought to the forefront of political dialogue and enables partnership-based approaches to German Africa policy.

In 16 one hour-long interviews, eight women and eight men were interviewed individually by GPI, resulting in 150 pages of transcripts, which were first analysed by the Allensbach Institute for Public Opinion Research and then condensed by GPI into this report.

The interviews reveal the experts' personal perceptions, basic assumptions and attitudes which we have summarised and in part contextualised with further information, so-called *GPInsights*. Chapter one describes perspectives on the status quo of African–German/European relations in general. Chapter two focuses on six thematic fields of international development in which specific problems, approaches to solutions, and cooperation are presented based on the of the interviewees' expertise in their respective fields. In chapter three, we outline some key takeaways to consider as German Africa policy continues to evolve.

An outdated mentality slows down development

The experts agree that relations between Europe and Africa continue to be highly asymmetrical. At the same time, the new approaches of German development policy are perceived positively. The relationship between Africa and Europe is highly complex – and not only because of Europe's colonial past in African countries. After the independence of many African states in the 1960s, relations changed greatly: From proxy stages of the Cold War, in which authoritarian regimes were externally supported, to a strong focus on democratisation and building good governance in the 1990s. Today, a variety of additional non-European stakeholders are active in Africa. As one expert explains, this results in a network of complicated interdependencies.

The experts assess the relations between Europe and Africa as strongly asymmetrical

Africa and Europe: A complex relationship to this day

The relationship has evolved over time. There have been periods of unhealthy collaboration during the Cold War when the Global North was divided and engaged with African autocrats. We saw a shift in the 90s with a great emphasis on good governance and democratisation. Today, the relationship is complex as more actors are involved, including China, the Gulf states, Turkey, India, or Russia.
Murithi Mutiga

Europe: Stuck in a colonial mentality?

Discrepancy: needs of African populations vs European development cooperation

The interviewees assess the relationship between the Global North and Africa as asymmetrical and paternalistic. Some criticise Europe for preserving colonial structures and behaviour and exhibiting a saviour or messiah mentality. Because of this, positive developments in African countries are not taken into consideration sufficiently. Furthermore, the experts agree that a great economic power imbalance persists: Actors from the Global North would often prescribe the goals of projects and measures in African countries, which tend to ignore the actual needs of the people. This asymmetry is not only observed in the way state actors cooperate, and even the involvement of large international non-governmental organisations is unable to solve this discrepancy.

It's an unequal, paternalistic, racist relationship. It is still rooted in an old colonial mentality and thinking.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

In European bureaucratic minds, the Africa they know was the Africa that was colonised, and the attitude remains paternalistic. That's terrible because Africa has remarkably changed in terms of its power to engage. To prepare ourselves well for the rest of the 21st century, Africa and Europe have to be true partners. That requires a mindset change on both sides, but particularly on the side of Europe. Europe has to unlearn and relearn a lot of things.
Obiageli Ezekwesili

Europeans still struggle to break away from this idea that they are messiahs and that what they do is help "poor Africans."
Prof. George Mukundi

It is important for this partnership to devolve power to the lowest level, for governmental partners to work with people at the local level. Because when you transfer this instrument of power to international NGOs, the power imbalance continues.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

In conversation: partnerships on equal footing

For many of the speakers, it is indispensable for future cooperation to overcome the previous donor-recipient model and to create a partnership on equal footing, based on mutual and common interests, but also accepting of different views and perspectives. These must be identified and negotiated together. Dialogue at eye-level also includes recognising the previous relationship as asymmetrical.

What matters the most now is how you engage with our folks. It has to be based on equal partnership, dignity, identity and mutual recognition of our divergences. But, also mutual interests, which are quite a couple. We are all in this together. If you use that approach, then we will stop pre-empting and imagining that we know what works and what does not work, as a lot has not worked in the past.
Prof. George Mukundi

You sometimes see vacuous rhetorics of Africa being a partner. That's not true. In reality, the modus operandi of the engagement with Africa doesn't show partnership. It still shows that sense that one party wants to get the better of the other. Mutuality of interests is a concept that Africa and Europe would have to sit down and agree on.
Obiageli Ezekwesili

Listening is key

Many experts positively commend Germany's engagement in Africa to date and attest to Germany's willingness to listen to its African partners and to discuss projects and challenges together. The experts hope that the current German government will continue and further expand this approach.

Experts praise Germany's commitment to Africa to date

Germany, under Merkel, generally attempted to listen to what Africans were asking for. Whether it fully succeeded in responding to them, I have doubts. But there was the intention and practice of genuinely listening. That needs to be maintained.
Faten Aggad

The government that will be leaving now has done a lot to help Africa because they were more sensitive to Africa issues. It would be good for the new government to continue listening to Africa, knowing Africa, visiting Africa.
Prof. Awa Marie Coll-Seck

Almost all the interviewees also had positive experiences cooperating with German ministries, especially the Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation, the Federal Foreign Office and the Federal Environment Agency. Examples include: support for the establishment of a Pan-African University, for the development of the East African Business Council, and overall cooperation with the German development agency Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). In general, the experts attest to the willingness of German policymakers to learn and to view the challenges on the continent from the perspective of African partners.

Germany – directly through BMZ, but also through the Foreign Office – supports a number of initiatives on the African continent. It would be ideal to continue those efforts underway.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

We've also been working with UBA, the German Environment Agency. There is already a willingness to hear, a willingness to listen, a willingness to sit around the same table and to address the issues.
Dr Fatima Denton

I was the chairman of the East African Business Council, and GIZ did a lot of work. Germany has been capacity building and getting precision engineering out there. Putting the right equipment in, the right mindset and developing African nations.
Vimal Shah

In 2017, when Germany was championing the Marshall Plan with Africa, that really was an excellent strategy and aligned quite well, having a focus on African solutions, equitable global structures and institutions. This is exactly what we're trying to do. There's a lot there that Germany and Africa can share.
Wanjira Mathai

We have a very good partnership with the BMZ. They listened, provided inputs, and had questions that forced us to reflect on things that we may have taken for granted. It was a very engaging way to work with partners because it wasn't just, "Here's a pot of money, see what you can do with it and how you can support this initiative". It was, "How do we collectively reflect on ways we can support these two continents and their relationship?"
Dr Fatima Denton

2 THEMATIC CLUSTERS ACCORDING TO MEGATRENDS

In the discussions with the experts, six central issues were identified on the African continent: 1) Economy and employment; 2) Trade and economic integration; 3) Climate and environment; 4) Peace and security; 5) Good governance and democratisation; 6) Covid-19, health and research. The following chapter outlines both the challenges described and the current situation, as well as approaches for dealing with these challenges within African countries and in partnership with the international community.

2.1 Economy and employment

Under-utilised potential

Africa only contributes about 3 % to global economic output

Africa's wealth in resources does not always reflect in economic output. Although Africa is the world's most resource-rich continent, it contributes only about 3 % to global GDP. Low productivity of the economy is of central importance here – resulting in poverty and social inequality with rapidly growing populations, combined with a lack of employment opportunities and investments. The effects of the coronavirus pandemic further exacerbate these negative trends. In 2020, Africa-wide GDP fell for the first time in 25 years. Economic output dropped by 2.1 % and is expected to rise again by about 3.4 % in 2021.[1]

Though Africa has 1.3 billion people, which represents about 17 % of the global population, they account for about 2.7 % or less of the global GDP. That's where the problem begins.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

Despite all the progress that we're making, we are lagging behind with respect to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. We know that poverty is still persistent and remains the most important challenge for countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.
Wanjira Mathai

Poverty and high inequality are serious challenges for a lot of African countries. This is of great concern and should be addressed to advance sustainable development.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

Commodity exports dominate trade: little value added in Africa

The low value added of African economies and manufacturing is often cited as a significant factor. Too often, it is mainly raw materials that are exported and then processed in the Global North, where most of the surplus value is added. Some experts are critical of the fact that many industrialised countries exploit Africa's dependence on these exports to secure cheap raw materials.

We like to say Africa is the richest continent on the planet. We are the richest continent underneath the ground, and we are one of the poorest continents above the ground.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

Your folks up in the North are happy to come and rape our resources, run away with it, and then continue to blame our people saying it is our people.
Prof. George Mukundi

This continent is not able to add value to its produce. The value has been added somewhere else. And so, profit is not seen in the continent. It is taken somewhere else.
Dr Fatima Denton

They decided to build some refineries in Rwanda. Now, they are adding value to minerals in Rwanda before exporting them, which is not yet the case for Niger. In Niger they have uranium, they have gold and oil, but everything is being exported in the raw state without value addition within the country.
Dr Youssef Travaly

Lack of jobs and prospects for the youth

High unemployment, especially among young people, is a much-noted problem area. According to the experts, in many parts of Africa, the economy does not grow at a rate sufficient to absorb the large number of young people entering the labour market every year. They explain that in some African countries, low job creation is a result of the heavy economic focus on raw material exports. Unemployment, especially among young people, is a driver of migration and – as a result of the lack of prospects – a breeding ground for crime, extremism and terrorism.

