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## Africa - Continent of contradictions: Opportunities for the path of sustainable and prosperous development?

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## Africa – Continent of contradictions. Opportunities for the path of sustainable and prosperous development?

Winfried Polte



## **Africa - Continent of Contradictions. Opportunities for the path of sustainable and prosperous development?**

### **Abstract**

Recent findings in South Africa have once again underlined the fact that the oldest people in the world obviously came from Africa. Thus, historically, this continent has a very special significance. However, its history in more recent times, especially from the mid-19th century onwards, was strongly influenced by colonisation by European states. Many deep wounds from that time still have an impact on society as a whole today. However, the continent is currently also confronted with a greater number of challenges of a different nature.

On the one hand, Africa is trying to strengthen internal cohesion by means of a number of regional organisations and the African Union as a globally active institution; on the other hand, the continent has been marked by political and military conflicts between neighbouring states over the past decades until the recent present. In addition, there are regular internal social upheavals in individual countries due to violent or manipulated political change.

Yet the continent could well be on a good development path, since it has a large number of important raw materials - also in comparison to other continents. However, the individual African states - and especially their citizens - often do not benefit from this to an adequate extent. This results in a social imbalance in large parts of the continent (data collection until the end of June 2023), which leads to considerable internal tensions. To make matters worse, Africa is the continent most affected by climate change.

A closer look at the partly very different economic, political and social situations of the large continent leads to an overall predominantly critical assessment of Africa's further development, which is explained in more detail in the final chapter with regard to the foreseeable consequences for the continent.

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## List of abbreviations

ACPC	African Climate Policy Centre
AFI	Academic Freedom Index
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area (Pan-African Free Trade Area)
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNP	Gross national product
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DEG/KfW	German Investment and Development Company/KfW
DSW	German Foundation for World Population
DW	Deutsche Welle
EITI	Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FMO	Nederlandse Financierings-Maatschappij voor Ontwikkelingslanden N.V.
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Beziehungen GmbH
IEP	Institute for Economics & Peace
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ICT	Information and communication industry
IIAG	Ibrahim Index of African Governance
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
KCPS	Kimberly Process Certification Scheme
MIF	Mo Ibrahim Foundation
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DR CONGO
MSI	Mobile Systems International
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OAU	Organisation of African Unity

OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PAF	Partnership for African Fisheries
Proparco	Subsidiary of the Agence Française de Développement
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEKEM	Rising Sun
TI	Transparency International
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization BT British Telecom
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

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## **1 Introduction**

Many people are currently saying that the world has come apart at the seams and that we do not know where the journey is going. As a current question, this only applies to the subject of this study - namely Africa - to a certain extent. After all, since the early phase of colonisation at the end of the 19th century, this continent has been practically permanently in a state of upheaval with considerable stress situations, most of which took place in great pain for the majority of the people there.

Currently, very contrasting developments can be observed in Africa. What is special about this is that due to the quite existing democratic aspirations, the range of different socially relevant factors has increased considerably compared to earlier decades. The question that arises is: Will this result in an increased positive dynamic for at least individual countries of the continent or will the internal tensions of the antagonism of a partly extremely unequal level of prosperity rather have a braking effect on future development? Or added for more depth: Are the antipodes democratic or dictatorial basic structures and can traditional systems still be appropriately classified here or are most political approaches anyway a conglomerate of everything, positioned somewhere in a diffuse middle?

In view of the considerable complexity of the topic, only the very central and relevant influencing factors can be analysed in more detail here, so as not to lose sight of the focus on the fundamental statement at the end of the study due to rather secondary aspects.

Accordingly, in addition to the general consideration of the region, deeper insights can inevitably only be provided for specific countries in Africa. The meaningful deduction of the relevance of the insights thus gained for the region as a whole is inevitably fraught with considerable risk. Although this risk can be somewhat reduced by the author's decades of involvement with the African continent, including corresponding travels on the ground, it must realistically be regarded as a given. Thus, the present paper is as well primarily intended to stimulate further in-depth reflections with other focal points of view as a supplement.

The aim of the study is to work out where Africa's development path is leading with its partly traditional structures on the one hand and highly modern technical and organisational approaches on the other. Coupled with this is the question of whether, on this complex basis, a sustainable development path can be targeted at all within the next decade until about 2035, or whether this process cannot be brought under control at all. In any case, the question is which larger African country or which Pan-African organisation could take on the leading role. Thanks are due to the Bonn-Rhine-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, and in particular to the International Centre for Sustainable Development (IZNE), which has made this publication possible.

## **2 Africa - a continent without history?**

The African continent is not a region that has been the focus of special attention worldwide. This also leads to a relatively broad ignorance of its historical development, which generally results in the fact that the colonial past is known in bits and pieces, but does not coalesce into a coherent picture. This is also due to the fact that in the early phase, reports about Africa were mainly written by adventurers or pure businessmen, and information from the few serious researchers such as the Englishman David Livingstone (1813-1873) was presented in a very simplified way in the media. Thus, even today, with regard to slavery in Africa, the main blame is often placed on Arab traders who were ultimately responsible for this drama, with the Europeans then merely picking up where



they left off later. In reality, however, this meant that Europeans brought around 11 million slaves to America alone under the worst conditions.

Even the great German philosopher Georg W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) denied the existence of a historical narrative in Africa because there were no states and laws. From this was derived a general feeling of superiority of the Europeans. Based on more recent research and DNA analyses, however, it can be assumed that humans as a whole are descended from the African continent. Hand axes of "homo erectus" date back 1.5 million years, with this type of human later spreading from Africa to Asia and Europe. Without going into further details of early history at this point, this means that the African continent played a very central role for humanity in early times.

From later developments we know, for example, of a powerful kingdom in Africa with a military force of up to 200,000 soldiers, but also of individual great leaders. Likewise, there were already famous centres of learning at the beginning of the 17th century, such as Timbuktu in Mali, a city with around 20,000 inhabitants; here, scholars taught in 180 Koranic schools, one of which had around 1,600 books. In the political sphere, there were already elements of democracy in these early phases, with corresponding values in society. The Berlin Conference of 1884/5, after which the colonies in Africa were divided up between the European states, represented a kind of low point in external influence. This phase also saw extreme atrocities in the Belgian Congo/Kinshasa as well as in the German colony of Namibia, whereby the issue of reparations for the genocide of tens of thousands of people of the Hero and Nama ethnic groups has still not been settled even after the negotiations on a reconciliation agreement between Namibia and Germany and is likely to occupy governments for some time to come.

In more recent history, the extremely arduous path of African states to independence began. Especially during the so-called Cold War, European countries (partly in cooperation with the USA) did not shy away from the worst use of force to secure their further political influence. A particularly drastic example is the case of the first elected prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Congo (in 1960), Patrice Lumumba, who was cruelly murdered in the presence of Belgian officers and officials after his removal from power in 1961. The later, world-famous president of South Africa - Nelson Mandela - also had to spend 18 years under the apartheid regime in sometimes very difficult conditions on Robben Island prison, until he was later able to bring peace to his country after his release through agreements with the white minority. <sup>1</sup> How Africa's situation presents itself today in the most diverse areas is the subject of this study.

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<sup>1</sup> The international literature on Africa is inevitably extraordinarily extensive. Only four works should be mentioned here:

- Ki-Zerbo, Joseph: The history of Black Africa, Frankfurt am Main 1981.
- Mandela, Nelson: The long road to freedom. Autobiography, Frankfurt am Main 1994.
- Hochschild, Adam: Shadows over the Congo. The story of one of the great, almost forgotten crimes against humanity, Stuttgart 2000.
- Mabe, Jacob E. (ed.): The Africa. A continent in 1,000 keywords, Stuttgart 2001.

### 3 Basic framework conditions of sustainability

#### 3.1 Economic perspective

##### 3.1.1 Regional breakdown

The African continent is characterised not only by its spatial size, but above all by the large number of countries. For this reason, the following central information is provided and the countries that are particularly relevant from the point of view of the subject of the study are examined in more detail.

In view of Africa's size, the United Nations has divided the continent, which had a population of around 1.4 billion<sup>2</sup> by mid-2022, into five sub-regions for statistical reasons: Of these, East Africa is the most populous with 473 million people, followed by West Africa with 430 million, North Africa with 251 million and Central Africa 196 million, with Southern Africa at the bottom of the list with only 69 million inhabitants.<sup>3</sup>

Broken down to the 57 countries, Nigeria clearly has the largest number of people with 219 million inhabitants, followed by Ethiopia with 123 million and Egypt with 104 million.<sup>4</sup> The continent's enormous economic and social challenges are evident in the size of the cities alone, with 21 million inhabitants in Lagos/Nigeria, closely followed by Cairo/Egypt with 20 million.<sup>5</sup>

A fundamental problem of the African continent is that the geographical borders of its countries are strongly influenced by the interests of the former European colonial powers. As a result, ethnic, linguistic or religious characteristics of the individual regions were not taken into account, or only inadequately.<sup>6</sup> The last victim of this colonial phase is the Western Sahara, whose right to self-determination and thus its independence has still not been implemented due to Morocco's military occupation, despite corresponding resolutions by the United Nations.<sup>7</sup>

With regard to the other continents of the world, the closest comparison can certainly be made with South America, although this is much smaller in terms of the number of countries (13) as well as the spatial extent (just under 60% of Africa). However, Brazil, by far the most populous country, has 215 million inhabitants, which is only slightly less than Nigeria (219 million).<sup>8</sup> With regard to Africa's capitals such as Lagos and Cairo, however, their populations are almost twice as high as those of Buenos Aires and Lima as South America's largest cities.<sup>9 10</sup>

But what are the consequences of this geographical consideration for Africa? On the one hand, it can be said that this continent, due to its spatial expansion and the number of its inhabitants - and this applies

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<sup>2</sup> Note: Figures rounded up and down in each case.

<sup>3</sup> DSW/: German Foundation World Population: Social and demographic data worldwide. DSW Data Report 2022, retrieved February 2023.

<sup>4</sup> [www.worldatlas.com/articles/how-many-countries-are-in-africa.html](http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/how-many-countries-are-in-africa.html), retrieved 08/02/2023 (German/British spelling of the date).

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.dsw.de/DSW/Deutsche\\_Stiftung\\_Weltbevoelkerung/Social\\_and\\_demographic\\_data\\_worldwide](https://www.dsw.de/DSW/Deutsche_Stiftung_Weltbevoelkerung/Social_and_demographic_data_worldwide). DSW Data Report 2022.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Tavakoli et al., Western Sahara. Africa's Last Colony, 2021, pp. 39 - 56.

<sup>8</sup> DSW/: German Foundation World Population: Social and demographic data worldwide. DSW Data Report 2022.

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/how-many-countries-are-in-africa.html](http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/how-many-countries-are-in-africa.html), retrieved 08/02/2023.

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/how-many-countries-are-in-south-america.html](http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/how-many-countries-are-in-south-america.html), retrieved 08/02/2023.

especially to its larger countries - could act globally in the front row, so to speak. The tragedy of Russia's war of occupation against Ukraine<sup>11</sup> and China's direct claim regarding the political integration of Taiwan<sup>12</sup> show how important the expansion of one's own country or the direct zone of influence is, at least for individual major powers. Other important factors of the African continent will be considered later in the paper.

As proud as presidents or government leaders on the one hand may be of the importance of their large capital cities or megacities, on the other hand, the living conditions can be extremely difficult for a significant proportion of residents, especially those in slum areas. Thus, for many of them, competition for one of the overall limited number of jobs or even one of the low-paid unskilled jobs often results in fierce competition. For example, as in the case of Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, it can be decisive whether someone lives in a slum in the centre of the city or further outside this area. A necessary long walk into the city can consume one's own strength for the daily challenges, or the price of the tickets for the respective bus takes up a considerable share of the earnings.

In addition, it is much easier in the city centre to find out where one of the few informal job opportunities is offered. Thus, the question of the location of one's own accommodation is of great importance for daily survival. It is equally important that there is the possibility for the - often numerous - children of the family to go to school without too much time expenditure. In many cases, this is only possible temporarily anyway, as their - albeit limited - additional income from informal activities can be of considerable importance for feeding the family. For example, it is easier for children - despite official prohibitions - to pick up certain materials at rubbish dumps and sell them later for a small fee; another possibility for them is to take on certain errand services, etc.

At the same time, African cities offer many career options for young people with good knowledge - e.g. in the IT sector - in national or international companies; as founders of a small IT company, they can also independently develop concepts for solving socio-political problems in their environment and thus create a basis for their existence. The regional location alone demonstrates the enormous range of professional challenges and opportunities. However, this positive effect also promotes the not unproblematic pull of big cities on the population in remote areas of the respective country, because megacities inevitably also bring considerable disadvantages with them, such as often very poor air quality with all its health consequences for those living there.

### 3.1.2 Africa's wealth - the natural resources

Africa's great advantage is its extensive endowment with most diverse resources, which are of central importance for the continent's further development. However, it is crucial in such a case that governments and the most diverse members of society are aware of this wealth and also manage and use it responsibly accordingly, be it goods that can essentially only be used once or that can be regenerated.

This is especially true for water resources, which are indispensable for the direct supply of humans and animals, but also for the cultivation of agriculture, where the amount and timing of availability must

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<sup>11</sup> Süddeutsche Zeitung, Auel, Juri: Übersicht: Was Sie zum Ukrainekrieg wissen müssen (What you need to know about the Ukraine war), 07/04/2021.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2022-2/china-russland-beziehungen-ukraine-krieg-aussenpolitik> (china-russia-relations-ukraine-war-foreign policy), retrieved 08/02/2023.

harmonise to a certain extent with the growth rhythm of the plants. With the Nile, the continent has the longest river and with Lake Victoria the second largest freshwater lake in the world.

In addition, Africa has huge groundwater resources, but a considerable part of them is non-renewable and has been stored deep in the earth for thousands of years. However, large-scale shallow water systems play the decisive role in meeting basic needs. Despite this impression, which is positive at first glance, around 300 million people in sub-Saharan Africa have no access to fresh water.<sup>13</sup>

The main reasons for the difficult living conditions of many people in Africa are the increasing climate change, but also the increased water consumption by agriculture, industry and commerce in addition to the growing population. In view of large regional dry zones and the destruction of entire ecosystems, water has ultimately become a scarce and precious commodity, as in many other regions of the world.

In this context, **fisheries** and **aquaculture** play a major role for the continent, as their products generate considerable revenues in the export business. In 2000, for example, 4.5 million tonnes of fish caught from the sea, such as herring, sardines or higher-priced species like tuna and cod, were marketed in West Africa alone. In contrast, domestic fisheries are mainly used to supply the local population and not for export, whereby, for example, around 500,000 tonnes of fish worth approximately US\$ 600 million are obtained every year from Lake Victoria in East Africa.<sup>14</sup>

Critically, however, the fisheries sector suffers from overharvesting. Fish stocks in some coastal zones have already been reduced by up to half in the last century. In order to stabilise the fisheries sector through stricter regulation and environmental management, the „Partnership for African Fisheries/PAF" was founded.<sup>15</sup> It remains to be seen whether this will succeed in stabilising marine and inland fisheries in the long term.

Of much greater importance for Africa is **agriculture**, as it employs two-thirds of the working population and generates 20 to 60% of the gross domestic product/GDP per country. The climatic conditions of the respective region inevitably play a central role, with tropical humidity, savannah, desert, Mediterranean or highland climate depending on the location. Accordingly, a wide variety of agricultural products are grown, be it pineapple, coffee and cocoa in tropical areas or cassava, peanuts and millet in savannah regions. Finally, in desert regions, cultivation often focuses on date palms and cotton. Accordingly, the two remaining climatic zones, such as the Mediterranean region and the highlands, also have specific products.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the given temperature of a region, the availability of water is inevitably of central importance for agriculture. Depending on the location, the general conditions can fluctuate between prolonged dry years and tropical rain, with climate change inevitably leading to greater water scarcity in addition to extreme years due to the further increase in global warming. Although Africa has the world's largest arable land area,<sup>17</sup> climatic changes and continued population growth are resulting in increasing impoverishment of the local population, leading to increased rural migration to urban areas.

In addition to pure agriculture, **forests** and **forestry** are of great importance in various African countries. At this point, only forest management will be discussed; the environmental aspects in this context will

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<sup>13</sup> <https://ecoplanet777.com/african-natural-resources/>, retrieved 10/02/2023.

<sup>14</sup> National Geographic. Africa: Resources <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/africa-resources>, retrieved 10/02/2023.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> <https://ecoplanet777.com/african-natural-resources/>, retrieved 12/02/2023.

be dealt with later. There is no doubt that forestry in the Congo Basin is of particular importance for Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, where the contribution to GDP can be as high as 60%. In terms of Africa as a whole, the figure of 6% of GNP is unmatched by any other continent in this sector.

Particularly valuable export products in this sector - and thus foreign exchange earners are mahogany and okoumé wood, which are mainly supplied to Japan, Israel and the European Union.<sup>18</sup> They are used in a wide range of applications for houses, musical instruments or even light aircraft.

As positive as this appears to be for forestry on the one hand, on the other hand it shows as a negative effect that there is illegal logging and, in the case of certain tree species such as mahogany, even over-exploitation of the stand and thus decimation. Since saplings do not grow back fast enough to the required extent, forest habitats are often destroyed and subsequently used for agriculture or village development, for example. Countermeasures such as the establishment of a large forest reserve of more than 1 million ha in the area of the three countries Cameroon, CAR as well as the Republic of Congo are definitely being taken.<sup>19</sup> However, experience to date, also in Latin America, shows that such initiatives are often not implemented consistently enough, as greed for wealth or the fact that the salaries of the controlling bodies are too low stand in the way.