Economic growth is not keeping pace with population growth

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Africa is the youngest continent in the world with a median age of 19.7 years. Every year, 12 million young people enter the labour market, but currently only three million formal jobs are created annually. Since many countries have little to no state social security system, many young people work in the informal sector to earn money.[2] An extreme case is South Africa, where more than 60 % of people between the ages of 15 and 24 were unemployed in 2020.[3] Most Africans continue to work in agriculture. On average, more than half of the population works in the agricultural sector, although it accounts for only about 15 % of the continent's GDP.[4]

The average age of Africans today is 19 years. Whatever we do, we have to build opportunities and hope for this crucial generation.
Wanjira Mathai

One of the biggest challenges are overpopulation and youth, which is continuously lacking jobs, lacking opportunities.
Prof. George Mukundi

Youth unemployment is still one of the biggest problems. The latest African Development Bank statistics show 12 million people coming to the job market every year. We are only able to create about a third of jobs needed for that group, and even the jobs that are being created tend to be vulnerable jobs that are not sustainable and can be lost easily.
Dr Kojo Asante

It's both unemployment and underemployment. (...) While many parts of the continent have been growing economically, a lot of it has been jobless growth. A lot of it has been based on debt and on infrastructure development, a lot of it is resource-based.
Murithi Mutiga

Digitalisation as a driver of development

Overcoming inequalities through digitalisation

Digitalisation is repeatedly mentioned by the experts as a driver of change and reduction of inequalities. The coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated the importance of access to digital services. Innovative technologies in health and education, such as telemedicine and e-learning, as well as the production of digital devices on the continent, could improve living conditions and create jobs. The interviewees claim that this could also partially close the gap between rural and urban regions. Regarding agriculture, they see opportunities in the digitalisation of supply chains to increase the production and competitiveness of African products.

We have such a gap between rural and urban areas, and we need to take advantage of digital emerging technology. (...) It would be important to start manufacturing cell phones and tablet computers in Africa so that they become affordable. We have to use digital technology – telemedicine and remote diagnostics – to make decentralised health infrastructures more efficient.
Dr Youssef Travaly

We saw the continent go through a big digitalisation acceleration during Covid. Countries and companies that were more digitally advanced fared better through the crisis. The digital transformation is going to be a massive enabler to help transform Africa.
Dr Acha Leke

Covid has shown us that there is more to be done regarding digital literacy and access in Africa. (...) Support is needed to digitise the dissemination chains for agricultural products to make African agriculture a lot more competitive.
Dr Fatima Denton

Africa's economy: Still underrated

Investments are essential for Africa's economic development. To this end, the experts emphasise that African governments must initiate reforms that enable stronger economic growth, unleash positive market dynamics and make Africa an attractive investment location. Regarding the necessary investments, they regret that German business actors are not sufficiently aware of opportunities in Africa. Even in areas that are developing well in Africa, there is clearly too little investment. The experts suggest identifying the most promising areas and companies in the coming years and strength-ening targeted private sector activities there. In particular, the many small and medium-sized German companies could benefit from expanding to Africa.

German businesses do not take sufficient advantage of opportunities in Africa

In terms of improving the continent as a destination for investment, Africa can be a new Asia, where companies can find opportunities to manufacture and invest.
Murithi Mutiga

We have to pursue critical reforms that unlock the opportunities in diverse sectors of our economies. We need to engage ourselves in building the right institutions and regulatory systems that make Africa an attractive place to move some of the global manufacturing. (...) There is opportunity. Some of what you call SMEs in Germany today can become bigger businesses simply by doing a lot of expansion into countries on the continent.
Obiageli Ezekwesili

Private sector: Incentives and safeguards

For Africa to succeed in truly stimulating local economies, it must become a more attractive destination for foreign investment. Germany could promote this by supporting and safeguarding German investors. One of the experts interviewed points to a Chinese development fund that could serve as a model.

China as a role model?

GPInsight The China-Africa Development Fund was established by the Chinese government in 2007. It is the first Chinese fund to support investments in Africa with about ten billion USD. It is headquartered in Beijing with offices in South Africa, Ethiopia, Zambia, Ghana and Kenya.[5]

Look at the Chinese African Development Fund. It gave the Chinese entrepreneurs who were investing in Africa a huge amount of capital available for them. If Germany did that for German investors coming out and doing things differently, that unlocks the whole thing of German people getting capital and bringing it to Africa.
Vimal Shah

The interviewees agree that Africa's economy needs massive investment in infrastructure development. Many of these projects are currently being implemented by Chinese companies. One expert calls for local people to be trained so that they can initiate and implement projects themselves. But it is not only China that is active on the continent: Africa is increasingly attracting actors from all over the world. More and more countries in the Global North see opportunities to promote companies in Africa, for example through participation in financing and steering. The experts welcome the interest of German companies.

A lot of our infrastructure is being built by the Chinese. Why can't it be done by locals? We need to equip them with the mindset, the skills, and the know-how. And build up huge companies that are infrastructure companies, with a German mindset and a low-cost base. But agile.
Vimal Shah

There is a huge infrastructure gap on the continent. In terms of investment or technical capacity, there would be a useful role for external actors.
Murithi Mutiga

German development has to be far more proactive. The British have now come up to say... "Can we develop companies in Africa, can we finance those companies? Can we have part-ownership for those?"
Vimal Shah

Call for international financing instruments

Against the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic, not only governmental but also international financing instruments should be considered to boost the economy. One important mechanism could be Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or flexible financing to promote innovative business ideas in Africa. Here, the experts would like to see further support from Europe and Germany.

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In order to prevent a global shortage of money, member states of the IMF were allocated Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) in 1970. Working as a sort of "artificial money", it was used to create currency reserves. IMF members have the right to buy other currencies against this artificial money when they need financing.[6] New SDR issuance is based on IMF shares, i.e., wealthier countries are automatically allocated larger SDRs.[7]

Germany is opposing stronger financial support such as the Special Drawing Rights (SDR) issue at the level of the IMF. For African countries, the SDR issue is extremely important as a financial buffer to respond to the global crisis.
Faten Aggad

Germany can be a better partner for African countries within international organisations by allowing SDR of the IMF to buffer the economic impact of the pandemic.
Nanjala Nyabola

One expert criticises that trade and negotiations concerning economic relations continue to be conducted primarily at governmental level. Instead, business, industry and other economic stakeholders should interact directly with each other. Africa is not a charity case but a business case and should be perceived and treated as such by the new federal government.

Business to business. We need to get more private sector to private sector relationship. That's what is meaningful. I'm tired of seeing government officials sitting in the room and private sector sitting behind them. This new governing coalition should think of Africa as a sound business case.
Obiageli Ezekwesili

2.2 Economic integration and trade

The African Free Trade Area: a common market?

Closer cooperation within the framework of the AfCFTA

From the experts' perspective, a lack of intergovernmental cooperation in Africa is holding back economic development of the African continent. Closer cooperation and joint action based on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) vis-à-vis other actors, such as the USA, the EU or China, is needed. Occasionally, states would drop out and seek bilateral agreements with countries of the Global North. Some experts warn that focusing on the self-interest of individual African states and their international partners could jeopardise the possibilities and scope for action that the AfCFTA provides.

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With 1.2 billion people and a combined GDP of USD 2.5 trillion, the AfCFTA is set to become the largest free trade area in the world. Except for Eritrea, all 54 countries have signed the agreement, which aims to reduce tariffs, stimulate trade and production and strengthen value chains. It has already been ratified by 36 of them.[8]

We need to drive that strong agenda for economic integration, so the AfCFTA is critical. Embracing internal trade in a way that fosters prosperity across the continent is so important for tackling poverty and bridging internal inequalities.
Obiageli Ezekwesili

With the AfCFTA we are trying to become one market. You have got the Americans, Chinese and Europeans giving different ideas on various ways to do things, but everybody is following their own interests. We as Africa should do that, too.
Vimal Shah

Kenya started negotiating with the US and now their agreement puts in jeopardy its engagement in the AfCFTA. It's seeking a similar type of engagement with the EU. Mauritius is doing the same with China and the EU. It is important for these countries to understand that it's not sub-optimal trade agreements that will help them, but actual commitments to their own agenda, such as the AfCFTA. Luckily, we're talking of two countries only. But if we see more of that trend of increased nationalism, it would be problematic.
Faten Aggad

Economic integration and diversification as a possible solution

High customs duties are cited as a major obstacle to domestic trade in Africa because they make it cheaper to deliver goods to the Global North or China than to other African countries. Additionally, most countries focus on producing and exporting unprocessed raw materials, which other countries could produce themselves. In addition to increased intergovernmental cooperation, a diversification of the product range would be helpful.

Logistics is a big one: If I send a container from China to Mombasa (Kenya), it costs me about USD 700 – 1,000 and the same container from Mombasa to West Africa costs me USD 4,000. The logistical costs to trade within Africa are too expensive and not competitive.
Vimal Shah

Trade and regional integration are a huge challenge. For example, in the East Africa region, trade between Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania is very difficult because they are producing the same goods.
Dr Youssef Travaly

Global trading injustice

EU subsidies harm African agriculture

The interviewees name the unfair global trade system as a central problem area for the African economy. Subsidies for German and European agriculture and additional tariff barriers make it difficult for African agricultural producers to access European markets. In addition, the export of subsidised surplus production to Africa and its sale at dumping prices drives local suppliers out of their own markets. African producers are often unable to compete with the low prices of goods from abroad. In addition, some experts explain that the high formal requirements for products make it difficult for African companies, especially smaller companies, to export their goods to Europe.

The global economic and trade system does not work for Africa. We have problems with market access to Europe. Because trade-distorting subsidies still continue at the European level, we see a dumping of excess produced goods for a lower cost than what it took for people in Africa to produce that same thing without subsidies. And so, people not only cannot import to Europe, they also cannot compete sufficiently in their own markets.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

African entrepreneurs explain that it is difficult to access European markets as they get caught up in issues of definition and classification. What is a sustainably produced product? I believe in the high potential of Africa, but Europe needs to give it the possibility to expand globally.
Faten Aggad

Opportunity and risk: the European Green Deal

Africa needs to increase its trade with Europe

Expanding trade with the Global North, especially with Europe, is of great importance for Africa's economic development. The interviewees agree on this. It is the responsibility of the Global North to establish a more equitable international trade system and to facilitate access to markets for African producers. To achieve this, removing subsidies for European farmers and lifting protectionist barriers to access are of critical importance. While one expert explicitly praises Europe's ambition to become climate neutral, two interviewees warn that the European Green Deal could become another trade barrier. The planned pricing of carbon-intensive products, the so-called *Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)*, would further increase market access barriers and thus aggravate the situation for exporters from Africa

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With the Green Deal, Europe wants to become the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. To achieve this, compensatory payments on carbon-intensive products (CBAM) are to be introduced. A United Nations study confirms that introducing carbon prices on imports would change international trade patterns in favour of countries in the Global North. Carbon prices on goods produced in the EU could benefit less developed countries, as production there is often less energy-intensive. Introducing carbon taxation on imports to the EU would in turn cancel out these effects and lead to a decline in exports from developing countries in favour of exports from developed countries, which tend to have less carbon intensive production processes.[9] Potentially, the European Union could use the revenues from the CBAM to promote the introduction and expansion of clean production technologies in economically weaker countries – for example, countries in Africa.[10]

The EU Green Deal has a lot of good ambition and can work very well with Africa to incentivize Africans to also arrive at the green transition. But they have to look at things like the CBAM to ensure that it will not have a negative impact and penalization on countries exporting to Europe.
Dr Fatima Denton

Even with the current proposals for exemptions that relate to least developed countries, the European Green Deal would be disastrous for the African continent in terms of access to the European market. It would be ok, if there were enough financial resources to enable the African continent to not pay the price of that adjustment and to be able to meet these very high standards on the European side.
Faten Aggad

Europe as a supporter of the AfCFTA

Regional integration modelling the EU?

An important step for the African continent could be stronger regional integration based on the EU model. This could even see the "Afro" introduced as a common currency. The experts hope that Europe and Germany will provide support for intra-African integration in the form of political assistance and sharing of best practices. The AfCFTA could gradually develop into a single economic area and an important trading partner for Europe.

When Europe adopted the euro in 2000, I was the first person to say: "If Europe can have a Euro, Africans can have a common currency, an Afro". Not to give up national sovereignty tomorrow, but we can do what the European Union project has done. Not as a blueprint, but there's obviously commonalities that can be shared.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

We are not so sure whether the new government is going to follow Angela Merkel's view, which really did support the very important project of the AfCFTA.
Prof. George Mukundi

Reducing intra-African trade barriers

Stronger RECs can improve intra-African trading conditions

The experts agree that trade and investment opportunities within Africa should be improved, for example, by reducing customs barriers and unifying tax systems. Africa has huge potential, but its fragmentation into 54 countries that range dramatically in size is a challenge. There are great, untapped opportunities in a stronger regional union. The trust of the African states among each other must be strengthened. Existing regional economic areas, such as in East Africa (ECA) or in West Africa (ECOWAS), which already reduce trade barriers such as high tariffs, are helpful in this regard.

We need to peel off the division on the continent: More trust within African nations is very important. How to develop that is basically through Regional Economic Communities, such as in East or West Africa.
Vimal Shah

It is an internal exercise for African countries: To continue to see value in regional integration and avoid following this global trend of increased nationalism. Pressure of the domestic private sector can be helpful in that regard.
Faten Aggad

2.3 Climate and environment

Climate change: devastating consequences for Africa

Slowing down climate change is a top priority

In addition to economic and security problems, the climate crisis is seen as Africa's principal challenge by many interviewees. According to a recent study by the World Meteorological Organisation, almost 120 million Africans living below the poverty line will have to fight additional droughts, floods or extreme heat by 2030.[11] Some regions have already been hit particularly hard by the consequences of climate change. African countries often lack the resources to rebuild after natural disasters. The experts emphasise that slowing down climate change and creating adaptation measures must have priority in order to be able to continue living on the continent.

The mother of all challenges is the climate change crisis, and African countries are the most at risk.
Wanjira Mathai

The biggest issue facing the African continent are the impacts from climate change and the fact that our continent is so ill-prepared for further shocks.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

I would love to see climate foregrounded as an urgent political priority. War and elections etc. – all this will not matter if there's nothing left to live in.
Nanjala Nyabola

According to the experts, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel – areas that are already struggling with water scarcity due to their geography – are affected particularly badly by the consequences of climate change. Unstable rainfall or droughts can have devastating consequences for agriculture and livelihoods. But the consequences are also visible in Southern Africa in the form of floods or hurricanes that devastate entire coastal landscapes. Yet Africa's natural landscapes are particularly worthy of protection. One interviewee points to the rainforest of the Congo Basin as an indispensable global carbon sink. Preserving this is not only in Africa's interest, but in the interest of the entire world.

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Carbon sinks are natural reservoirs, such as forests and moorlands, that absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it temporarily or permanently. The Congo Basin is the largest carbon sink in the world after the Amazon rainforest. Current scientific evidence suggests that both forests are rapidly losing storage capacity due to rising temperatures and slash-and-burn agriculture.[12]

We have a higher rate of climate-related risks. Droughts, flooding and locusts, especially in the Horn of Africa. We're seeing severe, chronic droughts in the Sahel as well.
Dr Fatima Denton

Cyclical droughts. Impacts on agriculture because the rain doesn't come when it should. Cyclone Idai wiped out large numbers of homes and infrastructure.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

In Mozambique, floods largely destroyed gains made before.
Prof. Awa Marie Coll-Seck

Very recently, data now show that the Congo Basin Forest is the only healthy lung we've got in the tropics. The Amazon is teetering on becoming an emitter of carbon, and the forests of Southeast Asia are already net emitters. But the Congo forest is still a net carbon sink. We must do everything in our power to protect it.
Wanjira Mathai

Climate (in)justice and green growth

An important issue in the debate on climate change and CO_2 emissions is climate justice. Many experts point out that historically, Africa has been responsible for only a small percentage of global greenhouse gas emissions and, even today, the continent only accounts for about 4 %. However, it is primarily African countries that suffer the consequences of global warming. Two interviewees explicitly argue that Africa is paying the price for European industrialisation.

Africa causes <4 % of global greenhouse emissions but suffers disproportionately from the consequences

A continent that has least contributed to the impacts of climate change with less than 5 % of emissions finds itself at the frontline of this fight.
Dr Fatima Denton

Africa has contributed least to the emissions and to the problem. But we are paying the first and most brutal price.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

It is not fair for the African continent to pay the heavy price of European industrialisation.
Faten Aggad

There is consensus among the experts that Africa should not repeat the mistakes of the Global North and needs to achieve industrial and economic growth with clean energy. However, there are concerns that a transition to a green economy might come at the expense of necessary development. Political demands for green energy, especially in industrialised countries, must be accompanied by the realisation that Africa cannot pay for the "luxury" of climate-friendly economic activity out of its own pocket. Two interviewees emphasised that coal or natural gas are in some cases the only available resources and that the priority of many countries is – justifiably so – economic growth and the eradication of poverty.

Green transition not at the expense of the development

The reality of the climate crisis today demands that African countries map a different development pathway. One that is clean, green, and climate resilient. But this transition must be just. It must acknowledge the historical disadvantage that African countries have had in developing their economies, their negligible responsibility for the climate crisis, and the urgent need to eliminate poverty and power the African industrialisation agenda.
Wanjira Mathai

How do we do the energy transition without slowing down our development? Because at the end of the day, what people want is bread on the table. A major recommendation for the new government is that they shouldn't project their domestic pressure for a green agenda onto their foreign policy in a one-sided manner.
Faten Aggad

Why are we dealing with issues that emanate from the North? They ripped up their forest. They ripped out everything. They say we cannot use coal or natural gas here. But sometimes, that's the only resource we have.
Prof. George Mukundi

Need for compensation and technology transfers

Instead of political bans and pressure from the international community, the experts call for solutions and financial compensation which should be provided for the transition to green energy production and a green economy. Necessary capital for the development of clean energy is not currently available in Africa. At the same time, rapid and comprehensive electrification is a priority for African governments. There is consensus among the interviewees that the costs for the development of renewable energy in Africa should in part be borne by the emitters.

Costs for halting climate change and for adapation should be shared with emitters

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The latest progress report on achieving Sustainable Development Goal 7 – affordable and clean energy – shows that only about 46 % of the population in sub-Saharan Africa had access to electricity in 2019. According to the report, 570 million people are still without electricity.[13]
There is a gap between rural and urban areas.
The German development bank KfW Entwicklungsbank cites problems with the implementation of decentralised energy supply, so-called mini-grids, as one reason.
The funds required for this are estimated at around 12 billion USD over the next few years, which often exceeds the financing options of local banks.[14]

The capacities and investments required for clean energy are way beyond our reach.
Prof. George Mukundi

Quality, balanced, and easily accessible climate finance is the only finance that will make a difference for the most vulnerable communities. Additionally, we must address the issue of loss and damage directly – creating a fund to address climate losses and damages will be a crucial hallmark for the success of COP27. We cannot and should not ignore it anymore.
Wanjira Mathai

There need to be some incentive and support systems so that African countries may not use oil and gas. But if it looks like a clear court ban, some countries might exercise their energy sovereignty and use oil and gas anyway because they see it as a pathway towards greater prosperity and industrialisation.
Dr Fatima Denton

Not only financial resources, but also knowledge and technology transfers can help to turn Africa's economy, energy production and mobility green. One expert mentions the cooperation between German car manufacturers and African countries. He points to strict regulations and inflexible infrastructure which prevent manufacturers from scaling up their synthetic fuels in Germany. Due to African governments' less restrictive approaches they could be promising markets for the future. New propulsion technologies could be developed in cooperation and made available to the corresponding countries in Africa. This would create win-win synergies.