A very central role in Africa's natural resources is played by the considerable range of **raw materials**. Inevitably, the large deposits of **oil** are at the forefront, the exploitation of which has triggered an average of around US\$ 40 billion in foreign investment in recent years - and thus more than 50% of all external financing. Of the eight most important African oil exporting countries, which have about 8% of the world's oil reserves, Nigeria and Angola stand out above all; the most important customers are the USA and China.<sup>20</sup> The leading role in the production and export of crude oil in Africa is clearly played by Nigeria, which is ranked fifth in the world as a producer by the OPEC/Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries ; this resource accounts for 40% of Nigeria's GDP.<sup>21</sup>

**Mineral resources** play a particularly important role for industrial use, both for Africa itself and, above all, for the global market. In 2019, almost one billion tonnes of minerals worth US\$ 406 billion were extracted. Africa accounts for over 30% of natural fossil resources in total, and in some cases almost 90%. This group includes asbestos, bauxite, chromium, copper, nickel, gold, phosphate and many other minerals. However, the deposits are distributed very unevenly across Africa. South Africa is the most important country on the continent, but it is also one of the most important mining countries in the world; its numerous mineral resources are mainly gold, iron, diamonds, silver and copper.

Of the other countries with important deposits, the Democratic Republic of Congo stands out with copper, cobalt, zinc, diamonds, gold and others. Other important countries in this context are Angola, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia.<sup>22</sup>

Such a considerable wealth of resources should actually also have a positive effect on the development of the producing countries themselves. Unfortunately, however, critical voices predominate in this

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<sup>18</sup> Timber exports from East Africa, especially from Mozambique, go mainly to China.  
<https://ecoplanet777.com/african-natural-resources/>, retrieved 12/02/2023.

<sup>19</sup> National Geographic. Africa: Resources <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/africa-resources>, retrieved 12/02/2023.

<sup>20</sup> <https://ecoplanet777.com/african-natural-resources/>, retrieved 15/02/2023.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.afrikatech.com/energy/top-15-african-countries-richest-in-natural-resources/>, retrieved 02/05/2023.

<sup>22</sup> <https://ecoplanet777.com/african-natural-resources/>, retrieved 15/02/2023.

context, reporting massive corruption and violence, extreme enrichment of elites, major environmental damage and dramatic poverty of many people.

Particular mention should be made here of the extremely harsh working conditions in the extraction of raw materials, such as those of the mine workers, as well as those of all the women, children and men who need a minimal income to survive and who, in order to do so, also take high health risks by, among other things, illegally digging on mining areas that have not yet been developed or have already been abandoned.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, instead of a blessing of the minerals, it is often even spoken of as a curse for these countries.<sup>24</sup> This is especially true for the so-called "blood diamonds", whose sales revenues have enabled or triggered regional conflicts or civil wars in Africa.<sup>25</sup> However, this extremely negative experience also led to an international initiative, the "Kimberly Process", which was initiated by South African diamond-producing states and started a very successful development. The official point of departure was a decision by the United Nations in December 2000 to create an international certification scheme for rough diamonds. After negotiations between governments, the international diamond industry and civil society, the "Kimberly Process Certification Scheme/KCPS" was created in November 2002.<sup>26</sup> This set out the conditions for the production and trade of rough diamonds. The Kimberley Process, which is now enshrined in law by 82 governments, has resulted in 99.8% of the world's diamonds coming from conflict-free sources.<sup>27</sup>

However, the above agreement only focuses on diamonds. A much broader approach is taken by the international "Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative/ EITI" by focusing on oil, gas and all types of mineral resources. Its basic principles from 2003 state that a country's natural resources belong to its citizens and therefore full transparency along the production chain is required in accordance with the so-called EITI standards<sup>28</sup>. A central concern is above all the avoidance of any corruption, whereby this should also extend to the area of "renewable energies". In the meantime, 57 countries from all over the world have joined these agreements as members. In addition, various non-governmental organisations are supporters of these standards, such as Transparency International, OXFAM, Publish What You Pay or the financing institution KfW Group.<sup>29</sup>

However, according to a report by Deutsche Welle/DW from the beginning of 2018, there must have been considerable problems, at least in 2017, with the implementation of the established principles by its then 51 members, 23 of which were African countries. Thus, important states such as South Africa and Saudi Arabia did not become members, the USA and the country of Niger withdrew, and Equatorial Guinea and Gabon were excluded, while the Central African Republic and Ethiopia were subject to suspension status.<sup>30</sup> The reasons for this are manifold; for example, accusations refer to a lack of transparency, awarding of concessions under unfair conditions, harassment of critics, etc., i.e. points

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<sup>23</sup> Bröll, Claudia: Ein bleiernes Vermächtnis (a leaden legacy), FAZ, 03/06/2023, p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> <https://ecoplanet777.com/african-natural-resources/>, retrieved 15/02/2023.

<sup>25</sup> National Geographic. Africa: Resources <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/africa-resources>, retrieved 15/02/2023.

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.kimberleyprocess.com/en/kpcs-core.document>, retrieved 15/02/2023.

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.kimberleyprocess.com/en/about>, retrieved 20/02/2023.

<sup>28</sup> <https://eiti.org/collections/eiti-standard>, retrieved 20/02/2023.

<sup>29</sup> <https://eiti.org/our-mission>, retrieved 20/02/2023.

<sup>30</sup> Note: As things stand, Niger, Gabon, Central African Republic and Ethiopia are again members or full members, but such important countries as Saudi Arabia, South Africa and the USA are still not, <https://eiti.org/countries>, retrieved 20/02/2023.



that can be seen time and again in non-transparent transactions worldwide. Such situations occur especially in the case of raw materials, since they do not have a longer production process with corresponding up-front costs like other products, but are above all dependent on often strongly fluctuating market prices and therefore tend to be more conducive to speculative behaviour. However, there are also positive examples, such as in the case of Ghana, which publishes the relevant data for the population promptly on the websites of the respective ministries, thus creating clear transparency.<sup>31</sup>

The special importance of South Africa as a mining country was mentioned earlier in this chapter. Over time, this prominent function of the country has inevitably diminished with the increasing extraction of minerals. However, the headquarters of most mining companies have remained in the capital, Johannesburg, so that the financial centre for the African continent could gradually develop here. However, it is to be lamented that despite this positive starting position, the city administration, among others, has not been able to implement necessary investments for the inner city district of Hillbrow in the last four decades. Unemployment, poverty and crime have spread there, combined with a large black market, through which the city also loses considerable tax funds for social and economic measures.<sup>32</sup>

This shows how, on the one hand, high yields of one-time extractable raw materials accrue, but on the other hand, the respective states must also be increasingly aware that the cash flows from these sources are limited in time. Accordingly, it is necessary to make funds available in time for future-oriented technologies or at least for investments that are sustainable in the long term in order to guarantee a certain level of prosperity for their own population in the future as well. Equally important, however, are social measures for the population that can be implemented in the short term, so that the socio-political stability of a country is strengthened, which would continue to deteriorate if an elite minority were favoured - as in many cases in the past.

### 3.1.3 Economic growth rates and foreign trade of individual regions and countries in Africa

When looking at the five regions of Africa for the periods 2000 - 2010 compared to 2010 - 2020, it can generally be said that the first decade for the most important countries in these regions shows higher growth rates in gross domestic product/GDP than for the second decade. The positive development in 2000 to 2010 applied, for example, to Egypt in North Africa, Ethiopia and Rwanda in East Africa, Nigeria in West Africa, Angola in Central Africa and Namibia in Southern Africa. During this period, Angola had the highest average growth rate of 9.8%, but then plummeted to only 1.3% in the following decade.<sup>33</sup>

In the period from 2010 to 2020, only Ethiopia and Cote d'Ivoire achieved a considerable increase of 9.3% and 6.9%, respectively, among the larger countries. Nearly all other countries experienced declines of up to 6.5%, such as Libya, Nigeria, Tunisia, but also South Africa, among others.<sup>34</sup>

This brief overview shows the wide range of economic growth in the individual regions and countries during these two periods. Inevitably, all possible influencing factors come into play, such as the endowment with valuable raw materials and their price dependency on global developments, the

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<sup>31</sup> [https://www.dw.com/de/rohstoffe-in-afrika-transparenz-initiative-in-gefahr-\(commodities-in-africa-transparency-initiative-in-danger\)/a-42278583](https://www.dw.com/de/rohstoffe-in-afrika-transparenz-initiative-in-gefahr-(commodities-in-africa-transparency-initiative-in-danger)/a-42278583), retrieved 20/02/2023.

<sup>32</sup> National Geographic. Africa: Resources <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/africa-resources>, retrieved 05/03/2023.

<sup>33</sup> The World Bank: World Development Indicators. Economy 4.1 Growth of Gross Domestic Product, March 2021.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

general level of development in terms of a more agricultural or industrial orientation, a market economy or a more socialist orientation, stable or unstable political conditions, and the degree of negative effects of climate change. From the beginning of 2020, COVID-19 then occurred - after confirmation of its existence on 31/12/2019 in Wuhan/China - with its later quite dramatic effects on the economy and society in more than 180 countries of the world.<sup>35</sup>

These very different influencing factors show how difficult it is to put such an important continent as Africa, with its numerous large and small countries, into a single category. At the same time, however, this observation also illustrates Africa's still dramatic dependence on international markets and individual important partner countries. At present, intra-African trade still does not play a central role. In 2019, it accounted for only about 15% of Africa's total trade volume. In contrast, the corresponding figures for domestic trade in North America are 51%, Asia 49% and Western Europe 69%; even Latin America accounted for 22%. If the various factors listed above are considered as a whole, it can be said that Africa has integrated more quickly into the global market than into its own continent.<sup>36</sup>

In order to turn this problem around, the trade ministers of the African Union (AU) have been working since 2015 to establish a Pan-African Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). After seven years, 54 of the 55 member states have now signed an agreement to this effect, which is an important step forward. However, it is now crucial to implement the necessary concrete steps.<sup>37</sup>

In order to strengthen Africa's domestic trade, it is particularly important to reduce non-tariff trade barriers such as the uncoordinated bureaucratic procedures in the various countries. For example, it is important to reduce the long waiting times for goods transports at the internal borders and to simplify cumbersome export regulations in order to significantly reduce intra-African trade costs.<sup>38</sup>

Africa's international trade - outside its own continent - mainly involves the sale of raw materials and agricultural products and, in return, a wide range of capital goods is imported. Here, the business relations are broadly diversified and of very different intensity. For example, Germany, which is strongly oriented towards the global market, reports a further slight decline in the share of only 1.7% of its exports for Africa in 2020 due to the economic consequences of the Corona pandemic.<sup>39</sup>

The average GDP growth of the last two decades in the various African regions and their individual countries was discussed above. In the context of the study, a comparison of the economic growth rates of 2021 in Africa and the EU also appears interesting in order to be able to estimate how big the "gap" is between a continent that is to a considerable extent still in the development process and one that has largely industrialised countries. For this purpose, the situation was analysed on the basis of the GDP growth rates of the World Bank for the end of 2021.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> <https://www.planet-wissen.de/natur/mikroorganismen/viren/corona-pandemie-100.html>, retrieved 03/05/2023.

<sup>36</sup> GIZ: Facilitating the volume of trade within Africa, October 2022, <https://www.giz.de/de/weltweit/59611.html>, retrieved 10/03/2023.

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/february-2023/au-summit-2023-powering-trade-through-afcfta>, retrieved 23/05/2023.

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.giz.de/en/downloads/giz2022-en-african-freetrade.pdf>, retrieved 10/03/2023.

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.gtai.de/de/trade/afrika/wirtschaftsumfeld/deutscher-aussenhandel-mit-afrika-entwickelt-sich-negativ-623890> (german-foreign-trade-with-africa-develops-negatively), retrieved 10/03/2023.

<sup>40</sup> <https://databank.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG/1ff4a498/Popular-Indicators#>, retrieved 10/03/2023.



Of the 54 African countries listed, the 27 most populous countries were selected. For these countries, the average GDP growth in 2021 was 4.3%. In view of the difficult global political and economic situation, this value can be considered quite remarkable. This average value inevitably conceals a wide range: Sudan and Chad, for example, show the lowest values with -1.9% and - 1.2%, respectively; in contrast, the highest values are achieved by Zimbabwe with 8.5% and Morocco with 7.9% annual GDP growth.

For the EU, too, 14 countries were selected, about 50% of the total of 27 EU member states, according to the size of the respective population. Here, the average GDP growth was 5.6% in 2021, with the lowest values being achieved by Germany with only 2.6% and the Czech Republic with 3.5%. The highest values were achieved by Greece with 8.4% and Hungary with 7.1% p.a.<sup>41</sup> The result may seem surprising at first glance, since the growth of the large dynamic European countries is not significantly higher, but it only underlines the importance of various factors on economic growth already mentioned at the beginning. In addition, the fact must be taken into account that the higher the absolute gross domestic product already is, the more difficult it will inevitably be to continue to achieve considerable percentage growth rates over the time axis. In addition, there are special factors such as the COVID pandemic, Russia's military attack on Ukraine with effects on the global supply of grain and gas or crude oil, various effects of climate change as well as refugee movements from southern countries to safer and more prosperous states.

What do these values and the comparison with the EU mean in concrete terms for the African countries as a whole? On the one hand, they show the existing wide range of economic development of individual countries on the African continent. Due to difficult political conditions, such as internal conflicts or secession efforts, or even military conflicts, GDP growth is inevitably significantly impaired in a number of countries. In other cases, countries have particularly weak administrative capacity, exacerbated by corruption at virtually all levels. Here, it is above all the lowest income groups that suffer the most, as they have the least bargaining power, especially vis-à-vis official bodies. This in turn is also due to the fact that normal salaries, especially in the government sector, are often completely inadequate. In addition to certain obligations within the family group, a greed or lack of interest in the common good can partly be observed in the upper to highest incomes, as is also known from industrialised countries even with the highest incomes. The exploitation of a position of strength ultimately works to the detriment of the lower income groups.

Foreign direct investment is a crucial factor for a country's economic growth, as it complements local capital inflows, but is also an important "know-how" transmitter through the international banks and companies involved. Mainly due to the COVID crisis, the year 2020 in particular was very atypical and fragile in terms of global economic development, so that considerable breaks in longer-term trends occurred. Therefore, only some data for this exceptional period will be given before going into more detail on the year 2021, which also suffered considerably from the crisis situation, but was able to bring the development path back more strongly in the direction of the previous level.

While the developed economies experienced a dramatic 58% drop in foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2020, the decline in the so-called developing economies was only 8% due to stable inflows to Asia. For the African continent, however, the 16% drop in FDI to around US\$40 billion was twice as high, bringing it down to the level of 15 years ago. The announcement of financing for so-called "greenfield" projects,

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<sup>41</sup> <https://databank.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG/1ff4a498/Popular-Indicators#>, retrieved 10/03/2023.

which are key to a region's industrialisation prospects, fell by 42% in the developing countries and by as much as 62% in Africa.

However, as the table below shows, the inflow of FDI then improved quite substantially in 2021 compared to 2020 in global terms; this was especially true for the industrialised countries, but there was also an increase for 34 out of 48 developing countries. However, the figure for Africa feigns an overly positive recovery, as a very large single internal corporate transaction in South Africa weighed heavily; excluding this, the result is only a moderate recovery, on a par with the other developing regions. Similarly, announcements for greenfield projects in Africa only increased from US-\$32 billion to US-\$39 billion in 2021, compared to US-\$77 billion in 2019.

**Table 1 Foreign direct investment inflows by region, 2020 -2021**

Foreign inflows	Direct investment:	2020 - 2021 in US\$ bn	Increase in percent
Regions:	2020	2021	%
World	962	1,582	+ 64
Developed countries	319	746	+ 134
Developing Economies	644	837	+ 30
Africa	39	83	+ 113
Asia	519	619	+ 19
Latin America	86	134	+ 56

Source: <https://unctad.org/publication/world-investment-report-2021>,  
<https://unctad.org/publication/world-investment-report-2022>,  
both retrieved 10/03/2023.

The individual values for the five African regions are also listed below, whereby the increase in direct investment inflows with regard to South Africa is particularly striking; however, the very high amount of US\$42 billion is - as already mentioned above - due to a large share swap between two companies, as it was only US\$4 billion in the year 2020. Ultimately, West Africa ranks first; the other three regions show only low values, some of which are even declining.

**Table 2 Foreign direct investment inflows in Africa, by subregion, 2020 - 2021**

Foreign inflows in Africa	Direct investment:	2020 - 2021 in US\$ billion	Increase in percent
Regions	2020	2021	%
Africa total	39	83	+ 113
North Africa	10	9	- 5
West Africa	9	14	+ 48
Central Africa	10	9	- 1
East Africa	6	8	+ 35
Southern Africa	4	42	+ 895

Source: see table above.

With regard to the development of individual countries, it is worth mentioning in the case of North Africa that in Egypt major exploration and production agreements were not renewed in 2021 and therefore a decline in foreign investment of 12% was noted, although this still reached the second largest volume on the continent at US\$5.1 billion.

In West Africa, Nigeria was able to double its inflows to US\$4.8 billion, largely due to a resurgence of investment in oil and gas. In Ghana, FDI increased by 39% to US\$2.6 billion, but again mainly for extractive industries.

In Central Africa, inflows into the Democratic Republic of Congo increased by only 14% to US\$1.9 billion and were concentrated in "offshore" oil fields and the mining industry.

The inflow of funds in East Africa was mainly in Ethiopia with an amount of US\$4.3 billion due to Chinese investments. Here, the sectoral focus is on renewable energies such as solar power plants.

In Southern Africa, investments in the country of South Africa also focused on renewable energy, financed by the UK.