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Since 2013, Audi has been working on the development of synthetic fuels and operates plants in Germany that use electricity to convert carbon emissions into methane or hydrogen. The existing conventional petrol-based fuel infrastructure can be used for these electricity-based fuels.[15] However, the efficiency of these fuels is low because an immense amount of electricity is needed to produce them. Accordingly, a recent Greenpeace study sees their usage mainly on long-distance routes to decarbonise international air and sea transport.[16] The Institute for Applied Ecology in Berlin also recommends expanding the production of synthetic fuels outside Europe to places where wind, hydro or solar energy would be available on a larger scale – for example in Africa or South America.[17]

H_2 & Co. from Africa: fabrics of the future?

A circular innovation partnership. Audi, for example, has developed a whole synthetic fuel value chain. This type of initiative could benefit Germany and Africa in terms of achieving its energy independence. Those technologies have a hard time to scale in Germany because of a robust policy framework and rigid infrastructure. You need some kind of playground.
Dr Youssef Travaly

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2.4 Peace and security

The interdependency of conflicts

The interviewees agree that peace is a basic prerequisite for any kind of development. Stability and security give people, businesses and politics the space to drive important progress in other sectors. Moreover, the interviewees emphasise the interdependency of conflicts with other problems. For example, climate change accelerates resource scarcity and thus promotes poverty, inequality and distributional conflicts. Political instability also leads to economic losses and the investment climate suffers from existing conflicts. Many of the challenges faced by African countries are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

Challenges that are mutually dependent and reinforce each other

In a very unstable security environment, it tends to be that the economy will suffer, investments will suffer, and there will not be a leadership that's able to implement coherent policies that can move the country forward.
Murithi Mutiga

The more resources are degraded, the more communities that are dependent on those resources come into conflict. Herdsmen very often come into conflict with each other because they're witnessing dwindling resources.
Dr Fatima Denton

Zones and causes of conflict

Existing conflicts on the African continent are complex in their forms and causes. Jihadist extremism, resource-based allocation conflicts, and banditry are all cited by the experts as critical issues in the Sahel region, the Chad Basin and Mozambique. In the Sahel, geo-strategic interests of the USA, Russia, France and Afghanistan play an additional role. Marginalised groups are particularly vulnerable and affected in conflicts motivated by religion as well as resources. In the Horn of Africa, the interviewees observe an increase in conflicts between political elites, which are driven by divisions along ethnic lines.

Conflicts on the African continent are complex in their forms and causes

In the Lake Chad Basin and the Sahel, there are three primary challenges. 1) Violent extremism, which has grown substantially. 2) Very substantial resource-based conflicts, so farmer-herder clashes. And then there is 3) criminality, what some call banditry.
Murithi Mutiga

Countries like Mozambique, Somalia, Mali, Nigeria, Niger, and their neighbours are confronted by increasing threats of violent extremism. (...) It is often the marginalised groups where you see this as an occurrence. These dynamics are observed across the regions affected by violent extremism, namely the Sahel, the Lake Chad Basin, the Horn of Africa, and Mozambique.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

All these conditions (hunger, lack of jobs) make it a bit more fertile for terrorism and extremism. Young people get indoctrinated, whether it's coming from religion or banditry.
Dr Kojo Asante

Security will be shaped by geopolitics in the sense of how, for instance, Jihadi activities flow from Afghanistan to the Sahelian region. How actors such as France and Russia, to some degree even the US, will engage with a lot of these conflicts.
Faten Aggad

The proliferation of crises in the Horn of Africa is political. Ethiopia is going through a very tragic civil war. Sudan is undergoing a delicate transition where there's no consensus on the way forward. Somalia also faces elections.
Murithi Mutiga

External partners: bottom-up vs top-down

The experts emphasise that conflicts do not stop at borders and that they influence entire regions.

Contested borders can promote the spread of conflict

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State borders in Africa are often remnants of colonialism and cut across ethnolinguistic or cultural communities, trade routes and land used by different groups. Contested and porous borders can foster the spread of conflict.[18]

Cooperation with other African states or international partners in conflict resolution is helpful or even necessary, as individual countries often cannot raise the required resources on their own. The current mission of the South African Development Community in Mozambique, the support of the G5 Sahel by the EU, the joint mission of the United Nations and the African Union in Darfur, and the support of the High AU Envoy to the Horn of Africa by the BMZ/GIZ are cited as positive examples of support and facilitation by the international community. Many interviewees welcome the involvement of multilateral organisations since they are often more accepted by the various stakeholders than individual (national) actors.

The importance of collaborating across countries in the African continent cannot be understated. At the same time, where countries don't have their own sufficient resources to do that, external assistance comes in handy. This is the case where the G5 Sahel have received a lot of external support from the EU.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

In each case, the countries concerned need to be sufficiently involved and stand behind the support mission. The principal responsibility for the missions should lie with the local or national state authorities, which is the only way to ensure sufficient involvement of the affected countries in the negotiation processes. The experts emphasise that it must also be ensured that local resources are sufficient to keep the situation under control before missions are withdrawn. Otherwise, actors run hazard of an emerging power vacuum, similar to what occurred in Afghanistan.

Affected countries must be involved in conflict resolution

Multilateral actors are the only ones that have political legitimacy and credibility to engage these difficult conversations. (...) The AU sends the High Representative for the Horn of Africa to Ethiopia to try to mediate. Yet the AU doesn't even have the resources to make sure that special envoy can execute his functions. And we see GIZ, BMZ supporting that process. That's a really useful partnership.
Prof. George Mukundi

You need the buy-in of the country in which the intervention will take place. (...) I can't think of a context in which some form of external aid will not be useful. What I do recommend is that the primary actors have to be national or regional authorities. (...) if you do not enable local and national authorities to deal with these challenges when international support has left, you haven't really solved the problem.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

Beyond securitisation

Cooperation in the security sector should not lead to losing sight of other development goals. It is essential to embed security issues in a political strategy that also improves living conditions and governance. In West and Central Africa in particular, experts speak of urgently needed investments in conflict prevention and the improvement of government and administrative work, the rule of law, and human rights. The new German government should get involved there and continue to support the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and the African Governance Architecture (AGA).

Security policy should be part of a political strategy

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APSA and AGA are instruments of the AU to improve the state of security and democracy on the continent. APSA consists of five pillars: The Peace and Security Council, the Continental Early Warning System, the Peace Fund, the military Standby Forces, and the Panel of the Wise advisory body. AGA is a platform to promote the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. Both mechanisms are implemented by the Regional Economic Communities.[19] [20]

AU-instruments to enhance security and democracy: APSA and AGA

According to the experts, it is important to create synergies at the state and local levels and for civil society to be involved in these processes. This ensures that security and development cooperation is oriented towards the actual needs of the local society. In contrast, a stronger military engagement in the Sahel is viewed rather critically. The experts argue that terrorism is not purely a security policy issue. It is essential to fight underlying causes to prevent the radicalisation of young people.

Not just UN forces parachuting onto the African continent to establish peace, but involving states, whether it's through multi-national regional entities like the G5 Sahel or the multi-national joint task force responding to the Boko Haram threat in the Lake Chad Basin or the national authorities in Mozambique and Somalia.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

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The G5 Sahel is a regional organisation based in Nouakchott, Mauritania, which aims to support and complement the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in areas such as poverty reduction, infrastructure development, agriculture and security. It was founded in 2014 by the heads of state of Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad. Since 2017, the G5 Sahel has also had a 5,000-strong Joint Task Force to fight terrorism and organised crime in the region. The task force receives financial support primarily from the EU.[21]

Over the last two decades, we've seen a great emphasis on securitised approaches, including the prominent example of jihadism. (...) The old priorities such as improving livelihoods have been subsumed under this very securitised approach. That needs to change.
Murithi Mutiga

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We have to invest significantly in conflict prevention, governance, rule of law, and human rights. (...) Germany supports two programmes at AU level – AGA and APSA – through the BMZ. But our hope and prayer is for synergy between support at the multilateral level, the member state level, and the community level. To ensure there is partnership with civil society and think tanks (...) to ensure the engagement is demand, and people, driven.
Prof. George Mukundi

The interviewees criticise the framing of migration as a security issue. The number of African migrants to Europe is far smaller than the number of internal migrants who remain on the continent. Instead of securitising migration, its causes need to be examined and, if necessary, ways of legal migration for training or work purposes from Africa to Germany or Europe should be made possible.