In summary, it can be seen that Africa's economic development in 2021 was still severely affected by COVID-19 and the other global crises, and that even those countries that appeared to be in an improved situation were usually still not in such a good position on closer inspection. However, in its "Economic Outlook 2022" for the past year 2021, the African Development Bank estimates a strong recovery with GDP growth of 6.9%, while for 2022 it again expects a decline, then to 4.1% p.a.<sup>42</sup>

For the time being, Africa's great future opportunities will probably continue to lie primarily in the exploitation of mineral resources, the volume of which is limited, however, and will thus inevitably decrease over time. The decisive factor is likely to be the extent to which local industrial development succeeds in processing a growing share of the raw materials in their own country and thus capturing a higher share of the added value generated. In addition, the prices for the increasingly scarce raw materials are likely to rise, which could at least partially compensate for declining yields. However, it must be taken into account that due to global environmental policy, the demand for certain products could also fall sharply or the demand for greater environmental compatibility in the mining or extraction of raw materials could lead to higher costs and thus lower yields. Corresponding model calculations could certainly be helpful for the budget planning of the public budgets of the more commodity-oriented countries as an orientation for future planning, as far as these do not already exist anyway.

The situation is somewhat different for renewable raw materials such as wood, but here too, for environmental reasons, it is important to avoid opening up additional forest areas or greatly expanding agricultural land. The latter is particularly relevant with regard to the cultivation of products such as coffee, cocoa, bananas, etc. It is therefore quite possible that, due to this development, African countries will have to initiate a stronger structural change towards a broad-based national economy in the course of the next decade.

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<sup>42</sup> African Development Bank Group: African Economic Outlook 2022.

## 3.2 Technological progress

### 3.2.1 Central factors influencing the market

The world's population has grown steadily and considerably over the past decades and amounted to 7.89 billion people in 2021.<sup>43</sup> However, since 1971 the global growth rate has fallen from 2.1% p.a. to only 0.9% p.a. Although the peak has obviously already been reached in a number of countries, this does not yet apply to the total number of people worldwide, although the peak could be passed in the near future.<sup>44</sup>

The central challenge for humankind, especially in times of strong **population growth**, was probably to provide the existing inhabitants of the earth with sufficient food. The problem here was that the land that could be distributed and used became increasingly scarce over time. As a result, not all people could find employment in agriculture. However, after a certain period of time, technological progress in the context of industrialisation led to a noticeable increase in new jobs. In the transition phase, however, there were often more people looking for work and fewer opportunities for employment, which led to low wages that were barely enough to survive. However, the growing cities with their large populations gradually increased the demand for previously unknown or now affordable products, which in turn led to new employment.<sup>45</sup>

The development briefly described above inevitably did not proceed in a straight line, but time and again there were considerable breaks with much human suffering. The use of **machines** in the production process was the central and irreversible turning point. With a relatively small number of employees, it was now possible to produce a much larger quantity of the respective article at lower prices. In addition, thanks to modern **means of transport**, national and international markets became increasingly intertwined over the decades. In the textile sector, for example, today the production process has become more and more small-scale, while the total volume has risen steadily, in order to exploit the last locational advantages to the maximum.<sup>46</sup>

In the meantime, countries such as Zimbabwe in southern Africa or Egypt and Morocco in North Africa have become more involved in this fragmented **production process**, as they have relatively low labour costs with a sufficient number of adequately trained **workers**. However, the positive effect of creating **new jobs on the** one hand is usually negatively overcompensated by the import of a glut of extremely cheaply produced clothing from emerging or industrialised countries on the other. The traditional producers of clothing in Africa have no chance of competing with this flood of low-priced goods.<sup>47</sup> For example, a local textile manufacturer in Kinshasa/DR Congo explained to the author years ago that despite using second-hand sewing machines from Europe, he was no longer competitive with the amount of work he had to do and that he could therefore only sell his garments in the circle of his larger family.

Another critical point is in particular the export of used and well-preserved summer clothing from Europe to Africa, whereby the distance from e.g. Germany to Zambia is 17,000 km and is not justifiable for climate policy reasons alone. In general, two thirds of all old clothes are resold on local markets in

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<sup>43</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL>, retrieved 12/03/2023.

<sup>44</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.Grow>, retrieved 12/03/2023.

<sup>45</sup> Osterhammel, Jürgen: Das 19. Jahrhundert 1800 bis 1850, bpb/Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, August 2012, p. 10ff.

<sup>46</sup> Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg: Fast Fashion. Die Schattenseite der Moderne (the dark side of modernity), Hamburg 2015, p. 35 ff.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid: p. 142ff.

emerging and developing countries. Ghana, for example, is the third largest importer of second-hand clothing, which comes mainly from England and the USA, but also from Germany. However, about 40% of these goods do not find a second buyer and end up in landfills, in the ocean or on the beach of Accra, the capital of Ghana. Every year, millions of used garments are sorted, washed, mended and sold by a few thousand workers.<sup>48</sup> Although African countries like Burkina Faso and Mali are also involved in the whole production process of clothing and the export of cotton for the international textile market, their share only reaches a few percentage points.<sup>49</sup>

A much more important area of production in the case of South Africa is given by the supplier industry in the car sector, where German manufacturers (BMW, Daimler, Volkswagen) take advantage of the country's low **labour costs** and, with around 349,000 cars in 2020, have produced almost half of all their vehicles in Africa.<sup>50</sup> On the other hand, Africa's agriculture offers diverse export opportunities for tropical products such as cocoa, palm oil, peanuts, coffee or other agricultural products to Europe due to the natural conditions as well as cheap labour.<sup>51</sup>

Global markets are a complex network with a wide variety of influencing factors in the country of production and the buyer country. The development of new machines, for example, influences the existing production processes and requires qualified workers - and this in an international competition in which the level of wage costs plays an important role. In addition, cheap means of transport are an essential factor in international trade. These various components together are supposed to create new jobs and income, whereby at the end of the chain the entrepreneur expects a reasonable profit and the government of the respective country also hopes for increased tax revenue in order to fulfil the state functions. If this does not produce a satisfactory result, however, the population expects the government to make appropriate forward-looking decisions. In a complex entity such as the African continent with five sub-regions and 57 countries, it quickly becomes apparent that it is an extremely challenging task to identify the necessary structural adjustments and to implement them in a future-oriented manner.

### 3.2.2 Outstanding examples of local businesses

The fundamental question that arises in this framework is the extent to which local investors are able to retain the original added value in the African country itself by developing state-of-the-art production processes or the latest software programmes. Over the decades, many young African researchers or managers have acquired long professional experience after completing their studies or training - often also abroad - which should enable them to develop their own strategies or patents.

A particularly positive example of this is Ibrahim Abouleish, who emigrated from Egypt to Austria at the age of 19. There he studied chemistry and medicine and attained a higher position in a pharmaceutical

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/fast-fashion-ghana-clothes-waste-b2132399.html>, retrieved 12/03/2023.

<sup>49</sup> Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg: Fast Fashion. Die Schattenseite der Moderne (the dark side of modernity), Hamburg 2015, pp. 38,44,133,142.

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.gtai.de/de/trade/afrika/wirtschaftsumfeld/deutscher-aussenhandel-mit-afrika-entwickelt-sich-negativ-623890> (german-foreign-trade-with-africa-develops-negatively), retrieved 12/03/2023.

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.bpb.de/themen/afrika/dossier-afrika/58996/naturraum-klima-und-natuerliche-ressourcen> (natural-space-climate-and-natural-resources) 20/05/2005, retrieved 12/03/2023.  
<https://www.dw.com/de/afrika-autoindustrie-deutsche-autobauer-vda-automarkt> (africa-car-industry-german-car-maker-vda-car-market) from 06/01/2021, retrieved 12/03/2023.

company. Nevertheless, he decided to return to Egypt in 1977 to pursue sustainable agriculture with a holistic approach on a 70 ha piece of land in the desert - 60 km north-east of Cairo. The products produced were further processed through various subcontractors within the agro-industrial **SEKEM company** and then marketed nationally and internationally. In addition, Ibrahim Abouleish, later also with his son, founded several other companies and various NGOs, including a school on the farm premises and a university in Cairo. In 2003, he received the so-called "Alternative Nobel Prize" (Right Livelihood Award) for his merits.<sup>52</sup>

Ibrahim Abouleish's activity is in some ways unique, as he has taken a very high entrepreneurial risk with his investments in the desert. He has also demonstrated special entrepreneurial qualities by very creatively establishing a wide variety of sub-enterprises and organisations. Finally, he showed exceptional social commitment by establishing the school and university as well as other non-profit activities. Such a broad-based and ethically committed personality will inevitably be very rare; but his role model function could also motivate many younger women and men in Africa to take smaller similar initiatives. It is also worth mentioning that this company, which has grown considerably in the meantime, is being continued by his son with just as much commitment.<sup>53</sup>

A truly groundbreaking development with an enormous broad impact was the introduction of mobile phones in several African countries by Mo Ibrahim. Born in Sudan and also raised in Egypt, he studied at the University of Alexandria and graduated with a degree in electrical engineering. After working for the Sudanese telephone company and completing a master's degree and doctorate in England, he became technical director at British Telecom/BT in 1983, where he was entrusted with the design of the mobile network "Cellnet". After six years, he left the company and founded the consulting company "Mobile Systems International/MSI" in 1989, which became the largest independent technology company in Europe. In 2000, however, he sold the company.<sup>54</sup>

With the capital now available, he could finally concentrate on a substantive issue important to him in his home country, namely the development and introduction of the mobile telephone in Africa by founding Celtel International. This was a huge challenge, as it was first necessary to secure the financing to be able to install the necessary cell towers for the system. In addition, the sale of the telephone chip cards had to be organised in "countless" kiosks. After all, obtaining the corresponding licences in these countries was in most cases only possible by paying bribes. Mo Ibrahim solved this problem quite aggressively by placing advertisements saying that he offered the best technology in this field, but that he was not prepared to make illegal payments. After solving all these problems and launching the new company, he managed to get over 5 million customers in 13 countries by 2005.<sup>55</sup>

The spread of the mobile phone in Africa marked a very important step for the continent into the modern times. At the same time, it also included a strong socio-economic component by opening up new opportunities for the large number of women farmers and market women in Africa to get a fair price for their products. Normally, traders came to their villages and bought the harvest at prices dictated by them. Now, however, the women could borrow or buy mobile phones and, together with several others, buy chip cards for them as needed, because they usually always had smaller amounts of money available

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<sup>52</sup> <https://www.sekem.com/de/uber-uns>, retrieved 12/03/2023. Individual information directly from I. Abouleish, with whom the author had worked closely over a long period of time in the context of his work at a development bank.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Handley, Lucy/Mo Ibrahim: The accidental businessman, <https://www.cnbc.com/mo-ibrahim-african-entrepreneur-and-founder-of-the-ibrahim-index/>, retrieved 14/03/2023.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.



through their businesses. In this way, it was possible for them to ask for the prices of their products in the market centres of the cities and to obtain higher income from the buyers by comparing prices. If the distance to the next town was not too great, they could now also travel there by bus or a jointly hired taxi if necessary and sell their products at more reasonable prices.<sup>56</sup>

Mo Ibrahim did not see himself as an entrepreneur and manager. Therefore, after only five years of full operation, he sold his successful company Celtel International for the extraordinary sum of US\$ 3.4 billion. With this financial basis, he founded the "Mo Ibrahim Foundation" in 2006, which awards the "Prize for Achievement in African Leadership" to African political leaders who have worked against corruption and for the strengthening of democracy and human rights in the interest of the local population. In order to be able to continue their work in a similar way for 10 years after their term of office has expired, they each receive a prize from the Ibrahim Foundation totalling around US\$ 5 million. The previous seven prize winners include Joaquim Chissano/Mozambique, Nelson Mandela/South Africa (special prize) and Ellen Sirleaf/Liberia.<sup>57</sup>

In 2007, Mo Ibrahim also initiated the so-called "Ibrahim Index of African Governance/IIAG", which ranks African countries according to the quality of their democratic orientation and is published every two years, exercising in this way an important control function.<sup>58</sup>

For both personalities, the original idea was to give something back to the home continent of Africa. A similar sense of responsibility undoubtedly exists among many African people who live abroad and regularly send a considerable part of their salary to family members who have remained on site. In addition, some of them also try to finance socially relevant projects in their place of origin, such as better equipment for kindergartens or schools, with smaller amounts.

On a completely different level are newer start-ups, mostly by younger but already experienced African or international entrepreneurs, who consciously address creative solutions to key challenges of their local society, such as in the health sector, agriculture or the financial sector. An overview of 100 leading companies in Africa that are market leaders in a wide range of sectors is presented in the publication "About Africa's Rising 100". At least as many as 62 of these companies are headquartered in Africa, with Nigeria leading the way with 17 of them, followed at some distance by Egypt (11) and South Africa and Kenya (10 each); however, a country as important as Ghana can only boast 3 of these companies. In terms of a single country, however, almost most of the companies - 19 companies - have their headquarters in the USA.<sup>59</sup>

In terms of sectoral orientation, the focus of these 62 companies headquartered in Africa is on the financial sector with services primarily in the credit business and the international transfer of money (especially also between family members at home and abroad).

In view of the mostly unstable public electricity grids, another important field for investment is the business of installing solar energy, the use of which is of great importance, especially in more remote areas of Africa. This is especially true for charging the batteries of mobile phones, which are of great relevance not only for normal communication with other people, but also for conducting monetary

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<sup>56</sup> The author of these lines also had close contact with Mo Ibrahim from the early phase of the project as part of his work at a development bank. The socio-economic component mentioned above was of particular importance in the decision-making process.

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/profile/mohammed-ibrahim/?sh=150925c31a41>, retrieved 14/03/2023.  
<https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/about-us/board/mo-ibrahim>, retrieved 14/03/2023.

<sup>58</sup> <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/iiag>, retrieved 14/03/2023.

<sup>59</sup> <https://briterbridges.com/africa-rising-100>, retrieved 18/03/2023.

transactions.<sup>60</sup> The outstanding future of the use of solar energy can be seen in the example of South Africa, where large-scale power cuts have been recorded for already 15 years and in January 2023 alone, around 60 million South Africans had to live without electricity for up to 10 hours a day. However, a solution to the problem is not expected for another two years.<sup>61</sup> This means that there is likely to be considerable demand in the future for companies active in the solar energy sector.

Another 10% of the above-mentioned "Africa's Rising 100" companies are active in freight and passenger transport as well as the used car business. A similar number of companies are dedicated to various areas in the agricultural sector. There is also a certain focus on the medical and health sector. A company that has existed in Ghana since 2014 has specialised in the use of drones to transport medicines to remote regions of the country in urgent cases, as delivery by car over land - especially during the rainy season - would take several days.<sup>62</sup> This is undoubtedly also a sensible and creative approach to using modern technology, but it does not seem to have achieved as well wider application in other African countries.

A much greater impact can be assumed for the mobile banking payment system M-Pesa in Kenya, as this is now used by the majority of the population. In a way, this heralded the digitalisation of Africa, whereby the expansion of fixed networks was simply skipped ("leapfrogging"). No matter how large the amount in question, the transfer no longer requires a trip to a bank to settle a bill. Rather, with this mobile bank account, the money is registered under a telephone number and then the amount can be transferred from one telephone number to another using the smartphone. By integrating SIM cards of the telephone company "Safaricom", it was then also possible to have money paid out at their business stands. In general, this procedure has led to the emergence of a largely cashless payment system in the country.<sup>63</sup>

With this and other positive experiences, a wide range of digital opportunities have emerged in countries open to innovation, such as South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana or Rwanda. Governments and the national and international private sector have already invested large sums in submarine cables, satellites, data centres, mobile networks and cloud systems. According to UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), foreign direct investment in Africa's information and communications industry (ICT) amounted to around 44 percent of the total volume in 2020.<sup>64</sup> Specific examples include health robots that, in view of the CORONA epidemic, measure the body temperature of people arriving at doctors' surgeries or airports and perform other tasks, or the installation of apps on smartphones to quickly mobilise an ambulance if necessary.<sup>65</sup> Another example is the development of a 3D printer from leftover materials by young engineers in Kenya, with which they produced thousands of very inexpensive microscopes for schools.<sup>66</sup>

These sensible investments not only have positive effects for the individual companies that have developed the products, but they also contribute to an overall increase in economic efficiency through the faster processing of a multitude of procedures in a modern society. This is also associated with a considerable gain in time, which often contributes to improving the living situation of people in Africa. In addition, it is important for a large number of people to be involved with this new and future-oriented

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<sup>60</sup> <https://briterbridges.com/africa-rising-100>, retrieved 18/03/2023.

<sup>61</sup> Fear of blackout: South Africa's lights go out, FAZ, 14/02/2023, p.18.

<sup>62</sup> <https://briterbridges.com/africa-rising-100>, retrieved 18/03/2023.

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.africa-business-guide.de/de/digitalisierung-africa-800180>, retrieved 20/03/2023.

<sup>64</sup> UNCTAD, World Investment Report, 2021.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Srinivasan, Ramesh: The state should not be the engine of transformation, FAZ, 13/02/2023, p. 18.



process of digitalisation for the first time, which also requires greater acceptance among the population for its further dissemination.

Nevertheless, it is also important to keep an eye on the macroeconomic track record. There is no doubt that important and technologically innovative jobs are created. However, after such a surge of innovation in suitable economic sectors, it can also quickly come to a standstill if there is no close dovetailing with the other economic cycles. The aforementioned prime examples of creative investment have undoubtedly triggered important impulses for the individual countries, but they have not been able to bring about a self-sustaining broader development process. Accordingly, it is also necessary, for example, to compare the possible job losses in the area of banks or savings banks and similar institutions triggered by this modern settlement process in payment transactions with the time saved as well as the previously non-existent options for action of the users in order to determine whether a positive or negative overall effect has resulted here in economic and social terms.

As an example, although South Africa's unemployment rate in 9/2022 was only 32.9% percent<sup>67</sup> compared to 34.9% in Q3 2021<sup>68</sup>. However, this figure is still well above the record low of 21.5% in 12/2008.<sup>69</sup> This means that South Africa, as one of the most advanced countries on the African continent, has not succeeded in further reducing unemployment despite a falling population growth rate to only 0.8% p.a. in mid-2022.<sup>70</sup> It is particularly critical to note that this is obviously not a special economic situation in South Africa, but that sub-Saharan Africa as a whole continues to rely primarily on the export of raw materials and unprocessed agricultural products. Thus, there is a lack of more productive jobs in industry and in the formal service sector such as technology, communications and finance. One of the central causes of this - despite considerable improvements - are substantial deficits in the education sector. This refers to the still too low graduation rates at primary schools as well as the low rates of attainment of the baccalaureate. In this context, the generally weak level of education must also be viewed critically, which is due to the continuing - albeit lower - population growth and the lack of available financial resources.<sup>71</sup> In addition, there is inevitably a permanent risk of "brain drain", i.e. the migration of educated personnel and top executives from African countries to the USA, Europe or Asia.

### 3.2.3 The importance of patents

With the many facets of a largely modern society outlined above, it is not easy to come to a clear statement regarding the concrete significance of technological progress for economic development in Africa or its individual countries. One objective factor - at least for technological progress - can be seen to some extent in the number of new patents filed in Africa or its most important countries, which are usually associated with corresponding protection for 20 years. It should be borne in mind here that the process of official recognition required for this may well take three to six years for a variety of reasons. Accelerated procedures for patents that have only a short life span or whose effects must be used

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<sup>67</sup> <https://www.ceicdata.com/de/indicator/south-africa/unemployment-rate>, retrieved 20/03/2023.

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.gtai.de/de/trade/suedafrika/wirtschaftsumfeld/arbeitsmarkt-762242>, retrieved 20/03/2023.

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.ceicdata.com/de/indicator/south-africa/unemployment-rate>, retrieved 21/03/2023.

<sup>70</sup> DSW/Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung: DSW Data Report 2022, p. 8.

<sup>71</sup> Berlin Institute for Population and Development: Growth good, all good? Why Africa's economic growth is not solving its demographic challenge, November 2020.

promptly are common internationally, but, according to a corresponding study, are only available in North Africa, but not in the other regions of the continent.<sup>72</sup>

The following excerpts from a table published by the World Intellectual Property Organization, Geneva/Switzerland, show the number of patents granted, the percentage of local persons/companies involved, the respective share of patents granted worldwide and the corresponding average growth figures for patent approvals per continent and worldwide for the years 2010 and 2020 for the continents of Africa and, in comparison, Latin America & the Caribbean and Asia.<sup>73</sup> For the period 2006-2020, the year 2012 reached the highest value with a worldwide growth of patent applications amounting to 9.2%; in 2020, it amounted to only 1.6% due to various global factors.<sup>74</sup>

**Table 3 Patents granted by region, 2010 and 2020**

Region:	1. number of grants		2. resident share %		3. share of world %		4. Φgrowth
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010 2020
<b>Afrika</b>	9,000	7,000	14.2	14.9	1.0	0.4	-2.5
<b>Latin America + Caribbean</b>	17,200	36,100	5.6	8.5	1.9	2.3	7.7
<b>Asia</b>	469,600	924,500	71.5	75.8	51.4	58.1	7.0
<b>World</b>	914,200	1,592,000	60.5	62.6	100.0	100.0	5.7

Source: WIPO/World Intellectual Property Organization, Statistics Database, September 2021.

What is striking about this overview is that (1.) the number of patents granted in the decade under review fell by almost 22% in Africa, while it rose by around 110% in Latin America/Caribbean, by around 97% in Asia and by at least 74% worldwide. This has inevitably led to the fact that (3.) Africa's global share has more than halved during this period, while in the other two continents mentioned it has increased slightly in the case of Latin America/Caribbean and strongly in the case of Asia to almost 60%; this is also expressed in the average negative or positive growth rates of the patent approvals of the continents (4.). Only in the case of the share of resident applicants was Africa able to increase its value slightly to 14.9% in this decade (2.), but here too the percentage growth was below that of the other two continents. Thus, no positive development for the African continent as a whole can be derived from the overview; rather, the gap to the other two continents has widened somewhat. This is true even if it is taken into account that a number of young African companies may have foregone the patent approval procedure for reasons of cost or time; after all, this argument could possibly also apply to the other two continents.

Due to this rather critical assessment of patent development in Africa as a whole, a closer look at the most important countries of the five regions of Africa, which could be of particular importance for the upcoming overall assessment, will be taken for a stronger differentiation.

<sup>72</sup> Moreira, Vitor Sérgio: Africa - patenting against the clock, November 2021.

<https://inventa.com/en/news/article/696/africa-patenting-against-the-clock>, retrieved 21/03/2023.

<sup>73</sup> World Intellectual Property Indicators 2021, WIPO 2021.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

**Table 4      Patent applications in countries from the five regions of Africa, 2020**

Regions and countries	Total patent applications	Residents/ companies in the country
1. North Africa: Egypt	2,207	978
Algeria	710	163
Morocco	2,688	250
Sudan, Rep.	160	153
2. West Africa: Nigeria	1,008	410
3. East Africa: Ethiopia	60	6
Kenya	376	341
Mozambique	40	26
Uganda	19	13
4. Central Afrika: Angola	85	85
DR Congo	182	72
5. Südafrika: Zambia	27	16
Rep.South Africa	6,688	542

Source: WIPO/World Intellectual Property Organization, Statistics Database, September 2021.

In the case of North Africa, it should be emphasised that Egypt has by far the highest number of patent applications in the whole of Africa, with 978 applications by residents in the country. In contrast, in the case of Morocco, the figure is very low at only 9% for local residents; this is probably due to the very close business relations, especially with French companies, and their investments in Morocco.

South Africa has by far the highest number of patent applications (6,688) in total, but in the list of countries selected here it has the lowest percentage value for residents in the country itself, at only 8%. This is probably mainly due to the strong presence of international car manufacturers in the country. In addition, it may also be an explanation here that especially younger researchers in the country who are active in the modern IT sector forego going to the well-known cumbersome administration in South Africa, especially since, given the fast pace of this sector, a lead time of two to three years is not attractive.

According to statements by entrepreneurs, the situation in the East African country of Kenya appears to be much more positive, as government agencies here are more open to the concerns of developers of new technologies and also promote this as far as possible; consequently, the share of residents in the country is 91% of all patents. The Republic of Sudan has an even higher share of residents at 96%;<sup>75</sup> in view of the currently erupting internal military conflict, the general social tensions and the high level of debt and inflation, a valid interpretation of this figure is not possible at present.<sup>76</sup>

Supposedly similar figures regarding the share of patents by local residents in Angola are apparently due to the fact that WIPO is not able to break down patents by resident and non-resident applicants due to a lack of data.

At this point, an at least rough comparison should also be made with the corresponding figures for patents in Latin America. For Brazil (24,338) and Mexico (14,312), it can be seen that their applications

<sup>75</sup> World Intellectual Property Indicators 2021, WIPO 2021.

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.giz.de/sudan>, retrieved 21/03/2023.

are far above the highest values for Africa; however, for the countries that follow, such as Argentina (3,492) and Chile (2,805), the values are at a similar level as in Africa.<sup>77</sup>

However, a fundamental difference can be observed with regard to the percentage of locally resident applicants. In Argentina, the highest value of local persons or companies for patent applications is achieved with only 27%. In contrast, the corresponding values for African countries - as already mentioned above - are much higher, e.g. in the case of Kenya with 91% and Egypt with 44%, which can be seen as a very positive sign for Africa.<sup>78</sup>

On the basis of the above, it can be deduced to a certain extent that obviously the creative potential in a number of African countries by individuals or companies is more pronounced than in Latin America. In certain cases, this may also be due to the fact that the local administration is either more open to such new developments or that there is more scope for the unbureaucratic introduction of new concepts due to fewer controls.

In general, a more in-depth analysis of the data in this area would be desirable in the context of complementary research on the following points: 1. a clear distinction between individual or company applicants, whereby in the case of the former a certain breakdown by age category might be of interest. 2. an allocation of patent applications according to economic sectors or socially relevant fields of activity such as research or social sectors. On the basis of such evaluations, a more well-founded statement could then be made regarding the technological future orientation of a country than is currently possible on the basis of the available data.

An interesting extension to the topic of future research in Africa addressed here is offered by the **Academic Freedom Index/AFI** (from 2022); it examines the extent to which academic freedom exists in the individual countries of the world.<sup>79</sup> With regard to the development of future patents, it may well be relevant whether universities, colleges and other educational institutions, in addition to the independence of teaching in general, also consistently strive for this for their research projects. On the one hand, this is about a corresponding culture in the universities themselves, but on the other hand it is also about the aspect that the university graduates or the lecturers who later move to state or private companies should bring with them a creative and independent research attitude that is important for society and that can contribute to the further economic and social development of the respective country.

In its assessment of 177 countries around the world by 2,000 experts, the AFI takes into account five key indicators:

1. freedom of research and teaching
2. freedom of academic exchange and dissemination
3. institutional independence of universities
4. integrity of the campus
5. freedom of academic exchange and cultural

Expression

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<sup>77</sup> World Intellectual Property Indicators 2021, WIPO 2021.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.kooperation-international.de/aktuelles/fuer-sie-entdeckt/detail/info/academic-freedom-index-2022-wissenschaftsfreiheit-nimmt-ab> (academic freedom is decreasing)/, retrieved 21/03/2022.

In summary, as of December 2022, the report finds a global decline in academic freedom over the last 10 years, with a sharp drop for North Africa, while sub-Saharan Africa remains stable in this regard.

The individual countries were given points and classified into a total of 10 so-called confidence intervals, whereby the first five intervals are to be regarded as positive, the following ones as negative. In the following table, only the countries of the African continent are listed: <sup>80</sup>

**Table 5, Group 1                      Academic Freedom Index/AFI (from 2022):  
Values and confidence intervals, Africa (as of 12/2021)**

(Order of the countries according to the rating in the respective group)

Top 10%	./.
Top 10 - 20%	Senegal, Nigeria
Top 20 - 30%	Botswana, Seychelles, Burkina Faso
Top 30 - 40 %	Sierra Leone, Benin, Gabon, Malawi, Cap Verde, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Togo, Kenya
Top 40 - 50%	Tunisia, Ghana, South Africa, Cote d'Ivoire, Sao Tome and Principe

**Table 5, Group 2**

Lower 40 - 50%	Niger, Madagascar, Zambia, Lesotho, Namibia, Central African Republic/ZAR, Mauritius, Somaliland, Tanzania, Mozambique
Lower 30 - 40%	Republic of Congo, Chad, Morocco, Comoros, Mali, Angola, Zanzibar, Libya
Lower 20 - 30%	Uganda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Guinea, Mauritania, Ethiopia, Sudan, Djibouti
Lower 10 - 20%	Algeria, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Eswatini
Lower 10%	Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda, South Sudan, Eritrea

Source: AFI/Academic Freedom Index 2021.

Even if the significance of this survey should not be overestimated, it does provide important indications for the general classification of countries with regard to their freedom of research and teaching, which can also be expected in the future. It is therefore not surprising that **Senegal**, with its long history of positive democratic development, ranks first among all African countries. However, recent unrest with a number of fatalities in connection with the elections scheduled for February 2024 has cast doubt on the country's previous image as a model democracy.<sup>81</sup> Given the regional tensions and conflicts that existed in **Nigeria** until the recent elections, it is surprising that this country is ranked second; however, it is positive that such a large and important country has achieved this ranking result despite the difficult political situation. Taking into account the recent political developments in Burkina Faso, however, the country's future ranking as number 5 is unlikely to remain.

<sup>80</sup> [https://www.kooperation-international.de/aktuelles/fuer-sie-entdeckt/detail/info/academic-freedom-index-2022-wissenschaftsfreiheit-nimmt-ab/\(academic-freedom-is-decreasing\)](https://www.kooperation-international.de/aktuelles/fuer-sie-entdeckt/detail/info/academic-freedom-index-2022-wissenschaftsfreiheit-nimmt-ab/(academic-freedom-is-decreasing)), retrieved 21/03/2022, p. 6 and 7.

<sup>81</sup> Bröll, Claudia: Proteste und Tote in Senegal (protests and deaths in Senegal), FAZ, 05/06/2022, p. 5.

In contrast, the ranking of such an important country as Kenya in the top 30-40% appears to be stable. This also applies to the countries listed one level lower (top 40-50), such as Ghana, South Africa and Cote d'Ivoire.

In the second block of the overview, the "under 40-50%" states include individual countries such as Zambia, Namibia, Tanzania and Mozambique, which could well move up into the first block if their economic and social situation were to generally ease and if the positive effects on research and teaching were then to be expected.

In the "lower 30-40%" group, countries such as Mali, Angola and Libya are likely to remain in this group or even drop lower in the future if negative political developments continue. In the case of Morocco, the question remains open as to whether the country, in view of the option of further economic rapprochement with states such as France and Spain, will also pursue a more democratically oriented policy or whether the royal house sees this as a possible weakening of its own position and will stick to its previous strict pursuit of power in violation of fundamental human rights.

In the case of the most important countries in the last three confidence intervals, we are dealing with states that continue to find themselves in difficult domestic and foreign policy situations, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan and Eritrea; some potential for orientation to a higher level could be shown by countries such as Cameroon and Rwanda, and possibly Algeria. Egypt, on the other hand, which belongs to the last group "below 10%", has an appalling record in terms of respect for human rights. For example, prisoners are often held in the worst conditions for years without trial. In this way, the government tries to suppress any criticism.<sup>82</sup> In general, it should be noted that especially the recent developments with their different global crises have shown how difficult it is to make a corresponding prediction about the political situation in the different states of Africa, as these are less likely to be assigned to certain blocs and thus many countries are trying to develop their own - and in their view - future-oriented strategy.

Even if no direct correlation between greater freedom of research and teaching and the increase in registered patents has yet been proven, there is at least much to suggest that greater unrestrained creativity in research through the granting of freedom can also have positive effects on the economic and social development of a country. This in turn indirectly leads to an increase in national patents in the respective country.

In view of the various global challenges of recent times - the likes of which we have not seen for decades - it is to be hoped that a stabilisation of the social situation in the individual countries and thus also of the global economy will gradually return. With regard to patent applications, there is an expectation that, while the highest annual growth rate of applications in Africa in the last 15 years of 9.2% in 2012 may not be quickly achieved again, at least the very low value of 1.6% increase in 2020 will be significantly exceeded in the future.

An important factor here could also be the already practised long-term financing of African tech funds by international development banks such as the IFC of the World Bank Group, the European Investment Bank or national institutions such as DEG/KfW or FMO (Netherlands) or PROPARCO (France). This not only closes financing gaps, but also aims to introduce young companies to private investors or the stock market through these institutions. Currently, corresponding financing is planned in the areas of health

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<sup>82</sup> Fuhr, Lukas/Meier, Christian: No room for civil society, FAZ, 05/11/2022, p. 6.

tech, fin tech and retail tech for countries such as Nigeria, Egypt, South Africa, Kenya and Senegal with a targeted fund volume of 230 million euros.<sup>83</sup>

Equipped with a financing base that follows entrepreneurial development, younger and successful companies in particular are increasingly able to devote themselves to targeted research in their field of expertise and thus also to the development of new patents. Over time, this approach could also be broadened by merging with other international growth companies and thus contribute to a solid economic basis for the respective African country. At present, however, it can still be assumed that the number of such companies is manageable.

US companies are particularly interested in developing the potentially large markets in Africa, especially in the field of new technologies, and some of them have already made massive investments. For example, Google has extended a submarine cable from Western Europe to South Africa at an investment cost of one billion US dollars, Amazon is currently building its African headquarters in South Africa and Microsoft wants to provide 100 million Africans with internet access by 2025. The problem for most American companies, however, is that they are not familiar with the market situation and the local mentality. For example, American price expectations for an iPhone of around US\$ 800 are in contrast to a local offer of only US\$ 20. This shows that there is still a large gap between local price expectations and those of American companies, whereby the latter will presumably first incur considerable losses. This could also reduce their interest in Africa relatively quickly.<sup>84</sup>

### 3.3 Social imbalances

#### 3.3.1 Modern slavery

Once a country has acceded to the United Nations Covenants, all national laws are governed by their provisions, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, which states, among other things, "Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and...to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights..." (Art. 22). It further emphasises that "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services..." (Art. 25). In a way, Art. 3 should be able to be taken for granted: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person".<sup>85</sup>

Furthermore, on December 2, 1949, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the "Convention for the **Suppression of the Traffic in Persons** and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others", which sets out in detail the relevant criminal law measures - also in an international context - especially for the **protection of women and children**.<sup>86</sup>

In many states of the world and also in African countries, however, this declaration and numerous United Nations conventions are confronted with the brutal reality of everyday life. Dictatorships disregard fundamental rights to life and limb in the worst possible way, whether as individuals because of a different political orientation or because they belong to an unaccepted ethnic group; in many cases,

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<sup>83</sup> DEG press release: EUR 15 million for African tech funds, presse@deginvest.de of 08/02/2023.

<sup>84</sup> IPS: Allen, Nate/Sambuli, Nanjira: Why US tech giants need Africa, 29/06/2023.

<sup>85</sup> <https://unric.org/de/allgemeine-erklärung-menschenrechte> (general declaration of human rights), retrieved 23/3/2023.

<sup>86</sup> <https://swisscows.com/de/web?query=UN+Convention+on+the+Interdiction+of+Trafficking+in+Humans>, retrieved 23/03/2023.



however, it is simply a matter of suppressing competing aspirations to attain power in the respective country.