Migrants from African countries mostly stay in Africa

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In 2015, of the nearly 5.3 million African refugees worldwide, only about 7.5% sought refuge in Europe, while 85% were remained in other African countries.[22]
In 2018, two-thirds of all immigration to Germany came from other European countries and only 4.2% from Africa.[23]
According to the UN International Organization for Migration World Migration Report 2022, around 21 million Africans live in other countries on the continent, compared to around eleven million people of African origin in Europe.[24]

85% of African refugees remain in Africa

Africa sees (migration) as a developmental issue whereas it's viewed through a securitised lens in Europe. Instead, we need more development-focused migration policies. Questions of economic inclusion and integration are part of that.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

You are just interested in the return of our migrants, no proper reintegration. (...) We need safe, orderly, regular migration. You people don't want to hear that.
Prof. George Mukundi

The Merkel era heralded a partnership of equals

Stepping up: Germany's potential as a conflict mediator

Germany has built up political capital in Africa. One interviewee explains this as a result of Germany's comparatively less aggressive colonial past, because of which Germany is perceived as less self-interested than other European powers. Moreover, some experts agree that the Merkel era has credibly initiated a partnership of equals. This political capital can be used by the new government to assume a role as a mediator in conflicts. Either on its own or within the framework of the EU, Germany could act as a mediator in the Horn of Africa – in the dispute between Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan over the Nile water or in the conflict in the Tigray region – or (re)establish communication between the countries and parties involved. This is a high priority because of the immense importance of the region around the Suez Canal and the Red Sea for world trade. The new government could also work to generate more African influence in the UN Security Council, especially since many of its decisions affect African countries.

Thanks to the leadership of Merkel, Germany accumulated some political capital (...) that can be used to mediate dialogue. A lot of countries see Germany as a kind of broker.
Faten Aggad

It helps that Germany was not a direct colonial power in a lot of the countries and is seen as less meddlesome and less self-interested. (...) Germany could contribute to stimulating talks, including through the European Union, between Ethiopia, Egypt, and Sudan in their major Nile Basin dispute about the sharing of that resource. (...) Trying to stimulate a humanitarian ceasefire in the Tigray conflict would be a useful first step to at least suspend hostilities and create space for discussions. (...) Working in partnership with the European Union Special Representative, with the German embassies in the region is a priority concern.
Murithi Mutiga

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Although Germany's colonial history was comparatively shorter and less intensive than that of France or Great Britain, Germany was also involved in the colonisation of Africa by Europe after 1884. Above all, today's Namibia was under German rule as German Southwest Africa, as well as Tanzania and parts of Rwanda and Burundi as German East Africa. The area of today's Togo and Cameroon were also occupied by the then-German Empire. After the end of the First World War in 1919, however, Germany ceded its colonies to France, Great Britain, Belgium and Portugal.[25] In 2021, the crimes committed against the population by the German colonial power in Namibia were recognised as a genocide and the German government promised to support an extensive reconstruction programme.[26]

It is through fora such as the UN Security Council that you can better strengthen Africa's position on certain issues, especially given that a lot of the decisions and resolutions that come out of the Council relate to the African continent.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

Africa is really pushing to have more space among the permanent members of the Security Council. Africa needs to be where people are taking decisions. And if we can have the support of Germany, that would be good.
Prof. Awa Marie Coll-Seck

2.5 Good governance and democratisation

Efficient governing as the foundation for development

The experts point to effective administrations as an important basis for development. Output-oriented governments are needed that systematically address existing problems. Two interviewees cite Togo and Rwanda – despite authoritarian tendencies – as positive examples where political leadership sets clear priorities for the promotion of economic growth and closely monitors their implementation. In general, reforms that make Africa an attractive investment location need to be initiated.

The number one challenge for the continent is to fix governance issues. (...) We need to make sure we have governments that are effective, accountable, and that deliver results. We've got to invest in cleaning up Africa's politics.
Obiageli Ezekwesili

We have the right visions, we have strategies. The continent's problem is execution. And that's exactly what leadership is. (...) Togo has done that well. It's going to focus on 42 projects and reforms in the next five years because those drive growth in GDP. Every quarter, there is a government retreat, and all ministers go through execution of these projects. They get the support they need.
Dr Acha Leke

It's easy for me to come up with a proposal on deploying digital health within Rwanda because they are already far concerning the modernisation of the government. (...)
I will go for a B2G (Business to Government) approach because of the responsive government in front of me.
Dr Youssef Travaly

Like everywhere else in the world, Africa has experienced a democratic backsliding in recent years, according to the interviewees. Coup d'états and illegitimate extensions of the terms of office of autocrats are seen as a problem, especially in West and Central Africa. These developments are also linked to geostrategic interests of various countries of the Global North: Russia, China and France are accused of not always being on the side of democratic leaders as long as they can enrich themselves with the resources of the respective countries.

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The annual governance index published by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation has indicated a slowdown in improvements in governance since 2015. 2019 was the first time the African average recorded a decline in scores. The decline is particularly sharp in the areas of rights & political participation and security & rule of law.[27]

Unfortunately, the whole world is caught in this period of rising authoritarianism and assault on democratic values, and Africa is no different. (...) We've seen the coups and destabilisation in Guinea, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad. (...) We are almost back to the period where people are trying to extend their stay in office.
Dr Kojo Asante

Countries facing those challenges – Mali, Central African Republic, Chad, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau – have become (arenas for) proxy wars. (...) Half the time, it is a conversation about the resources available there.
Prof. George Mukundi

One of the first people to congratulate the military putschist in Chad was the president of France, and he was the only European leader to attend the inauguration of Mahamat Déby. (...) How do you claim to have a public interest in peace in Chad when you are working with (someone) the Chadian people have been vocally pushing against for the last 25, 30 years?
Nanjala Nyabola

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In April 2021, one day after winning disputed elections that would have further extended his already 30-year term, Chadian President Idriss Déby was killed in a military coup. His successor and son Mahamat Déby promised a transition period of 18 months ending in democratic elections. Under Idriss Déby, the country was run as an autocracy. >

Geostrategic interests at the expense of democracy?

Chadian civil society and opposition have little hope for improvement under his successor and criticise France's support for both the old and the regime. They accuse the French government of accepting the violations of human rights and civil liberties in Chad because the country plays an important role in the fight against terrorism in the Sahel, and because a large part of the French anti-terrorist mission Barkhane is stationed there.[28]

Good governance: solely a domestic matter?

Democratisation – an internal affair?

The experts differ on the question of how external partners can support the improvement of governance. Many insist that each country should build its own good, efficient government and administration and ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law. They suggest that democratisation driven by external actors might be doomed to fail and that the initiative for political development and the impetus for it must come from African civil societies. One expert explicitly points out that political conditionality is not the right way.

Long-term sustainable governance, democratisation, human rights issues: It doesn't require an external expert to sort that out. We internally have to sort ourselves out.
Prof. George Mukundi

The only people that can tackle bad governance are citizens. You cannot substitute the role of citizenship with conditionality from abroad. (...) No external partner has the mandate to fix governance for you.
Fixing governance is the business of the people of Africa. Citizens have to step up and lead that effort.
Obiageli Ezekwesili

You need to have people that are engaged in consultative frameworks of governance, and that is a challenge that needs to be tackled internally among Africans themselves.
Murithi Mutiga

A positive example of Germany's promotion of good governance is a GIZ-funded project of the Hertie School of Governance, which supports the training of political leaders in Nigeria.

They did not give money to us, but simply to the Hertie School of Governance in order to support us as we build the School of Politics, Policy and Governance in Nigeria. (...) We produce a different political class of people that are trained in the art of good, competent, ethical leadership. (...) Next year, we're going to have SPPG in six other countries in Africa.
Obiageli Ezekwesili

However, not all experts see governance as solely an internal matter. Some criticise that external partners exert insufficient pressure on African states to reform, and the German Marshall Plan with Africa is cited as an example. Within the framework of the IMF, it could be helpful to tie funding to the commitment of governments to initiate reforms measures. In this way, positive pressure could be exerted on governments to implement their own projects.

The German Marshall Plan is a very serious intervention (...) but the incentive for participating countries to respect the governance imperatives is not there. They would take the money, and German and other European companies can participate in the economy, but you're not going to get the reform.
Dr Kojo Asante

The value of IMF packages is that the IMF is behind governments and makes sure they do what they are committed to. The next tranche will only be released if they deliver. It creates some positive tension within African governments.
Dr Acha Leke

Strengthening civil society is key

Since, according to the interviewees, national governments are not always interested in supporting civil society in their own countries, the promotion of African civil society organisations is an important lever for external partners. The aim should be to strengthen processes championed by local actors and to implement them with foreign support according to local priorities. However, the people themselves must be the agents of change and transformation cannot be imposed externally. The experts generally agreed that external assistance should strengthen local NGOs. With this support, organisations can self-determine and assert their demands vis-à-vis governments.

External aid should strengthen local NGOs

All that external partners can do is support processes that are led by the people.
Prof. George Mukundi

Local governments are unlikely to finance civil society. (...) A partner doesn't have a legitimate voice in a sovereign state, so the role of partners would be to facilitate civil society, not the international civil society to go to a country, but local civil society. (...) Think bottom-up. Don't think Germany first, think communities first.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

Some interviewees complain that German projects are strongly oriented towards governments and often lack opportunities to involve African civil societies. In order to be able to support local processes more sustainably, the experts recommend concrete analyses of the civil society landscapes and the needs of individual countries. According to the interviewees, these have not yet been sufficiently carried out by the German partners. Cooperation between German and African organisations can also be a helpful means of advancing development without having to determine it from abroad. This can also be done at the European level. Here, an EU grant for the Afrobarometer is cited as a positive example.