On a completely different level, however, is the enslavement of people by denying them any kind of rights. Mostly, it is a question of an unaccepted ethnic group in the country or people who are unable to claim their rights due to a lack of formal education and those who, for a variety of reasons, such as refugees, have to fear losing their already low-paid jobs.

Even in many so-called developed countries, a shockingly high number of people are in "modern slavery", which usually takes the form of forced labour or forced marriage. All the more, many people suffer this kind of oppression in numerous African states; be it that the respective government more or less openly accepts this or even imposes forced labour on people itself.<sup>87</sup>

An even more dramatic situation arises in the case of child slaves or child labour. Here, young people are deprived of or severely restricted from a possible path to a better life at an early age by being withheld of schooling - either completely or only partially.

According to the International Labour Organization/ILO, global estimates of "modern slavery" in 2021 result in the following summary values:<sup>88</sup>

**Table 6** **Modern slavery, 2021**

	<b>Forced labour</b>		<b>Forced marriage</b>		<b>Modern slavery (total)</b>	
	Number (1)	% (2)	Number (1)	% (2)	Number (1)	% (2)
<b>Worldwide</b>	27,577	3.5	21,993	2.8	49,570	6.4
<b>Africa</b>	3,819	2.9	3,189	2.4	7,008	5.2
<b>American Continent</b>	3,593	3.5	1,496	1.5	5,089	5.0

(1) Expressed in 1,000. (2) Cases per 1,000 inhabitants.

Source: ILO/International Labour Organization: Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, 2022.

Worldwide, it is assumed that there are about 49.6 million "modern slaves" (in 2021), of which about 7 million are in Africa; this means that globally, about 14% of all "slaves" live in Africa.<sup>89</sup> Based on the approx. 1.4 billion people in Africa (in 2022) mentioned in chapter 3.1.1, this results in a share of 0.5% of Africa's own population. This may be perceived as a low figure, but it overlooks the fact that almost every one of the 7 million people who perform forced labour (3.8 million) or are in a forced marriage (3.1 million) suffer a mostly very bitter fate over longer years or even for life.<sup>90</sup>

Forced labour worldwide is largely carried out by private actors (63%), in the context of commercial sexual exploitation (23%) and through state-imposed forced labour (14%); 12% of those affected are children alone (3.3 million). Forced marriages primarily affect women and girls and usually take place within the family; be it parents with 76% or relatives with 19% or marriage brokers etc. with 5% of the

<sup>87</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/publications/WCMS-854733/lang--en/index.htm>, retrieved 23/03/2023.

<sup>88</sup> ILO: Global Estimates of Modern Slavery. <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/publications/WCMS-854733/lang--en/index.htm>, September 2022, retrieved 23/03/2023.

<sup>89</sup> Note: This puts Africa slightly below its share of just under 18% of the world's population.

<sup>90</sup> ILO: Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, op. cit., retrieved 23/03/2023.



cases.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, it is extremely difficult for outsiders such as the state administration to counteract this abuse.<sup>92</sup>

According to Walk Free's latest "Global Slavery Index" of 2018, cases of "Modern Slavery" occur mainly in the African countries of Eritrea, Burundi and Central African Republic, which have the highest prevalence, while the biggest number of people affected live in large countries such as Nigeria (almost 1.4 million) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (around 1 million).

The above index has also established values for the assumed "vulnerability" of 50 African countries to "Modern Slavery", based on five criteria: Aspects of governance, basic needs coverage, inequalities in society, disenfranchised groups and conflict impact. According to this, the countries Central African Republic, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and Sudan had the highest weighted scores and thus the most critical assessments. A further in-depth evaluation of African countries also identified which governments had made the most progress in strengthening laws against 'modern slavery' or human trafficking in 2018 compared to 2016; these were Tunisia and Cote d'Ivoire, and at a slightly lower level, countries such as Algeria, Kenya and Tanzania. However, limited resources and ongoing internal conflicts prevent more comprehensive action to reduce 'Modern Slavery'.<sup>93</sup>

There are reports from the Sahel belt that descent-based slavery is still widespread in Mali and Mauritania, for example, with Mauritania being the last country in the world to have banned slavery by law as recently as 1981; in this country in particular, prosecutions are often still unsuccessful today due to the state's reluctance to act. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change are driving more and more people into unplanned migration and insecure and risky employment.<sup>94</sup>

Looking at the overall situation, there is no positive outlook for "modern slavery", at least in the short term. Even in cases where the respective state is pursuing a consistent policy towards this deplorable state of affairs, it can be assumed that in remote regions of the country, but also in many large cities, the fate of this group of people will not improve in the short term due to limited administrative capacities on the one hand and corrupt behaviour of civil servants on the other.

### 3.3.2 The scourge of corruption

A particular scourge of humanity is **corruption**, which was already mentioned on a papyrus of the ancient Egyptian 20th dynasty (about 1,100 years BC) with reference to the temple of Elephantine, where a large quantity of sacks of barley had been embezzled and a dense network of theft and corruption had obviously existed; this was, after all, over 3,000 years ago!<sup>95</sup> Today, the non-governmental organisation Transparency International/TI defines corruption "as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain and advantage".<sup>96</sup>

In view of the long history and widespread nature of corruption, a multitude of extreme examples could be cited at this point. The crucial point is that corruption on the one hand works to private advantage,

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<sup>91</sup> ILO: Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, op. cit. retrieved 23/03/2023.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Walk Free: Global Slavery Index. Africa 2018.

<https://www.globalslaveryindex.org/2018/findings/regional-analysis/africa/>, retrieved 20/03/2023.

<sup>94</sup> DW: Slavery in Africa is far from over, 02/12/2021, <https://www.dw.com/de/die-sklaverei-in-afrika-ist-noch-lange-nicht-überwunden/a-59990116>, retrieved 20/03/2023.

<sup>95</sup> <https://www.selket.de/kemet/schreiber-und-beamte> (scribes and officials)/, retrieved 21/03/2023.

<sup>96</sup> <https://www.transparency.de/ueber-uns/-/was-ist-korruption> (what is corruption), retrieved 21/03/2023.

but on the other hand it works to the detriment of individuals or state institutions and thus the general public. Accordingly, these effects can occur in very different areas. In the legal sense, corruption is the abuse of a position of trust in a wide variety of positions "...in order to obtain a material or immaterial advantage to which there is no legally justified entitlement";<sup>97</sup> this can occur through bribery, corruption, the acceptance of advantages and the granting of advantages.

There is no doubt that in Africa, too, "gifts" or "tributes" were given to the head of a village or clan very early on to express gratitude for an advantage received or hoped for. However, a review of older African literature tends to give the impression that this type of corrupt behaviour was more regionally limited and, for a variety of reasons, not as broadly anchored in society as it later became with the growing interest of Europeans in local products or raw materials in the context of colonisation and especially after many states gained independence.<sup>98</sup> This also seems understandable insofar as in recent times these were often huge sums of investment for project measures, where even larger "unproductive" payments could be easily absorbed. This was mainly because, in addition to the loss of traditional values of society and weak state institutions, this temptation was countered by the relatively low salaries of politicians and above all of "simple" state employees.

Just as in the case of Egyptian barley mentioned above, mineral wealth is usually associated with a high degree of corruption.<sup>99</sup> Experience shows that this behaviour also extends to the other social and economic sectors of a country. Here it also comes to bear that trust can be lost in a very short period of time, but it usually takes years to regain it. Very concrete negative effects in the economic sphere result from such a fundamental loss of trust on the part of international banks, in that they downgrade the respective state in their country risk rating, which inevitably leads to an increase in the interest rates demanded for loans to local banks as well as state agencies and thus also to the population in general.

In particular, the 2010 World Bank report on the Africa Development Indicators in its chapter "Silent and lethal. How quiet corruption undermines Africa's development efforts" deals relentlessly with this issue. As a starting point, it describes the "big-time and petty corruption" of high-ranking politicians and employees in Africa, especially in cooperation with companies. However, this also has a negative impact on service sectors such as schools and hospitals, as teachers and doctors reduce their respective service in terms of time and also mentally in order to concentrate more on better-paid private services, which they do on the side. This results in a downward spiral of lower productivity in the economy as well as a reduction in trained human capital and its ability to be deployed. But this obviously poor allocation of resources also causes a general decline in society's trust in public institutions, so that it conforms in its behaviour to the example set. As a certain conclusion, the World Bank's statement can be seen that corruption is currently obviously embedded in Africa's political economy.<sup>100</sup>

The above assessment has obviously not changed fundamentally in recent times. This is also shown by the "Corruption Perceptions Index" of Transparency International from 2022, in which a maximum of 90 points can be achieved. In the group of the first 90 countries in the world with a more positive assessment, there are only 13 African countries, while in the second group of also 90 countries, which has a weaker assessment, Africa is represented by 40 countries. It is also striking that the first group

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<sup>97</sup> Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences: Guideline on the Prevention of Corruption at Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences dated 15/02/2022, p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> Jakobeit, Cord: Korruption, in: Das Afrika Lexikon, Stuttgart 2004, p. 316f.

<sup>99</sup> Berlin Institute for Population and Development: Growth good, all good? Why Africa's economic growth is not solving its demographic challenge, November 2020, p. 9.

<sup>100</sup> The World Bank: Africa Development Indicators 2010, Washington, D.C. 2010.

mainly includes African countries with a low population, such as the most positively assessed Seychelles with just under 100,000 inhabitants or Botswana with 2.6 million inhabitants. The most populous country in this group is South Africa with 60.6 million inhabitants, with Ghana (33.5 million inhabitants) following at a considerable distance. In the case of the last two countries mentioned, their strong international integration may also be a decisive reason for their positive rating.

**Table 7            Transparency International: Corruption Perceptions Index 2022**

**Group 1 (selection)**

Score	Country name
60	Botswana
51	Rwanda
49	Namibia
43	Benin/Ghana/Senegal/
	South Africa
42	Burkina Faso
40	Tunisia

Source: Transparency International - Corruption Perceptions Index 2022, 2023.

Group 2 shows a number of African countries with large populations among the 40 countries listed, such as Nigeria with 218 million inhabitants, followed by Ethiopia (123 million inhabitants) and Egypt (103 million inhabitants). In addition, fifteen countries have 20 million inhabitants or more. In such populous countries with complex administrative structures and a large number of medium and large enterprises, controlling and curbing corruption is bound to be a major challenge.

**Group 2 (selection)**

Score	Country name
38	Ethiopia/Morocco/
	Tanzania
37	Cote d'Ivoire
33	Angola
32	Kenya
30	Egypt
24	Nigeria
12	Somalia

Source: see above Group 1.

The political background of individual countries will be discussed in Chapter 4.1. However, it can at least be concluded at this point that large, resource-rich countries with many international companies and corresponding local partners are particularly susceptible to corruption, whether at the private or public national level. For example, Nigeria is ranked 150th out of 180 countries in Transparency International's corruption ranking.<sup>101</sup> At the same time, about 40% of the population in this country have less than US\$ 1.90 per day.<sup>102</sup> In addition, there are millions of people with incomes just above the poverty line who also have to fight desperately for daily survival.

<sup>101</sup> Transparency International - Corruption Perceptions Index 2022, 2023.

<sup>102</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/lsm/brief/nigeria-releases-new-report-on-poverty-and-inequality-in-country>, May 28, 2020, retrieved 07/05/2023.

### 3.3.3 The Gini coefficient of income inequality

If the national income of individual countries is considered, the decisive question here is how income (and also wealth) is ultimately distributed within societies. For a closer look at this, the countries listed in the previous two tables with regard to the ranking of the corruption perception index are listed again in the first column (1.) according to their order recorded there. This is contrasted with the Gini coefficient of **income inequality** in the middle column (2.) and the average **gross national income per inhabitant** in the right-hand column (3.).

**Table 8** Country selection as well as Gini coefficient of income inequality and gross national income per inhabitant

#### Group 1

1 country	2 World Bank: Gini coefficient	3 DSW: Gross National Income per inhabitant (in US-\$)
Botswana	53.3	16,650
Rwanda	43.7	2,440
Namibia	59.1	9,650
Ghana	43.5	6,020
South Africa	63.0	14,140
Burkina Faso	35.3	6,020
Tunisia	32.8	11,270

Source for 2: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/gini-coefficient-by-country>, retrieved March 24, 2023.

Source for 3: DSW/Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung: Social and demographic data worldwide. DSW Data Report 2022, February 2023.

#### Group 2

1 country	2 World Bank: Gini coefficient	3 DSW: Gross National Income per inhabitant (in US-\$)
Ethiopia	35.0	2,590
Tanzania	40.5	2,920
Cote d'Ivoire	41.5	5,760
Angola	51.3	6,060
Kenya	40.8	4,950
Egypt	31.5	12,910
Nigeria	35.1	5,250

Source: see group 1 above.

As noted above, the countries in the two overviews (groups 1 and 2) are ranked according to the intensity of vulnerability to corruption, with Botswana to Tunisia among the countries with the low values and Ethiopia to Nigeria among the more vulnerable. In both tables, countries are assigned their GINI coefficient of income inequality; the lower the value, the lower the inequality, and the higher the value, the higher the inequality.

Although "Group 1" contains the countries that are less prone to corruption, the Gini coefficient of income inequality is above 50 for three of these countries and in the 40s for two, i.e. it is very high. In "Group 2" with the countries that are more prone to corruption, only Angola achieves a coefficient of

inequality of over 50. Although the number of countries selected is small, they are all among the larger and more important states on the African continent. Thus, they carry special weight and it can therefore be concluded with some justification that countries with a high susceptibility to corruption do not necessarily have higher inequality. This can be seen in a similar way in the second data column with the average gross national income per inhabitant: In the countries with a lower susceptibility to corruption (group 1), the gross national income is on average above US\$ 5,000 in six countries; in the countries with a higher susceptibility to corruption (group 2), however, this amount is also exceeded in four (rounded up even in 5) of the selected countries. Thus, here too, there is no automatism that would result in a clear improvement of the average income situation in the countries with lower susceptibility to corruption.

The above sample analyses have focused on the most important states in Africa, but no significant correlation between the susceptibility to corruption of the individual countries and the respective given inequality of income could be identified. In the same way, no direct correlation could be found between low susceptibility to corruption and the absolute level of income in the respective countries. Obviously, a number of other factors play an important role, such as the phase of the development process and international economic interdependence, the socio-political environment or traditional behaviour in the respective country; in any case, there does not seem to be a simple monocausal relationship between the two variables.

### 3.3.4 The Corporate Social Responsibility Concept

In view of the above-mentioned facts of income inequality, the given situation of difficult living conditions for a large part of the population in African countries cannot simply be accepted. The central responsibility here lies primarily with the governments of the individual states. After all, their obligations under international law require them to protect fundamental human rights in their territories. In addition, the UN Human Rights Council adopted the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in 2011, according to which companies should also avoid, reduce or offset the negative impacts of their business activities on human rights; the relevant details are to be regulated by national laws.<sup>103</sup>

Derived from this, there are also corresponding international regulations within the framework of the **Corporate Social Responsibility/CSR** concept, on the basis of which companies are to assume greater social responsibility in their field of activity. The beginnings of this go back to the 1950s, although it was not until 1990 that concrete CSR approaches developed, which then led to clear requirements for companies in the European Union/EU from 2001. Of the various corresponding definitions, the short version from 2011 is concise but ultimately all-encompassing: "Corporate responsibility for its impact on society." <sup>104</sup> Developed in 2010, DIN ISO 26,000 (reviewed and reaffirmed in 2021)<sup>105</sup> and its standards have been adopted by 88 countries by 2021.<sup>106</sup> This guideline on social responsibility can be regarded as a voluntary standard not only for large companies, but also for medium-sized enterprises, non-profit associations and e.g. hospitals; it contains, among other things, the following seven principles, the consideration of which is intended to contribute to sustainable development:

<sup>103</sup> [https://www.bmz.de/de/service/lexikon/un-leitprinzipien-für-wirtschaft-und-menschenrechte-\(un-guiding-principles-on-business-and-human-rights\)](https://www.bmz.de/de/service/lexikon/un-leitprinzipien-für-wirtschaft-und-menschenrechte-(un-guiding-principles-on-business-and-human-rights)) 60438, retrieved 30/03/2023.

<sup>104</sup> European Commission: A renewed EU strategy 2011-14 for Corporate Social Responsibility, 25/10/2011, p. 6.

<sup>105</sup> <https://www.iso.org/standard/42546.html>, retrieved 30/03/2023.

<sup>106</sup> <https://iso26000.info/iso/iso-standards/iso-26000/87-countries>, retrieved 30/03/2023.

Table 9

Principles of DIN ISO 26,000

Principle	Description (individual aspects)
1. Organizational governance	Transparent decision-making processes, international accounting, audited financial statements
2. Human rights	Avoidance of complicity, grievance settlement, basic labour rights
3. Labour practices	Working conditions, social protection, health and safety, workplace training
4. Environment	Pollution prevention, sustainable use of resources, reduction of climate change
5. Fair operating practices	Non-corrupt behaviour, fair competition, Respect for property rights
6. Consumer issues	Fair marketing, sustainable consumption, complaint and dispute resolution, data protection
7. Community involvement and development	Promotion of education and culture, job creation and skills development, social investment

Source: <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:iso:26000:ed-1:v1:en>, retrieved 30/3/2023.

These CSR guidelines with their explanatory notes are intended to provide companies with a broad framework of orientation in their daily business conduct. Due to their regional origin, they are essentially shaped by North American and European values. In recent times, the aspect of sustainability has become particularly important. At the same time, the further erosion of moral and ethical standards is to be counteracted.<sup>107</sup> The fundamental question in this context, however, is to what extent the implementation of CSR by companies in Africa can lead to an improvement in the financial situation of employees through the payment of more appropriate salaries or to a certain reduction in income inequality in general through the increased creation of jobs for young people. In addition, positive effects on the community environment are expected.