Need for concrete analyses of the civil society landscapes in individual countries

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Afrobarometer is the largest African opinion research network, and has offices in Accra, Nairobi and Cape Town. Since 1999, the NGO has conducted surveys on democracy, governance and socio-political issues in 37 African countries and published country and issue specific results and policy papers.[29]

The way the German government thinks about cooperation; they think of it as a state-to-state thing. The end result has been support for initiatives that people aren't necessarily comfortable with.
Nanjala Nyabola

It looks like it's a partnership with the government. But where is the people's side? This has been done to benefit the people, ultimately. Why are they not part of the conversation? Why are they not part of the accountability mechanisms that are set up?
Dr Kojo Asante

There have to be creative ways of understanding the fabric of civil society and being able to support in more creative and strategic ways. I know I am being vague here, but partly because the details are not that easy to frame.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

The most difficult thing for Germany is: How do you get off your desk and find local civil society that you build, capacitate and facilitate.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

A facility that gives to civil society directly is normally missing in GIZ or German partnerships. (...) Not necessarily directly, but through other civil society formations in Germany. (...) Regarding issues of sovereignty and interference it is slightly different if organisations form themselves peer to peer and share comparable lessons. (...) The EU/AGA support project gives money directly to an African civil society platform across the continent – Afrobarometer.
Prof. George Mukundi

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The digitalisation – stability nexus

One expert mentioned the topic of digital rights – i.e., censorship, data protection and freedom of expression – as particularly important aspects of good governance. Work in this field is mainly driven by individual digital experts or loose associations of young activists. For these people, institutional and financial support from domestic or foreign sources needs to be raised and provided. This would ensure that they continue and scale their important work even against the backdrop of increasingly authoritarian regimes. Digitalisation also offers the possibility of Africa being perceived as a competence hub on equal footing: East Africa in particular is in no way inferior to the Global North in terms of digital expertise and knowledge

Digitalisation as a challenge and opportunity for democracy

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In 2019, Forbes magazine listed over 600 tech hubs in African countries, most of them in Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya, which have emerged as hubs of innovative information and communication technologies and artificial intelligence. The Kenyan tech ecosystem is also known as Silicon Savannah.[30] The two biggest exports of innovation in recent years are the mobile payment system *M-Pesa*, which has spread from Kenya to 11 other countries in Africa, Asia and Europe since 2007.[31] Like *M-Pesa*, the platform *Ushahidi* originated in Kenya and is used for election monitoring and crisis response. In over 160 countries, citizens, civil society organisations and UN Peacekeeping use Ushahidi to report and be informed about outbreaks of violence or political intimidation.[32]

In 2019, Forbes listed over 600 tech hubs in African countries

One of the biggest challenges is the coordination on digital rights. Most people doing digital rights work in Africa are young, passionate and working crazy hours without their own organisations and little backing; the space is still organising itself. How do you create an enabling environment for individuals to continue their work?
Nanjala Nyabola

"The digital" offers a great example to reset the presumption that Africa needs to "catch up". Activists from the Global South have been raising concerns over digital rights and misinformation for years. Now that it is a problem in the US, everyone is like "Who would have seen this coming?" Well, we did.
Nanjala Nyabola

2.6 Covid-19, health and research

Three takeaways of the pandemic

Covid-19 has exposed weaknesses of African health infrastructures

Fortunately, the coronavirus pandemic has taken a milder course in Africa than initially expected. Nevertheless, the experts agree that Covid-19 has revealed grave weaknesses in the African health infrastructure. With an average of only 30 USD in public spending per capita and the lowest density of healthcare providers in the world, the health systems of African countries quickly reach their capacity limits. Since the beginning of the pandemic, a sharp decline in healthcare has been recorded, especially regarding the immunisation of children and the fight against malaria, HIV and other infectious diseases. Shortages of drugs and equipment for diagnostics and treatment have been further exacerbated by the pandemic.

The viral pandemic has shattered health systems. (...) On average, Africa spends 30 USD of public money per person/year on health. Compare that to Germany's more than 5,000 USD.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

Already resource-constrained health systems were overwhelmed with waves of COVID-19 cases. (...) Africa accounts for 94 % of the global malaria and 67 % of global HIV cases. Every year, member states report around 100 acute health events such as Ebola, cholera, or yellow fever. The continent has the lowest skilled health professional density of any WHO region.
Dr Matshidiso Moeti

With Covid-19, we have disruptions of essential health services, and about a 25 % drop of health intervention coverage. (...) We can't reach 82 million children for oral hydration and 17 million have no access to basic immunisation.
Prof. Awa Marie Coll-Seck

Balancing act between life and livelihood – Africa's economy suffers from the pandemic

African countries' economies are also suffering from the coronavirus pandemic. The interviewees attribute this, among other things, to the lack of state social protection systems. Since a large part of the African population works in the informal sector, curfews and lock-downs deprive them of their livelihoods. This creates a trade-off between an intact health system and a healthy economy, a balancing act between life and livelihood. Despite this enormous challenge, one expert emphasises that many African countries have come through the crisis better than expected.

In a highly informal economy, you cannot do the typical lockdowns that are done in Europe to protect health systems. That is not compatible with livelihood. Whenever you try to protect health systems, you end up with job losses.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

Not all countries put in place a system that compensates people for staying home during a lock-down. In Africa, most people are in informal day labour. They were left to survive on their own, and it's been incredibly devastating for poor people.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

We thought GDP could contract by as much as 5%. It did contract, but only by 2.6%. We thought 150 million jobs were at risk. We did lose jobs, but only about 30 million. Our leaders were better able to balance lives and livelihoods – the economics side of the crisis and the health side of the crisis.
Dr Acha Leke

Health systems are dependent on medical equipment from the Global North

The coronavirus pandemic has also shown African governments how dependent their health systems are on medical equipment from the Global North, as more than 90% of which is imported to Africa. This is particularly visible in the case of the Covid-19 vaccines. Economically stronger countries dominate research and development and can pay high prices for individual vaccine doses. This lack of solidarity-based global distribution mechanisms has caused great disappointment among the interviewees.

The new generation never had the illusion that the Global North would stick by Africa when push came to shove. (...) Covid-19 was a wake-up call in the sense that we realised that we have no friends in the international system. None.
Faten Aggad

Vaccine nationalism has been a great disappointment and threat to multilateralism.
Wanjira Mathai

We are buying 90 % of our medication and vaccines abroad and this is a big problem. We need local production with transfer of technology.
Prof. Awa Marie Coll-Seck

Germany for vaccine equity

The experts urge Germany to do even more to ensure the equitable distribution of Covid-19 vaccines, both due to ethical responsibility and the fact that the pandemic can only be contained through global immunisation. This means prioritising risk groups globally, giving priority to less financially strong countries, and making more vaccine batches produced in Germany available to the global vaccination alliance COVAX.

Experts: Germany should champion the equitable global distribution of vaccines

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COVAX is a global Corona vaccine distribution programme led by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. This vaccine alliance was launched in 2002 by WHO, UNICEF, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Bank and works with numerous governments, NGOs and vaccine manufacturers. Donations are intended to make the Covid-19 vaccine as well as other vaccines accessible to poorer countries worldwide. So far, COVAX has delivered more than 610 million doses of the Covid-19 vaccine to 144 partners, including 36 African countries.[33]

You cannot say you are sharing doses and line up those same doses for the booster. Prioritisation should be global. (...) Germany could take a few steps back and offer its position in the queue to countries under Gavi or the COVAX mechanism.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

The experts stress the importance of releasing the patent rights to the Covid-19 vaccines. They criticise that in the past, Germany had spoken out against the TRIPS waiver application of South Africa and India and would like to see Germany and Europe change their course.

Need for a course correction regarding vaccine patents

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In October 2020, South Africa and India submitted a request to the World Trade Organization for the temporary suspension of the Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement in order to produce vaccines for the Global South more quickly and efficiently. In June 2021, the European Parliament voted in favour of negotiations on exemptions. However, Germany and the European Commission continue to oppose this.[34]

Patents and intellectual property fixation are holding back vaccine accessibility.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

We need access to vaccines and to manufacturing capacity. The TRIPS waiver is a problem.
Nanjala Nyabola

Germany has been against the suspension of TRIPS. Where will all the vaccines come from if you only have these few manufacturers? The easiest thing is to ask for the suspension of intellectual property. Germany needs to have a position on that.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

PPPs of African governments and German pharmaceutical companies?

In general, the capacity to produce vaccines and other medicinal products in Africa should be increased, e.g. through public-private partnerships (PPPs) between African governments and German pharmaceutical companies, emphasise some experts.

What I see for the role of external partners is scientific support. To be able to produce vaccines and protective equipment in Africa. The government can select some of the big industries working on products important for Covid and potentially transfer technology to support Africa to produce that as well
Prof. Awa Marie Coll-Seck

It would be of great help if there were policy incentives encouraging German pharmaceutical companies to participate in the transfer of technology.
Dr Matshidiso Moeti

Covid-19 – catalysing progress?

E-health and decentralisation create strong health systems

As in Germany, the coronavirus pandemic is perceived by some interviewees as a catalyst for progress in digitalisation and decentralisation in the health sector. Health centres and care at the local level are the central building blocks, together with telemedicine and remote diagnostics for structurally weak areas. The expansion of this infrastructure requires immense investment, which Africa cannot afford on its own. Here, Germany could provide support with technology transfers and research cooperation. One expert emphasises that African civil society plays an important role in this cooperation. Social, cultural or religious norms make access to health services difficult in some areas, especially sexual and reproductive health services. Local actors who enjoy the trust of their communities are needed to reach local populations in a sustainable way.

We have to use digital and emerging technologies to make decentralised infrastructures much more efficient. This means telemedicine and remote diagnostics.
Dr Youssef Travaly

Investments are needed in decentralisation and community systems: the health system's building blocks.
Dr Matshidiso Moeti

Partners have a role to facilitate civil society and individual voices to overcome social, cultural and religious barriers. (...) The most important partner in addressing the health challenges is the community. We must harness local knowledge capital, trust capital, and community resources.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

Financial and technical support from external partners is preferably provided through multilateral channels such as Gavi, the *Global Financing Facility* of the World Bank or the *Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria*. It is also in Germany's own interest to strengthen structures for effectively fighting dangerous epidemics in Africa, the experts emphasise. Here, further promotion of the existing public health institutions is desired.

The new government needs to look at multilateral organisations like Gavi, the World Bank's Global Financing Facility or the Global Fund, which are all supported by Germany.
Prof. Awa Marie Coll-Seck

Ensuring we have a regionally connected infrastructure of disease surveillance can be assisted by the German government together with the Africa CDC or the WHO Disease Intelligence Unit.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

Research and education: a win-win principle

Research cooperation on equal footing

Not only in the area of health, but also in general, the interviewees complain that research cooperation often proceeds unequally. Too often, research questions and analytical concepts are developed in the Global North and are only marginally tailored to African conditions. More work needs to be done here based on local perspectives, especially in the field of tropical medicine or epidemic diseases. There is a great deal of expertise in Africa that is too rarely recognised and used.

A lot of the research that's being done about African politics, history, economics is always through the lens of someone else's ideology and epistemology. (...) One of the lessons of this pandemic has been that African scientists are trained.
Nanjala Nyabola

The African partner is left to do the running around, but most of the money and work remains elsewhere. That reflects who manages and owns the data.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

What the BMBF (Federal Ministry for Education and Research) can do with other institutions in Africa, is the co-generation of knowledge and helping African researchers design their own research based on their own realities and their own understanding of the problems.
Dr Fatima Denton

Knowledge transfer through labour migration?

The professional qualifications of people living in Africa could also be improved through managed labour migration. One expert sees an interesting approach to capacity building in circular migration. He refers to corresponding agreements through which young workers are recruited and trained in the health sector in African countries, work for a few years in European countries and then return to their home countries. Such agreements would support countries of origin through knowledge transfer and remittances and compensate for the shortage of skilled workers in European countries.

Kenya signed an agreement with the UK for the organised migration of 20,000 nurses. That supports diaspora remittances, growth of economies, and skills exchange when they go back to their country after a few years. (...) Germany could use this to relieve labour shortages.
Dr Githinji Gitahi

3 THE FUTURE OF GERMANY'S AFRICA POLICY

The previous chapter presented the perspectives of African experts on various topics of international cooperation. Some considerations and recommendations represent overarching suggestions for sustainable German/European – African cooperation. These cross-cutting considerations range from optimising bilateral relations to geopolitical considerations and recommendations of multilateral responsibility.

3.1 Restructuring outdated frameworks

Germany needs Africa

Many interviewees make it clear that a democratic and economically successful Africa is in Germany's own interest. In this respect, the question of cooperation is not a request from Africa for charity, but rather a confident offer to tackle common challenges together. The coronavirus pandemic has shown in an exemplary way that global crises can only be solved globally. Pandemics do not stop at national borders, nor do extreme weather events or economic collapses. An equal partnership between Europe and Africa could create the basis for jointly tackling global challenges such as terrorism, climate change, the fight against pandemics and social inequality. The experts emphasise that the key to this is the will of Europe and Africa to learn from each other.

Everyone benefit from an equal partnership

Germany's self-interest is best served by a democratic and economically independent Africa. People in Africa are not asking for charity, we are asking Germany to act in its own self-interest. Unless we are all safe, none of us are safe. That applies to the pandemic, climate change, and economic stability.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

Europe and Africa are next-door neighbours. If they can learn from each other, they can invest. There can be mutual strategies for stabilisation and growth.
Murithi Mutiga

High, sustainable growth would turn Africa into a prosperous zone that is an even larger, stronger market for Germany. Germany would enjoy the benefits of being the closer continent. The Chinese can find markets elsewhere.
Obiageli Ezekwesili

A strong Africa-Europe partnership has geopolitical significance

In geopolitical terms a partnership between Europe and especially Germany and Africa would be in Germany's own interest. One expert points to the withdrawal of the USA as a regulatory power and the weakening of multilateral organisations due to individual states doing it alone. The interviewees also observe political tensions and disunity within Europe. Germany cannot always rely on its direct neighbours to work together and agree on matters. Here, a deeper partnership with African countries – beyond Europe's borders – would be advantageous and desirable.

Frankly, whether Europe likes it or not, it has been dropped by the US, it is in competition with the East, and it is increasingly isolated. Perhaps, Europe needs to become a bit more humble and understand that it depends on others as well.
Faten Aggad

Germany may not always get the buy-in of other countries in Europe. For that, Germany needs to look beyond Europe's borders for some of its key partners, and some of those partners are on the African continent
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

Creating a good partnership

Acknowledge and name existing inequalities

German Africa policy should make greater use of expertise from Africa

The experts are unanimous in their explicit wish that future cooperation between Africa, Europe and Germany should be characterised by mutual respect and recognition. A first step in this direction would be the willingness of German policymakers to recognise and name existing inequalities. In this regard, one expert praised the *Compact with Africa*, which has heralded a new course of relations on an equal footing. This path should be expanded and pursued further. The knowledge and experience of African experts should play a central role in this. According to the interviewees, German Africa policy should promote and use these even more in the future to develop context-specific, locally anchored and sustainable solutions.

A first instance is Germany's willingness, ability and openness to confront the asymmetrical nature of our relationship. (...) Let's engage on the basis of dignity and recognition of divergences and mutual interests.
Prof. George Mukundi

Africa needs Germany. The mode of partnership is changing, for example through the Compact with Africa. My request and suggestion to Germany is to embrace that change.
Dr Acha Leke

Partnerships between African countries and Germany should look for homegrown solutions and deploy context-specific approaches that leverage the knowledge and skills of local experts. (...) Create the space for local actors – governments, communities, civil society – to drive solutions.
Dr Matshidiso Moeti

One expert explicitly refers to different approaches based on cultural context and socialisation. For example, because punctuality is highly valued in Germany, it can lead to frustration if it is not the top priority elsewhere. In African countries, things are often done with less time pressure – especially because the involvement of many actors is central to the acceptance of decisions. The joint shaping of the process is a very important point, which sometimes takes longer than external partners deem necessary. Mutual understanding is needed here to prevent frustration on both sides.

The Germans imagine that things have to happen yesterday. There's a lot of frustration with our processes. Part of this is based on our own socialisation: Nothing is good if we all don't feel like we're a part of it. Those human relations take a lot of time.
Prof. George Mukundi

Enough bureaucracy: "Just do it"

Even though Germany has an international reputation for precision and punctuality, one expert complains that the implementation of projects is not efficient enough in some areas. This is partly due to bureaucratic hurdles, which are much higher than in the Chinese model of international cooperation. He would like to see a more proactive approach here. In addition, it is recommended that German-African cooperation does not take place only at the governmental level. Instead of national strategies, one expert recommends the development of sectoral roadmaps in which goals, success indicators and implementation steps are recorded. These could be developed through cooperation between experts from different countries.

Proactive approach and sectoral roadmaps

The Chinese model works very well because it's not the bureaucracies; they come with financing and African governments will jump for it. Let's get it done. Overall development aid processes should become more agile. (...) You need to decide early and execute fast. German development cooperation has to be more proactive.
Vimal Shah

The first mistake is focusing all your energy at the highest level of government and losing perhaps a year or two within that space before something starts happening. Have a team who is more down to earth drive the agenda. Take a couple of countries that are similar in terms of mindsets so that you have more impact. (...) What I am missing in Africa are sectoral visions and roadmaps.
Dr Youssef Travaly

These teams on the ground should be composed of government representatives as well as civil society and private sector actors. The strengthening of African non-governmental organisations and voices from the population is deemed essential in all sectors and is considered an important connecting point for external partners. Likewise, private companies from home and abroad are indispensable for the financing of capital-intensive projects. The experts emphasise the importance of mobilising private sector investment to and in Africa.

Engage civil society and private sectors in development projects

Where is the people's side? Cooperation is done to benefit the people, ultimately. Why are they not part of the conversation and of the accountability mechanisms that are set up?
Dr Kojo Asante

Create the space for local actors – communities, civil society – to drive the solutions. They know the challenges and are best positioned to determine how to address them.
Dr Matshidiso Moeti

It has to go beyond humanitarianism. Business to business. We need more private sector to private sector relationships. Think of Africa as a sound business case.
Obiageli Ezekwesili

Bring some people from the public sector, and a number of people from the private sector. Outline priorities for the country.
Dr Acha Leke

Towards a unified Africa policy

Regarding German-Africa policy and development cooperation on the ground, two experts criticised the fact that there were too many different contact points for African partners, which did not always coordinate coherently with each other. African states or organisations cannot be expected to be familiar with the German policy landscape, which they perceive as a "house divided", or to be able to automatically grasp different working methods and responsibilities. A central contact point for foreign partners would help here. In addition, more coordination between, for example, GIZ projects at the local, national and regional or AU level is desired. This might help to avoid duplication and an overlap of projects, areas of responsibility and funding.