It must therefore be clarified to what extent CSR criteria conform to the values of the African continent and are accepted accordingly by the local society, i.e. the companies and other forms of organisation in the country. Even in the case of so-called universal values, the question of a different weighting for each country or continent can certainly arise. For example, there are voices in Africa, also from the university sector, that question the weighting of the values of the international CSR approach, as they do not adequately take into account the social and cultural conditions of the continent. There is also the question of whether the introduction of CSR in companies is merely a fad or a real commitment. In Africa itself, a patronage culture reigns more than the CSR approach brought in from outside, especially since it is little known among public authorities or company managers and there is a general lack of formalisation of the concept. However, in recent years, a certain new dynamic has emerged in Africa with regard to the CSR approach at various levels, especially with regard to the concept of sustainable development. In the meantime, examples can be cited from Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Tunisia and above all Morocco. Often, however, the financial and human resources for the introduction of CSR are still lacking.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Polte, Winfried: Relevance of Corporate Social Responsibility for Latin American Entrepreneurs, IZNE Working Papers, 2017, p. 7.

<sup>108</sup> <https://afrimag.net/ces-entreprises-africaines-qui-ont-mise-sur-la-rse/>, 21/02/2020, retrieved 30/03/2023.

In addition, the ILO/International Labour Organization calls for stronger legal anchoring of the rules for obtaining the necessary social security in Africa, as the level of public spending for this purpose is the lowest in the world. According to the International Labour Organisation, this primarily affects workers in the informal sector, migrants, refugees and other minority groups, as well as rural areas and fragile zones in general.<sup>109</sup>

This makes voluntary CSR measures on the part of companies all the more important. An advantage here is that the level of awareness of CSR has obviously increased in the course of the last ten years. However, even promoters of this concept confirm that although there are individual countries in Africa that are already implementing certain approaches, the general awareness of this is still far from being firmly anchored on the entire African continent; this is especially true with regard to a certain legal framework. CSR is seen primarily as a philanthropic concept rather than a broader business strategy.<sup>110</sup> In any case, it must be taken into account that some economic growth does not automatically create a certain number of jobs and thus bring about a corresponding reduction in poverty.

A similar position is also held, for example, by authors from Moi University in Kenya. For them, CSR is still a largely misunderstood and misused concept, both theoretically and practically. In their view, western CSR theories are not directly applicable to Africa. For example, African culture is closely linked to humanism as a way of life that is independent of status, gender, religion, ethnicity and race. The African understanding of humanism is deeper than western theoretical strands. In general, however, CSR, which is based on mutual support, is in line with African values. Without being able to present all levels of argumentation at this point, this position to a certain extent boils down to the fact that, from an African perspective, CSR should be understood as a lifestyle and not as a technocratically structured instruction of behaviour.<sup>111</sup>

In general, the African business world consists of many small local companies, a few medium-sized local companies and large foreign multinationals. The latter from western industrialised countries - and increasingly also from China and India - trigger conflicts with their business policies and promote child labour and gender discrimination.<sup>112</sup>

However, a look back at the time ten years ago will confirm that the level of awareness of CSR in Africa has increased considerably in the meantime. However, this does not apply in the same way to its concrete implementation. Undoubtedly, the great COVID wave, negative consequences of climate change as well as the multitude of conflicts on the African continent have contributed to the result of a greater awareness of CSR. However, the socio-political lines of argumentation cited above also show a deep mistrust of this CSR concept, which is seen primarily as a "Western" import.

The original assumption that CSR could contribute significantly to a reduction of social imbalances and thus to more stability in Africa in the near future must be clearly abandoned in view of the above. Rather, a longer process of adaptation is needed on the part of companies and African society. However, governments and civil society in the North American and European home countries of large corporations and stronger medium-sized enterprises should continue to exert pressure on them to consistently

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<sup>109</sup> OTI/Organisation internationale du Travail: Stratégie régionale de protection sociale en Afrique, 2021-2025, 2021.

<sup>110</sup> <https://www.afrik21.africa/en/thierry-tene-csr-in-africa-a-key-approach-to-preserving-the-environment/>, July 28, 2021; retrieved 01/04/2023.

<sup>111</sup> <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309410494-Corporate>, retrieved 03/04/2023.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.



comply with ISO 26,000 standards in African investment countries, so that they can at least provide certain impulses as pioneers.

## 4 Central perspectives of sustainable development

### 4.1 Difficult political orientation of the continent

#### 4.1.1 The Global Peace Index

The critical situation in individual African countries has been pointed out repeatedly in the course of the previous explanations. This chapter will deal with this in more detail, because without a certain political stability of the continent, a prosperous future for Africa is hardly imaginable. However, for several of the topics discussed below, the situation of the three largest countries in each of the five African regions can only be presented as examples, as they are listed in Table 4 "Patent applications" in Chapter 3.2.3. Thus, this paper will not be able to provide in-depth details on the individual selected countries, but will rather highlight fundamental fault lines with which individual countries are currently confronted and which stand in the way of sustainable development.

The political path taken by the individual African member states inevitably plays a decisive role in the future development of the continent. The primary issue here is not the extent to which the country is more capitalist or socialist according to the classical standard, but the extent to which the focus is on basic human rights and thus also on the well-being of its own population. Peacekeeping plays a central role here. Only within the framework of a peaceful society can the citizens of a country be assured decent living conditions over a longer period of time.

The Australian " Institute for Economics & Peace/IEP " has made an important contribution to the penetration of this topic with the publication of the sixteenth report of its "Global Peace Index" for the year 2022, which measures the topic of peace in a complex world on the basis of various data series. A total of eight "pillars of peace" are assessed for 163 countries of the world and a ranking is derived from this, with the following criteria:

- Well-functioning government
- Healthy business environment
- Accepting the rights of others
- Good relations with neighbours
- Free flow of information
- High level of human capital
- Low level of corruption
- Equitable distribution of resources

For each of these eight pillars, more detailed explanations are given in the report. Overall, all relevant aspects of central importance are taken into account at the level of the possible policy framework - as far as this is comprehensible. The table below shows the assessment for each of the **three largest countries** in terms of **population** in the **five regions of Africa**, whereby the lower the ranking and the score achieved, the better the result.

**Table 10 Global Peace Index 2022 - Overall Assessment, June 2022**

Country/Region Group 1	Ranking - Score
Ghana/West Africa	40 - 1,759
Botswana/Southern Africa	48 - 1,801
Namibia/Southern Africa	68 - 1,908
Angola/Central Africa	78 - 1,982



<b>Group 2</b>	
Tanzania/East Africa	86 - 2,001
Cote d'Ivoire/West Africa	108 - 2,144
Algeria/North Africa	109 - 2,146
South Africa/Southern Africa	118 - 2,283
Kenya/East Africa	120 - 2,303
Egypt/North Africa	126 - 2,342
Cameroon/Central Africa	142 - 2,709
Nigeria/West Africa	143 - 2,725
Ethiopia/East Africa	149 - 2,806
Sudan/North Africa	154 - 3,007
Congo D.R./Central Africa	158 - 3,166

Source: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-peace-index-2022>, retrieved 04/04/2023.

The total of 163 countries listed worldwide in the survey are divided into two halves, with the first group comprising 83 countries. These account for only four of the 15 most populous African countries in the table above. The remaining 11 countries - and thus around 73% - are assigned to the second half of the table of a total of 80 states, in which the countries with the worse Global Peace Index scores are listed. This means that it is precisely the important large states of the African continent that score worse in terms of the implementation of basic democratic values.

Apart from the above consideration of the selected 15 most populous countries in Africa, a total of 51 African countries are listed in the index of 163 states; of these, only 15 are African countries in the first half with the better rating (83 states), which corresponds to a rate of only 18%. In the second half of the index with 80 lower-rated states, 36 African countries are listed; this corresponds to 45%, almost half. Thus, according to this evaluation, the majority of African countries do not score positively in terms of the Global Peace Index, but rather show a considerable need for reform.

In view of the critical assessment, especially for Africa, it is helpful that the Australian research institute IEP has further broken down the above-mentioned eight "pillars of peace" into three relevant thematic focal points, each of which contains a number of individual aspects:

a) Ongoing **national and international conflicts**

- Number, duration and intensity of internal and external conflicts and number of victims
- Quality of relations with neighbouring countries

b) **Social and individual security**

- Level of perceived criminality in society
- Number of refugees and internally displaced persons as a percentage of the population
- Political instability; scale of political terror; impact of terrorism
- Number of murders per 100,000 inhabitants, level of violent crimes, violent demonstrations, number of detainees and police/security officers, access to Weapons

c) **Militarisation**

- Level of military expenditure, number of armed forces, amount of delivered or received main conventional weapons, nuclear and heavy weapons capabilities

- Financial contribution to UN peace missions

Without a doubt, this should cover the most important aspects of the topic "peace". What is also important is that the individual countries presumably strive for an equally good assessment of the three points listed, although this is not likely to happen so easily due to the different number of questions. In addition, the topic complex of "militarisation" can be seen from different perspectives. For example, it is certainly important for a country to financially support UN peace missions in the region and - depending on the regional threat situation - to equip itself appropriately militarily; nevertheless, most of the weapons can also be misused for a war of aggression. Overall, however, this data collection is a very important contribution to peace research.

The results for the three most populous countries in each of the five African regions are given below, according to a scoring system for the three themes listed above (the lowest possible score should be aimed for).

**Table 11** **Global Peace Index 2022, June 2022**

Regions and countries (number of inhabitants)	a) Ongoing national /internat. Conflicts (Score from 1,000)	b) Societal and individual Security (Score from 1,000)	c) Engagement in militarisation (Score from 1,000)
<b>1. North Africa</b>			
- Egypt (104 m)	- 2,426	- 2,503	- 2,014
- Sudan (47 m)	- 3,313	- 3,193	- 2,311
- Algeria (45 m)	- 2,068	- 2,302	- 2,041
<b>2. West Africa</b>			
- Nigeria (219 m)	- 2,806	- 3,107	- 2,059
- Ghana (34 m)	- 1,472	- 2,026	- 1,726
- Cote d'Ivoire (28 m)	- 1,694	- 2,764	- 1,724
<b>3. Central Africa</b>			
- Congo D.R. (99M)	- 3,413	- 3,747	- 1,881
- Angola (36 m)	- 1,666	- 2,413	- 1,706
- Cameroon (28 m)	- 2,967	- 3,014	- 1,877
<b>4. Southern Africa</b>			
- South Africa (61 m)	- 1,782	- 3,024	- 1,711
- Namibia (3 m)	- 1,201	- 2,569	- 1,755
- Botswana (3 m)	- 1,000	- 2,441	- 1,812
<b>5. East Africa</b>			
- Ethiopia (123 m)	- 3,457	- 2,917	- 1,809
- Tanzania (66 m)	- 1,800	- 2,443	- 1,531
- Kenya (54 m)	- 2,345	- 2,599	- 1,794

Source: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-peace-index-2022>, retrieved 04/04/2023.

A review of this detailed data overview leads to further relevant conclusions. Of all the largest countries of the five African regions listed, **Ethiopia** is the country with the most **conflicts (column a)**, which only underlines its character as a very fragile country. Just a glance at the country information provided by the German Embassy in Addis Ababa conveys the local and regional conflict regions or areas of the country that are warned against: Tigray region, parts of Afar and Amhara, Gambella region, etc. For example, the fighting with the People's Liberation Front of Tigray only ceased on 2 November 2022 and

a peace agreement was signed on 11 January. Whether this will remain stable in the long term remains to be seen.<sup>113</sup>

The second country with the next highest score for ongoing conflict is the Democratic Republic **of the Congo (DRC)**, which has been facing internal and external unrest as well as fighting for many years, especially in the east of the country. **Sudan**, which follows in terms of points, also continues to face fundamental internal conflicts on its way from military dictatorship to free elections and democracy after the secession of South Sudan. The current fighting between the military under General Burhan and the Rapid Support Forces/RSF militia under General Dagalo has already claimed several hundred lives and injured thousands; as of mid-June 2023, there is no end in sight, as all attempts at mediation have so far failed. Likewise, the new state of **South Sudan** has already suffered for more than 10 years: the president and vice-president soon fought bitterly with different factions of the "Sudan People's Liberation Movement", with an estimated 400,000 people dying. In addition, there were more than 2 million internally displaced persons or people who fled abroad. The president and vice-president have now been working together again in government for three years, and it is hoped that this peace will last until the planned elections in 2024.<sup>114</sup>

On the issue of **security (column b)**, the **DR Congo**, which already had the second worst score for conflict, is ahead with a very high score in the negative sense, followed by Sudan and Nigeria.

The last item, **militarisation (column c)**, shows **Sudan**, already mentioned twice before, as the country with the highest score. Nigeria and Algeria, the largest country in Africa in terms of area, occupy the next places.

If the respective sum of all three columns is determined, it becomes apparent that the **DR Congo** has the **worst overall result**. In view of the many and varied conflicts within the country over many years, but also with neighbouring states, this result is very understandable. In the eastern part of the country in particular, there have been armed conflicts between various militant groups for many years; the main issue here is power and control over the region's many raw materials. Blue helmet soldiers from the UN mission MONUSCO or military support from Uganda have so far not really been able to contribute to pacifying the region. Thus, in addition to the many casualties of soldiers, thousands of civilians have been killed in recent years.<sup>115</sup>

**Sudan** achieves the second worst result in the overall assessment, followed by **Ethiopia**. If one takes into account that South Sudan seceded from the original mother country and that in the case of Ethiopia this could only be avoided through a peace agreement - which may be very unstable - these two ratings also seem appropriate. Above all, serious human rights violations and war crimes are said to have been committed on both sides during the civil war in Ethiopia, which first need to be dealt with, with appropriate consequences and the introduction of fundamental reforms.<sup>116</sup> To underline the importance of the African Union/AU for Europe, the German Foreign Minister Baerbock visited the capital of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, with the headquarters of the AU in January 2023, together with her French colleague Colonna.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> info@addis.abeba.diplo.de, retrieved 07/04/2023.

<sup>114</sup> cmei: In a young country without peace, FAZ, 03/02/2023, p. 6.

<sup>115</sup> Bröll, Claudia: Anschlag auf einen Taufgottesdienst (attack on a baptismal service), FAZ, 17/01/2023, p. 6.

<sup>116</sup> Elliesen, Tillmann: Ethiopia not released from responsibility, WELT-SICHTEN, 2-2023, p. 11.

<sup>117</sup> mawy: Baerbock seeks close relations with Africa, FAZ, 14/01/2023, p. 6.

The summation of the poor results of these countries on the topics of conflicts, security and militarisation is a clear indication that a political orientation of a country that is to be viewed critically does not only have a negative effect on a limited topic area, but that it has a number of weak points that cannot be found in the same way in a democratically oriented country. It is also striking, for example, that for practically all countries, social and individual security scores significantly lower (i.e. higher) in terms of the number of points compared to the topics "conflicts" and "militarisation".

However, special mention should be made of the three countries that have been assessed as the most stable according to these three criteria. **Ghana** should be mentioned first, followed by **Botswana** and **Namibia**. The result for Ghana can generally be understood very well, even when viewed over a long period of time. Botswana, on the other hand, has the lowest possible score for "conflicts" (a); however, "militarisation" has a relatively high score, which may be due to the fact that the country is surrounded by four other states and there may be an increased need for security as a result. In the case of Namibia, it is to be hoped that the reconciliation agreement negotiated between the Namibian government and the Federal Republic of Germany regarding compensation payments for the genocide committed during the colonial period - also involving Herero and Nama groups suing at the Supreme Court - can be finally concluded as soon as possible.<sup>118</sup>

Further relevant conclusions can certainly be drawn from the above overviews, but such an evaluation should not be overestimated. In general, however, the presumed assumption is strengthened that in the case of an open or democratic orientation of a country, the content-related linkage with other thematic aspects also leads to more positive results than in the case of states that do not have these constructive elements. For example, the new president of **Zambia**, which ranks sixth among all African countries in the Global Peace Index 2022, decided in December 2022 to abolish the death penalty - as announced in the election campaign.<sup>119</sup> At the same time, however, the fighting between the government army and the Islamist Al Shabab, which controls parts of central and southern **Somalia**, **continues** unabated even after more than a decade.<sup>120</sup>

While the above remarks mainly refer to the internal political situation, the influence from abroad must also be taken into account with regard to militarisation. This applies in particular to the European countries, whereby until recently France was still very active due to its interests, if only because of the West African Franc-CFA zone. However, **Mali** and, more recently, **Burkina Faso** have already announced that in future they will no longer source their weapons from France, but mainly from Russia; the starting point in each case was the overthrow of the previous governments by the military.<sup>121</sup> In general, Mali is seen as the country of origin of the crisis in the Sahel, with the incidence of violent events in the country increasing sevenfold and the number of people killed sixfold in the last five years.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> clb: Lawsuit against agreement with Namibia, FAZ, 23/01/2023, p. 4.

<sup>119</sup> KNA: Zambia abolishes the death penalty, FAZ, 27/12/2022, p. 5.

<sup>120</sup> Cmei: Successes against Al-Shabab, FAZ, 18/01/2023, p. 5.

<sup>121</sup> Bröll, Claudia&Wiegel, Michaela: Russlands Vormarsch in Afrika (Russia's advance in Africa), FAZ, 25/01/2023, p. 5.

<sup>122</sup> Schnabel, Simone &Witt, Antonia: Friedenspolitische Kohärenz im deutschen Regierungshandeln. (Peace policy coherence in German government action). Lessons from Mali and Niger, September 2022, p. 26.

#### 4.1.2 The Ibrahim Index of African Governance

There is no doubt that the above explanations by the Australian "Institute for Economics & Peace" are very helpful with regard to the - above all political - classification of the three largest countries in each of the five African regions. In view of the central importance of this topic for the future development of Africa, a further study should be consulted to round off the discussion in order to be able to better assess the actual relevance of the previous statements. For this purpose, we will draw on studies by the **Mo Ibrahim Foundation** mentioned in Chapter 3.2.2. Since 2007, it has been examining the performance of the governments of 54 African countries by means of the "**Ibrahim Index of African Governance**". For this purpose, the study, which includes more recent values up to the year 2021, uses the following scheme, which covers **four thematic blocks**, each with **four** substantive **sub-items**, under the guideline "**Overall Governance**".<sup>123</sup>

**Table 12 a**                      **2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance, January 2023**

<b>OVERALL GOVERNANCE</b>			
<b>1. SECURITY &amp; RULE OF LAW</b>	<b>2. PARTICIPATION, RIGHTS &amp; INCLUSION</b>	<b>3. FOUNDATIONS FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY</b>	<b>4. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT</b>
Security & Safety	Participation	Public Administration	Health
Rule of Law & Justice	Rights	Business & Labour Environment	Education
Accountability & Transparency	Inclusion & Equality	Infrastructure	Social Protection & Welfare
Anti-Corruption	Women's Equality	Rural Economy	Sustainable Environment

Source: Mo Ibrahim Foundation: 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance - Index Report, January 2023.

In order to facilitate a general political assessment of the 54 African countries studied, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation compiled a summary result for all countries ("Overall Governance:2021 rank") in the form of a hierarchical list for each of the four governance areas studied (the lower the position number, the better the result of the respective country). The 10 best and 10 worst countries from this list are listed below.

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<sup>123</sup> Mo Ibrahim Foundation: 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance - Index Report, January 2023.

**Table 12 b 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance, January 2023**

Overall Governance: 2021 rank		
1 Mauritius		45 Libya
2 Seychelles		46 Congo Republic
3 Tunisia		47 Chad
4 Cabo Verde		47 Sudan
5 Botswana		49 DR Congo
6 South Africa		50 Central African Republic
7 Ghana		51 Equatorial Guinea
8 Namibia		52 Eritrea
9 Senegal		53 Somalia
10 Morocco		54 South Sudan

Source: Mo Ibrahim Foundation: 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance - Index Report, January 2023.

The overall governance rankings for the 54 African countries were then assigned to the five regions of Africa listed in Table 11, each with its most populous country, with the following result:

	Position:
- Nordafrika mit Ägypten:	27
- North Africa with Egypt:	30
- Central Africa with Congo D.R.:	49
- Southern Africa with South Africa:	6
- East Africa with Ethiopia:	32

The result shows that with **South Africa** and **Egypt**, only two of the largest countries of the total of five regions in Africa are represented in the numerical first half of the ranking of 54 states, which can inevitably be described as a weak result. However, there is a relevant number of other important but smaller countries in this first half, such as Tunisia (3rd), Ghana (7th), Namibia (8th), Senegal (9th) and Morocco (10th).

If the four governance areas listed in the table above are considered separately, the individual countries are ranked very differently. It is astonishing to note in advance that **Angola** ranks first in three of the index areas and second in the fourth. For example, Angola takes first place in the area of "Security & Rule of Law", which also includes corruption and transparency. This is surprising because Angola has a long history of extreme corruption and, although the situation has improved somewhat, the country is still ranked 116 out of 180 on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.<sup>124</sup>

**South Africa**, as one of the most important countries on the continent, is ranked very differently in the four categories. For example, it occupies a good 15th place in the category "Participation,...", but plummets to 50th place in "Human Development". A similar picture emerges for the country of **Cameroon**, which takes a very good 5th position in both "Economic Opportunity" and "Human Development", but drops to 35th place in "Security...". Like Cameroon, **Nigeria** also achieves a good 20th place in the two categories mentioned there, but slips to 50th place for "Security...". Ultimately, however, such fluctuations are quite normal for countries in the process of development, as they

<sup>124</sup> <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2022>, retrieved 12/05/2023.

inevitably still have considerable catching up to do in various thematic areas compared to other continents.

In addition to the annual data for the individual governance areas, a summary **10-year trend** (2012-2021) is also shown. According to this, there was only a marginal progress of +1.1 points to a total of 48.9 points in the overall view for Africa in the last decade in the maximum 100-point system. In detail, 35 countries were able to improve their position during this period and 19 of the 54 countries saw their position deteriorate. In a supplementary observation, however, eight "successful" coups were registered in the period 2019 to 2022.

Within the four **governance areas** listed above, there were also inevitably different positive or negative developments in the individual countries over the time axis. **Thematic block I (security and rule of law)** saw the greatest deterioration of all four thematic areas over the past decade, with its pace increasing over the past 5 years. Specifically, this meant that almost 70% of Africa's population was worse off in terms of security and democratic participation in 2021 than in 2012, due to the increased number of armed conflicts and the increased use of violence against civilians. Furthermore, the progress of anti-corruption measures has come to an end since 2017.

Also for **thematic block II (participation, rights & inclusion)**, the category with the lowest score of the four thematic blocks, the situation has even further deteriorated compared to 2012 for 60% of the population. However, one of the few bright spots emerged for the sub-theme "Equal rights for women", as there has been a significant improvement in their situation in 42 African countries; overall, a high score of 55 to 100 was achieved here in 2021.

In **thematic block III (foundations for economic opportunities)**, there has been positive development since 2012, although the pace of improvement has slowed since 2017. The central driver here was the considerable growth of the digital infrastructure in all 54 countries with the components mobile communication, internet and computers. Apart from this very positive development, however, most African countries face major challenges in terms of employment, transport and energy infrastructure. According to this study, without a secure and reliable energy supply, it will be difficult for Africa to achieve its development goals. Currently, around 600 million people have no access to electricity and even more than 950 million do not have access to clean cooking fuel.

The study considers **thematic block IV (human development)** to be the most successful, as it has achieved the greatest progress over the last decade with increasing acceleration. According to the study, by 2021 around 90% of the African population would live in a country whose development conditions had improved since 2012. These include, in order of priority, health, sustainable environment, education and social protection and welfare.<sup>125</sup>

However, in view of the consequences of climate change, the effects of the COVID pandemic and Russia's military attack on Ukraine in the last two years, a supplementary paper by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation from the beginning of 2023 sees an urgent need for action for the African countries to avoid a reversal of the progress made in recent years. Accordingly, the assessment of the 5-year trend 2017-2021 already noted a slowdown in the overall improvement of development. As of January 2023, the situation is now even seen to be deteriorating in all four thematic blocks; this concerns the areas of security, rule of law, participation, inclusion and others. Moreover, the weaknesses of the African health and education systems have been exposed, although they were praised in 2021, as mentioned in the previous paragraph. The deterioration of the security situation, a higher level of conflict, increased

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<sup>125</sup> Mo Ibrahim Foundation: 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance-Index Report, January 2023.



government violence against civilians and political unrest are seen as particularly worrying. Only in the area of economic development is the improved performance in 2019-2021 assessed as a cause for optimism. However, even here progress has come to a complete halt in the Business & Labour Environment sub-item and has almost halved in the Infrastructure sub-item. Without sustained efforts to reverse this trend, the ability to implement the global Sustainable Development Goals/SDG's and the African Union/AU Agenda 2063 is seen as severely limited.<sup>126</sup>

In summary, the supplementary document concludes that the positive development of the African continent has lost ground since 2019. Major challenges remain for most countries in the areas of employment, transport and energy infrastructure.

When looking at the overall data overviews, it is not necessarily clear to the reader how the individual African countries are classified. It is therefore also important that the authors of the "Ibrahim Index of African Governance" point out the difficulties of adequate data collection, as data gaps remain a key concern. For example, there is a lack of sufficient information on important areas such as capacities in the health sector, the situation in the rural sector as well as Africa's resilience to climate change. The cause of these gaps is likely to be the generally scarce human resource capacities among government administrations in individual African countries. The deficits in data collection apply in particular to rural areas, which continue to be at a considerable disadvantage in terms of finance and personnel in many countries. Therefore, from the point of view of the author of these lines, statements that are often presented as facts should always be viewed critically and, if necessary, fundamentally questioned, also taking into account the limitations mentioned above.

#### 4.1.3 Regional organisations in Africa

A relevant political variable in the context of a continent can be **regional alliances** that have laid down a wide variety of goals, values and rights of the people in their catchment area as the basis of their activities. An early example is the **Council of Europe**, which was founded in 1949 and now has 46 member states. It is an independent international organisation that promotes human rights, democracy and the rule of law, based on the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.<sup>127</sup>

In contrast to the Council of Europe, the **European Union/EU** (founded in 1993) is based on a common legal foundation and thus has much greater clout; it currently comprises 27 member states with almost 500 million people. Essential goals are, among others:

- Promoting peace, European values and the well-being of its citizens
- Freedom, security and the rule of law in an area without internal borders with adequate protection of the external borders...
- Creation of a single market
- Curbing social injustice and discrimination

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<sup>126</sup> Mo Ibrahim Foundation: 2022 Ibrahim Index of African Governance. 2022 IIAG: Key findings, January 2023.

<sup>127</sup> Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berlin: Member States of the European Union, 31/01/2020. Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berlin: What you should know about the Council of Europe, 14/09/2022, retrieved 14/05/2023.

Fundamental values of the EU are: Human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights.<sup>128</sup>

More than a decade after the Council of Europe, the **Organisation of African Unity (OAU)** was founded in 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, by the heads of state of 32 independent countries as the first continent-wide African institution. This was linked to the vision of a united, free and self-determined Africa, characterised by the principles of freedom, equality, justice and dignity. Above all, the understanding between the African peoples was to be improved and the economic and political cooperation between them promoted, which was expressed with the term "Pan-Africanism". One of the main goals here was also to free the continent from the remnants of colonisation and apartheid.

Similar to the founding of the EU, the creation of the **African Union/AU** in 2002 as the successor organisation to the OAU aimed at a new quality of cooperation between currently 55 African member states; the AU was also given more competences than its predecessor organisation. After decolonisation and the liberation of the continent from apartheid, there was now a desire for increased cooperation and integration of the African states. This includes above all the preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the member states. In the founding act and the protocol of amendment to the African Union, 17 central points are laid down, which, in addition to the priority Africa-specific aspects, also include the preservation of fundamental principles of democracy and "good governance" on the continent. Other essential aspects are, among others, the protection of the environment, the fight against international terrorism and the AU's involvement in humanitarian issues such as the refugee issue; in addition, there is the stronger involvement of women in decision-making processes. The establishment of the organisational structure, with all its bodies and complementary institutions, has also obviously followed international standards, thus facilitating cooperation between the AU and the EU, but also between the various UN organisations. This is especially true for the three financial institutions such as the African Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund and the African Investment Bank.<sup>129</sup>

Particularly noteworthy is the **AU's Agenda 2063**, which set the framework for Africa's long-term socio-economic and inclusive transformation from 2013 onwards. In addition to a wide range of substantive targets, it also lists 20 concrete goals for sectors and subsectors. Detailed information on their implementation status was provided in a second comprehensive continental progress report of 2/2022, which also outlines the current percentage of target achievement in each case.<sup>130</sup>

In political reality, the **AU** has certainly been able to build up a positive reputation. It is generally accepted as the central governmental regional organisation for the whole of Africa and is accordingly sought as a contact partner. This is all the more true as Africa, due to its large raw material reserves, has gained in importance in recent years not only for the former colonial countries but also for China, which sees this continent as a sales market and strategic investment area. In the meantime, Russia has also become increasingly involved on the continent, which is facilitated by the fact that it is not confronted with any colonial past in Africa.

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<sup>128</sup> Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Berlin: Member States of the European Union, 31/01/2020. [https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/principles-and-values/aims-and-values\\_en](https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/principles-and-values/aims-and-values_en), retrieved 14/05/2023.

<sup>129</sup> <https://au.int/en/au-nutshell>, retrieved 15/05/2023.

<sup>130</sup> <https://au.int/en/agenda2063>, retrieved 15/05/2023.  
<https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>, retrieved 15/05/2023.

The close relationship between the AU and the EU was also expressed at the sixth summit in Brussels in February 2022. In addition to the usual mutual assurances regarding solidarity, security, peace and sustainable development, a joint Africa-Europe investment package of 150 billion euros was announced; this is to be used to promote projects in the areas of energy, transport, digital infrastructure and other important sectors by 2030, also in support of the AU Agenda 2063. Furthermore, during his visit to the AU headquarters in Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa at the beginning of May 2023, the German Federal Chancellor Scholz also spoke out in favour of the African Union joining the group of G20 states with the world's most important economic nations. Until now, Africa has only been represented in this body by the state of South Africa, which, however, is currently viewed critically by the West due to its closeness to Russia.<sup>131</sup>

In retrospect, one could get the impression that after 60 years - starting with the OAU and ending with the AU - the African Union has undergone a slow but steadily positive process of development to become a powerful organisation in the present day, during which the institution has gained in reputation at the international level and, among other things, has also worked closely with NATO, as in the conflicts in 2005 (Sudan), 2007 (Somalia) and 2011 (Libya).<sup>132</sup>

However, this neglects the much stronger development of the 200 **intergovernmental regional organisations** in Africa. In the most recent military conflict in **Sudan**, which has not yet ended, it was primarily the **IGAD/Intergovernmental Authority on Development** that negotiated the ceasefire in April 2023 with the two parties to the conflict; the USA and the AU were also active in the background.

<sup>133</sup> IGAD had already played a similar role as the main external driver in **South Sudan** in 2013, 2015 and 2018.<sup>134</sup>

An important study by the European Council on Foreign Relations on regional initiatives in West and Central Africa comes to the conclusion that regional organisations have proliferated in Africa in recent decades, with many of them trying to address the same issues in the same parts of the continent. However, international donors have contributed to this development through their funding by not questioning the foreseeable disadvantages of their actions. By shifting from development and economic issues to the strategic aspects of "peace" and "security", regional organisations want to achieve greater international visibility, which in turn makes it easier for them to receive financial support from European states as well as the EU and the USA. However, many of these organisations do not have the necessary human, logistical and financial capacities to operate successfully in this field. These gaps remain difficult to bridge, as international support is too inconsistent to allow the African side to deal with volatile conflict situations.

Furthermore, the study states that the overlapping tasks of the different regional organisations would result in additional costs. Furthermore, there is a lack of coordination between these organisations themselves. Attempts in the past to avoid institutional overlaps or to establish only one organisation per geographical region have failed. In addition, the regional organisations themselves have different issues, be it a stronger focus on economic activities, regional integration, sectoral priorities or

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<sup>131</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-summit/2022/02/17-18/>, retrieved 16/05/2023.

<https://www.bmz.de/de/laender/afrikanische-union> (countries African Union), retrieved 16/05/2023.

<sup>132</sup> [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_8191.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_8191.htm), retrieved 16/05/2023.

<sup>133</sup> [https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/sudan-verhandlungen-waffenstillstand-usa-\(sudan-ceasefire-negotiations-usa\)1.5824254](https://www.sueddeutsche.de/politik/sudan-verhandlungen-waffenstillstand-usa-(sudan-ceasefire-negotiations-usa)1.5824254), retrieved 16/05/2023.

<sup>134</sup> Federal Agency for Civic Education: The Contribution of Regional Organisations to the Prevention and Management of Conflicts and to Peacebuilding. Case study South Sudan, 15/12/2021.

recognition or non-recognition by the AU. This completely uncoordinated construct also results in an extremely uneven distribution among the individual African countries: while the Democratic Republic of Congo has only two regional organisations, Ghana has three, Senegal four and Niger, at the end of this numerical series, even nine representations.<sup>135</sup>

This completely uncoordinated work of the regional organisations - in the West and Central Africa selected as examples by the study - contrasts with fundamental problem areas of the population: Extreme poverty, unequal wealth distribution, institutional weaknesses, limited or no governance, youth unemployment and lack of women's empowerment. These problems are compounded by long-term challenges such as rapid population growth, food crisis, climate change, irregular migration, organised crime and Islamic terrorism.<sup>136</sup> It can be added here that a large number of the points listed can also be found in the other African regions and states. In general, it must also be noted that state services in the Sahel countries concentrate primarily on the largest cities and systematically neglect the peripheral regions.<sup>137</sup>

Despite these many existing needs in the individual African countries, there is no cooperation or division of labour between the regional organisations, e.g. in the areas of peace and security, but rather competition takes place, which also causes duplication of activities and thus increased costs. This ultimately leads to increased dependence on the "donors", who, however, now increasingly prefer to directly co-finance regional projects themselves.

Another critical point is that African regional organisations are mostly oriented towards the defence of national interests and state sovereignty and therefore increasingly distance themselves from the local population during military operations and thus act more "state-centred" than "people-centred". This has led to deep mistrust and loss of credibility on the part of citizens towards the elites of their countries with the corresponding political consequences. Accordingly, the increase in the number of African regional organisations has not been able to reduce the incidence of violence, as the root causes of instability in their member states have not been addressed. In addition, there is no interest on their part to reduce the number of regional organisations, as this gives them more choice depending on their interests, which is aptly described by the term "forum shopping". This whole package of problems is compounded by the constant tensions between francophone and anglophone countries.<sup>138</sup>

In her concluding remarks, the author of the study concludes, among other critical remarks, that despite thoroughly successful regional organisations, the international partners should work on freezing their number and then gradually reducing it. In addition, it is above all important that the individual regional organisations cooperate more closely than before according to their specialisation, but that they should also forego individual activities and thus concentrate on tasks in which they have comparative advantages over other organisations.<sup>139</sup>

These conclusions are constructive and also fully welcome in terms of content. However, against the background of the general experience so far that organisations once founded, which are important for certain office holders, are very difficult to dissolve again, this strategy might not be easy to accomplish.