Get your institutional house in order. It has hampered Germany's ability and potential. You speak to the BMZ, and they refer to the Foreign Office or the Chancellor. It is not up to the partner to go to each room of the divided German house. It would help to identify a single point of contact for Germany to international partners.
Faten Aggad

Lack of proper synergy between the actors that support multilateral-level work and those that are supporting at country level. There are GIZ offices in most African countries, but they don't necessarily align their programmes at the regional level.
Prof. George Mukundi

You find that the same project or initiative is funded through different streams going to different parts of government, creating duplication in some instances and opening up avenues for corruption. That coordination has to happen. (...) There shouldn't be a differentiation whether Germany intervenes alone or as part of the EU. There has to be consistency.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

Similar to Germany's internal coordination, the experts criticised the lack of a clear, unified Africa strategy on the European side. Particularly in the Sahel region, German and French involvement seems to be guided by their own interests and to be at odds with one another, says one interviewee. Another expresses displeasure about possible market barriers through the European Green Deal as well as the opposition of some European states to the TRIPS proposal. This high-handed action is clearly contrary to the assurance of a new, progressive partnership between Africa and the European Union. Promises must now be followed by deeds, the experts emphasise.

Experts criticise the lack of a united European strategy for Africa.

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France has been militarily engaged in the Sahel since 2013, initially to stop the advance of the terrorist group Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in Mali. Germany is also involved in police and military training as part of the EU's EUTM training mission. However, France's strong focus on military solutions to radical and violent Islamism is increasingly being criticised. Germany, too, has so far not complied with French demands for more armed forces and pleads for more development cooperation and training on the ground.[35]

It would be good to see more cohesiveness in how European countries are thinking about their role in peace and reconciliation, especially in the Sahel. Right now, France and Germany seem to be working at cross-purposes.
Nanjala Nyabola

The Green Deal suddenly being dropped on us, the EU opposing the intellectual property transfer on vaccines, it contradicts what we've been hearing since 2007 of Africa being the new strategic partner of Europe. Europe hasn't yet truly articulated its mission vis-à-vis Africa. Once we do that, we overcome these short-term tensions and truly build a partnership.
Faten Aggad

International cooperation still disadvantages Africa

3.2 Africa and Germany in the world

Africa needs a seat at the table

The interviewees repeatedly express the need for more recognition and weight of African voices in the international system of states and multilateral organisations. International cooperation continues to put Africa at a disadvantage. One expert specifically mentions four structural deficits of the UN, World Bank and IMF system: 1) a democratic deficit, because not all states can make their voices heard equally; 2) a coherence deficit because not all institutions act in the same direction and sometimes pursue contradictory interests; 3) a commitment deficit because the decisions taken are often not implemented; and 4) an accountability deficit, because governments cannot be held responsible for the poor implementation of agreements.

The UN system, the World Bank and the IMF all suffer from four major governance deficits. Firstly, a democratic deficit because Africa and other developing countries have no voice. Secondly, the international system is incoherent and lacking intersectionality. The third problem is a compliance deficit. What the G7 actually delivers is a very disappointing fraction of what they decide at meetings. These three deficits mean that there is a fourth accountability deficit. (...) Those that have huge power to make decisions, especially from the Global North, dominate these institutions. It's a small number of countries that actually call the shots.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

At the same time, there is criticism that small states or countries with comparatively low economic power often have fewer resources to be present at conferences or in international institutions and hence represent their interests. Therefore, some interviewees emphasise, African countries are dependent on other, more powerful states to act and decide in their interests.

In the UN Security Council, three African member states join on a rotational basis but don't have permanence. They have to lobby and engage with some of the permanent members for their positions to be seen and heard.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

When small countries are going to, for example, the WTO negotiations, they maybe have two competent delegates. And then you look at the US and Germany coming with 200 negotiators to the same conference.
Dr Kumi Naidoo

The experts see the strengthening of Africa in multilateral organisations as a solution to global political inequality. Germany could continue its existing commitment to reforming the UN Security Council and advocate for a permanent seat for Africa. In addition, the interviewees mention the WTO negotiations on the suspension of patent rights on Covid-19 vaccines and the special drawing rights within the IMF. In both cases, they would like to see German support for the proposals of African states and thus strengthen Africa's voice within the bodies.

Germany can be a better partner for African countries in multilateral organisations by backing African proposals for special drawing rights at the IMF, by supporting proposals for vaccine access at the WTO. It is in no one's interest for African economies to collapse under the strain of pandemic lockdowns.
Nanjala Nyabola

We cannot have an institution like the UN Security Council in which Africans are not well represented. Angela Merkel has already played a role in the G7 and G20. This needs to continue and strengthen. We need to continue this type of advocacy, to have Africa more present at decision-making places.
Prof. Awa Marie Coll-Seck

We need to rethink the way some global institutions, like the UN Security Council, operate. It is through such fora that Africa's position can be strengthened.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

Germany can trust its own capabilities

Germany as a global leader?

In the discussions, the desire for a strong German voice in the international discourse becomes clear. In addition to supporting African partners in multilateral institutions, Germany itself should take on more global responsibility. The experts agree that Germany, as the world's fifth strongest economy, the engine of the EU and a member of the G7 and G20, has a wide reach. It is important to make conscious use of this and to take on a leading role in international discourse, beyond the political tensions of the US-China competition.

Some think Germany punches below its weight as a major economic power and populous country at the heart of Europe. A greater role on the global stage would not be unwelcome. Germany needs to assert itself more at every level. Including the UN, G20, and G7.
Murithi Mutiga

Germany has increasingly positioned itself as one of the global actors, whether it's within the EU or the UN. (...) Recognise the great power that Germany has within the European context.
Ottilia Anna Maunganidze

It takes a Germany that rises to that responsibility, to really take the lead in global conversations. To move along with Africa, to call out the two competing powers (USA and China) and tell them that it is neither of their ways, it is the way all of us want it.
Obiageli Ezekwesili

Germany must remain committed to liberal values in its engagement. One expert refers to the changes that have taken place in the international system in recent years. Attacks on democracy and democratic norms, also in the Global North, require the defence of human rights and freedom around the world. Germany should set a good example here.

Post-Trump, there is a different attitude to multilateralism. In all of that, Germany's role has to still be a defender of universally shared principles and human rights. We need a leader at the international level that still promotes and projects the set of values that held the world together for many years.
Dr Kojo Asante

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ANNEX: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Starting the conversation: Greatest challenges in Africa

I would like to talk with you today about Africa, or more specifically, about the greatest challenges on the African continent today and the cooperation with international partners, in particular with the EU and Germany.

Introductory question

First of all, regarding the situation in Africa: It is certainly not easy to make sweeping statements for all of Africa, but in your opinion, what are the greatest challenges facing the African continent as a whole? What are the major issues that urgently need to be addressed in the next few years?

Supplementary questions

a) May I ask somewhat more specifically: To what extent do these challenges apply to the entire continent, and to what extent do they apply particularly to certain regions or countries?

Questions b) to f) are dependent on respondent's area of expertise

b) Thinking specifically about peace and political stability: To what extent or, respectively, in which countries and regions do you think the challenges are especially great?
c) When it comes to Africa's economic development: What do you think are the greatest challenges in this respect? What issues need to be addressed in this area?
d) Regarding the economy, what positive developments have there been in recent years? What were the reasons for these developments?
e) In your opinion, how will Africa be affected by climate change? What will be the most serious consequences and greatest challenges?
f) What impact do you think the coronavirus pandemic will have on the nations of Africa? What consequences do you expect specifically with regard to the economy and political stability?

2. Possible partnerships for dealing with challenges

Introductory question

What do you think: To what extent can Africa deal with the challenges it is facing on its own? In what areas would it make sense to cooperate with foreign partners?

Supplementary questions

a) In your opinion, in which areas does Africa have a good chance of overcoming the challenges without any external cooperation?
b) And which challenges can only be dealt with via international cooperation?
c) In your opinion, which partners can offer Africa especially good support? Which countries, institutions or organisations come to mind in this regard?

d) In your opinion, which problems and challenges can best be addressed with the aid of governmental actors, like the EU or Germany, and which challenges would be better addressed in partnership with non-governmental organisations?

3. Describing the international cooperation with Africa

Introductory question
Thinking in general about the relationship between Africa and the global north: How would you describe this relationship?

Supplementary questions
a) How would you describe the cooperation between Africa and the EU? In which areas does the cooperation with Europe or, respectively, European partners work well, in which areas are there major problems? How would you describe these problems in concrete terms?
b) At the European level, with which partners does the cooperation work well, and with which ones does it tend to be difficult? What is the reason for that?

4. Perspectives for Africa policy under Germany's new government

Introductory question
How do you envision the future partnership with Germany? What form do you think the future African-German relationship could take?

Supplementary questions
a) This month, a new government will be elected in Germany. Which issues are especially important for the new government to address?

Questions b) to e) are dependent on respondent's area of expertise
b) May I also ask somewhat more specifically: What kind of support could the new German government provide in the areas of peace and political stability?
c) How do you envision Germany's Africa policy with respect to the economy in Africa?
d) What about the area of climate change and environmental protection?
e) Finally: How could Germany support Africa in the battle against the coronavirus pandemic?
f) In conclusion, another general question: What role do you think should Germany play as a political actor in future? What role should Germany play in international organisations like the G7, G20 or the United Nations?

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