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<sup>135</sup> European Council on Foreign Relations (ed.): Gnanguenon, Amandine: Mapping African regional cooperation: How to navigate Africa's institutional landscape, 29/10/2020.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, p. 7ff.

<sup>137</sup> Schnabel, Simone/Witt, Antonia: op.cit., p. 27.

<sup>138</sup> European Council on Foreign Relations (ed.): Gnanguenon, Amandine: Mapping African regional cooperation, op. cit., p. 10ff., 29/10/2020.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid, p. 13ff.

In addition, a newly elected president of an African country, in view of the manifold political and above all social problems in his country, is likely to give only very low priority to the question of dissolving an organisation. In this context, it would have to be taken into account that the country could gain a material advantage from the dissolution of an organisation, but that this would certainly trigger considerable political headwind. Weighing up all these aspects, it is more likely that most of the regional organisations that are ultimately not necessary will continue to exist for many years to come.

Finally, a comment by CRP-Infotec on this very topic is reproduced: "The establishment of a coordinated, coherent organisational structure is a mammoth task. Africa would have to catch up in a very short time with what Europe...needed more than half a century for". It then goes on to say: "Nevertheless, there is no alternative if the continent does not want to completely lose touch with the rest of the world".<sup>140</sup> This last sentence, however, cannot be agreed with, as it obviously attaches too much importance to regional organisations. In the medium term, it can rather be assumed that international donors will lose interest in some of the organisations over time, so that they - without external, but presumably also reduced internal support - will no longer be able to fulfil their task and will thus have to end their activities.

A further step towards a stronger political perception of Africa in the global community could be a broadening of its presence, e.g. in the G20 countries. Asia and Latin America are each represented by three countries. In contrast, only South Africa is on the list from the African continent.<sup>141</sup> One possibility would be to include a second country, Nigeria, or the African Union/AU as a regional association.

## 4.2 Famine and refugee movements as a consequence of population growth, climate change and migration

### 4.2.1 Numerical development of the African population

The growth of the world population has been declining since 1963, when it was 2.1% p.a., and fell to 0.9% p.a. in 2021, but by then it had reached a total of around 7.9 billion people on earth.<sup>142</sup> In the previous chapter "Regional breakdown" (3.1.1), reference was already made to the total population of Africa in mid-2022 of around 1.4 billion people, as well as to the five sub-regions of the continent with their hundreds of millions of inhabitants and the densely populated major cities. Currently, the population growth rate in Africa is around 2.5% p.a., the highest of any continent in the world; in comparison, the growth rate for Latin America/Caribbean is only 0.9% p.a.<sup>143</sup>

Within Africa, the individual countries show partly considerable differences in growth rates. Below a population growth rate of 2% p.a., South Africa in particular (1.0% p.a.) is well ahead of Egypt and Algeria with 1.7% p.a. each. The highest value is shown by Niger with 3.7% p.a., followed by Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali and Uganda, each with 3.2% p.a.; even the most populous country in Africa - Nigeria - still has a growth rate of 2.4% p.a..<sup>144</sup> According to UN model calculations, the annual

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<sup>140</sup> <https://crp-infotec.de/afrika-regionale-organisationen/>, 03/08/2021.

<sup>141</sup> [https://www.g20germany.de/Wels/G20/DE/Service/LeichteSprache \(easy language\)/Mitglieder/\\_node.html](https://www.g20germany.de/Wels/G20/DE/Service/LeichteSprache(easy%20language)/Mitglieder/_node.html), retrieved 23/05/2023.

<sup>142</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.Grow>, retrieved 24/05/2023.  
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL>, retrieved 24/05/2023.

<sup>143</sup> [https://www.bib.bund.de/DE/Fakten/Fakt/W24-Bevoelkerungszahl-Wachstum-Afrika-ab \(population-growth-africa-since\) -1950.html](https://www.bib.bund.de/DE/Fakten/Fakt/W24-Bevoelkerungszahl-Wachstum-Afrika-ab(population-growth-africa-since)-1950.html), retrieved 24/05/2023.

<sup>144</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL>, retrieved 24/05/2023.

population growth in Africa would amount to 1.74% p.a. even in 2050, so that the total population should reach a value of around 2.4 billion people.<sup>145</sup>

There are undoubtedly efforts by individual African countries to reduce population growth through educational measures. However, this is opposed by a large part of the population with three arguments: Firstly, many people regard a larger number of children as a future labour force for them and, above all, as old-age insurance, hoping that at least one of their children will then have a sufficient income to be able to adequately support their parents. Secondly, the reputation - especially of the man - is enhanced if he can show a larger number of children as a sign of prosperity, which is particularly important in rural areas. For these reasons, men are often married to two or more wives, who in turn may compete with each other for the larger number of children, because in this way they can win their husband's favour. Finally, men often cite religious reasons for having so many children, as the Koran does not contain any references to limiting the number of children, e.g. by using contraceptives.<sup>146</sup>

From the point of view of the political leadership of a country, which is already facing great challenges due to the general framework conditions such as widespread poverty or possible conflicts with neighbouring states, the aspect of population growth may not be of the utmost importance, as this is a process that can only be steered in a positive direction in the long term. In addition, family planning projects always meet with opposition in the political arena as well as in society. However, in the case of high unemployment and the associated poverty, especially in rural regions, women may take the contraceptive pill in order not to have to feed more children.<sup>147</sup> In addition, some far-sighted politicians are now taking action against the unbridled population growth. President M. Bazoum of Niger, for example, decreed in 2022 that he would only accept as a minister in his cabinet someone who had no more than one wife. Generally, up to four wives are allowed in Niger, with around 30% of marriages in the country being polygamous; the number of children per wife is generally assumed to be between 6.2 and 6.9. While the population of Niger was 2.9 million in 1960, it is currently around 25 million and is estimated to reach 41 million by 2035.<sup>148</sup>

To a certain extent, this is aggravated in this context by the fact that Africa currently has the youngest population on average, but according to available calculations, this structure will undergo an ageing process relatively quickly, as a result of which the proportion of people over 60 is expected to almost double from 5% in 2017 to 9% in 2050. This will pose special challenges for the health care system, old-age pensions and the social protection system in the coming decades.<sup>149</sup> Given the large income and wealth disparities in most African societies already mentioned elsewhere, this is likely to lead to a significant increase in the corresponding potential for intra-state conflict. Long years of unemployment, living in slums, lack of access to medical care and a larger proportion of children who could only attend schools for two years may one day take their toll on the general public and especially on the elite of the respective African country. To illustrate the dimension of the challenges to be expected in Africa, it should be noted that by the middle of the century, more than half of the global population increase will

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<sup>145</sup> [https://www.bib.bund.de/DE/Fakten/Fakt/W24-Bevoelkerungszahl-Wachstum-Afrika-ab \(population-growth-africa-since\)-1950.html](https://www.bib.bund.de/DE/Fakten/Fakt/W24-Bevoelkerungszahl-Wachstum-Afrika-ab-(population-growth-africa-since)-1950.html), retrieved 24/05/2023.

<sup>146</sup> Merey, Can: Geburtenboom mit Folgen (Birth boom with consequences), in: Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 6/7 May 2023, p. 13.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/desa/world-population-projected-reach.98-billion-2050-and-112-billion-2100>, retrieved 24/05/2023.



be accounted for by this continent.<sup>150</sup> The population of Nigeria alone will rise from 213 million people in 2022 to 791 million in 2100, making it the second most populous country in the world after India.<sup>151</sup>

However, the huge megacities expected by the end of this century - such as those on the connecting route from Cote d'Ivoire through Ghana, Togo and Benin to Nigeria - could possibly reach a combined population of up to half a billion. However, the question then arises as to whether the administrative structures in place at that time will still be able to cope with the enormous administrative challenges. Experts are already criticising the fact that local urbanisation is largely taking place without planning. What will it be like decades from now when millions of poor people meet enclaves of extreme prosperity? This shows what existential challenges Africa will have to face in the future due to the interplay of various critical developments.<sup>152</sup>

#### 4.2.2 Climate change through largely external guilt

The World Meteorological Organization/WMO, like many other institutions, sees an increasing threat to the African continent from climate change. The tragedy of this development is that by mid-2022, Africa itself will have contributed only 2-3% of global greenhouse gas emissions, but with its 1.4 billion people it accounts for 17.6% of the world's population.<sup>153</sup> This means that the African continent is suffering from climate change that is disproportionately caused by the other continents, especially those of the industrialised countries such as the USA and Europe. Africa also has the lowest CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita in the world.<sup>154</sup> In general, it can be said that the trends towards rising average temperatures across Africa are due to human-induced climate change. In general, warming in Africa increased faster than the global average.<sup>155</sup> Otherwise, depending on the statistical year of comparison, 2021 was the third or fourth warmest year for Africa since records began.<sup>156</sup>

In general, the dramatic climate change is having a negative impact on the African continent in a wide range of fields:<sup>157</sup>

##### a) Increasing temperatures

In the period from 1991 to 2021, there was an average increase of +0.3° C per decade; whereas from 1961 to 1990, this value was only +0.2° C in each case. All regions of Africa reported a rise in temperature, with the greatest increase occurring in North Africa. A particular consequence is also the irreversible retreat of glaciers in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, with this occurring faster than the global average. These hydrometeorological hazards trigger the displacement of people within but also outside their borders and can lead to conflict and violence.

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<sup>150</sup> Berlin Institute for Population and Development, op. cit.

<sup>151</sup> World Bank.2023. World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees, and Societies. Washington, DC: World Bank, p. 70.

<sup>152</sup> French, Howard W.: The largest city in the world is being built here, WELT-SICHTEN, 3-2023, p. 17ff.

<sup>153</sup> Population Reference Bureau, 2022 World Population Data Sheet, [www.prb.org/worldpopdata/](http://www.prb.org/worldpopdata/), retrieved 29/05/2023.

<sup>154</sup> <https://www.iea.org/reports/africa-energy-outlook.2022/key-findings>, retrieved 01/06/2023.

<sup>155</sup> World Meteorological Organization/WMO: State of the Climate in Africa 2021, 2022, p. 9ff.

<sup>156</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1126221>, retrieved 29/05/2023.

<sup>157</sup> World Meteorological Organization/WMO: State of the Climate in Africa, op. cit.



#### b) Rising sea levels and increased coastal erosion

On the coasts of Africa, sea levels have risen by almost 4 mm/year in some areas, which is higher than the global average. A similar development is also assumed for the future, which means increased flooding of low-lying coastal cities. In addition, there is increasing salinisation of groundwater due to increased mixing with seawater. By 2030, more than 100 million people in Africa are also expected to be at risk of sea level rise.

#### c) Extreme events

A typical phenomenon is tropical cyclones such as the one that occurred in 2019 called "Idai", which caused 43,000 internal displacements, as well as cyclone "Eloise" in January 2021, which was accompanied by wind gusts of up to 160km/h. In South Sudan, extreme flooding was also recorded again in 2021, exacerbated by the stagnant water of previous years. But long-term impacts can also lead to dramatic results: For example, the surface of Lake Chad, which is bordered by Chad, Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger, has shrunk from 25,000km<sup>2</sup> in the 1960s - mainly due to greatly reduced rainfall - to only 1,350km<sup>2</sup> in the 2000s, with all the consequences for agricultural irrigation and fisheries.

#### d) Impact on food security

East Africa in particular suffered from cumulative failed rainy seasons, which led to lower food production and thus higher prices, which in turn meant acute food insecurity for millions of people. In general, the increased temperature in Africa has led to a 34% reduction in agricultural productivity since 1961, a higher figure than recorded in any other region of the world. If this trend is expected to continue with increased droughts in the future, acute food insecurity as well as malnutrition in particular are expected.

#### e) Consequences for health

Climate change also has a significant impact on public health due to rising temperatures and changes in rainfall patterns. For example, the habitats for biting insects are increasing, making the transmission of dengue fever, malaria and yellow fever even easier. The rise in temperature on the East African plateaus also creates habitats for malaria-transmitting mosquitoes, with the corresponding impact on the local population. In general, it was estimated in 2017 that 93% of the people who died from malaria worldwide are from Africa. Drinking water shortages can also be expected in the future due to higher consumption and more frequent drought and heat events.<sup>158</sup>

#### f) Economic impact

In 2021, extreme climatic situations with severe drought and fierce fires on the one hand and dramatic floods on the other inevitably had a strong impact on agricultural production and downstream activities in various regions of Africa. Algeria in particular was affected by large fires, also with numerous human casualties and the loss of large livestock; in Tunisia, there was mainly destruction of forest and arable land. This already extreme situation was exacerbated by military conflicts in various African regions with corresponding population displacement. In 2021, a total of around 14.1 million people were internally displaced in sub-Saharan Africa, of whom around 11.5 million were war-related and around 2.5 million due to natural disasters. This situation has inevitably led to considerable economic downturns in various parts of the African continent, the effects of which have been dramatic for many people. For this reason,

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<sup>158</sup> United Nations: Climate Change Is an Increasing Threat to Africa, 27 October 2020, p. 3ff.

there is an increasing demand for the expansion of social security systems in order to at least cushion such extreme situations financially for the people affected.

With regard to the general economic impacts of climate change, the International Monetary Fund/IMF assumes that negative consequences will be concentrated in regions with relatively hot climates and a disproportionately large number of low-income countries.<sup>159</sup>

**Table 13 Long-term impacts of climate change on GDP of Africa by four global temperature increase scenarios for the five sub-regions and for the whole of Africa in 2019, 10/2020**

Subregions	1. Rise of temperature 2. GDP (% change/year)			
	1° C	2° C	3° C	4° C
North Africa	-0.76	-1.63	-2.72	-4.11
West Africa	-4.46	-9.79	-15.62	-22.09
Central Africa	-1.17	-2.82	-5.53	-9.13
East Africa	-2.01	-4.51	-7.55	-11.16
Southern Africa	-1.18	-2.68	-4.40	-6.49
All Africa	-2.25	-5.01	-8.28	-12.12

Source: United Nations: Climate change is an increasing threat to Africa, 2020, p. 4: Adapted from Economic growth, development and climate change in Africa, African Climate Policy Centre/ACPC of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa/UNECA.

The overview shows how quickly the GDP of Africa as a whole will be reduced as the temperature rises. A currently quite realistic scenario of + 1° C or probably even +2° C would lead to a considerable reduction in African GDP of -2.25% or already -5.01%. An increase to +3° C, which is not completely unrealistic given the overall constellation of the African continent in terms of climate, would even result in a -8.28% lower GDP; at +4° C the figure would be -12.12%.<sup>160</sup>

Due to Africa's large spatial extent, the individual sub-regions are partly located in considerably different climatic zones. Therefore, in the most important sector of most countries - agriculture - different products are cultivated, which in turn react differently to climate change. Another important aspect is the question of the level of industrialisation, which is usually largely unaffected by climate change. This aspect is likely to be particularly relevant for the economies of North Africa and Southern Africa with the country of South Africa, as a result of which both also show the smallest declines in GDP in the above table on the various temperature increases. In any case, West Africa and East Africa are most affected, followed by Central Africa. Depending on the temperature increase, West Africa would experience a decline in GDP of -4,46% to -22,09%. As West Africa with 430 million inhabitants and East Africa with 473 million inhabitants are the largest sub-regions of the continent in terms of population, this would affect many millions of people who are already struggling to survive on a daily basis; experience shows that the income reductions and food shortages caused by climate change have the greatest negative impact on women and thus also their children, so that their mortality rate is likely to increase further.

<sup>159</sup> United Nations: Climate Change Is an Increasing Threat to Africa, 27 October 2020, p. 3ff.

<sup>160</sup> It should be critically noted that even the International Energy Agency says it is more than uncertain that the international target of a global temperature increase of only up to 1.5° can be achieved. <https://www.iea.org/reports/africa-energy-outlook-2022/key-findings>, retrieved 01/06/2023.

Estimates by the African Union Commission/AUC suggest that up to 118 million extremely poor people on the continent will suffer from drought, floods and intense heat in 2030.<sup>161</sup>

#### g) Climate protection

In addition to the many measures that need to be taken, many of which have already been mentioned, the technical installation of early warning systems against dangerous situations such as extreme weather and the effects of climate change plays a special role in this context. So far, only 40% of the African population is reached by this.<sup>162</sup> Accordingly, there is an urgent need for action in this area to save human lives, but also to reduce material damage and the corresponding loss of assets.

The deforestation of precious rainforests is a central problem in practically all relevant countries, although there are very different situations. On the one hand, the local administration is unable to bring this practice under control due to a lack of personnel capacities or given corruption; on the other hand, there are now serious efforts in various states to reforest affected areas; however, internal conflicts and wars with neighbours repeatedly put the brakes on these activities.

Therefore, in conclusion, at least a brief mention should be made of the much-cited "**Great Green Wall**", which is to extend 15 km wide and almost 7,800 km long from Djibouti to Senegal. The intention is to prevent the advance of deserts into the south. The intention is not merely to plant trees, but to achieve a natural regeneration of land originally used for agriculture. Launched in 2007 by the African Union/AU, US\$ 8 billion have been raised or announced so far. This initiative of 22 African countries aims to restore 100 million ha of degraded land. Initial measures have been implemented in Senegal, Nigeria and Niger, among others; according to the UN, however, only 15% of the plan has been realised so far. In view of the enormous dimension of such a programme, but above all the difficult political situation of the partner countries such as Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, it is difficult to imagine that under the leadership of the AU it will actually be possible to realise this huge programme by 2030 as planned.<sup>163</sup>

The foregoing has shown that the phenomenon of climate change is of central importance for Africa and will have serious consequences for the continent. What is dramatic is that the causes of this development are essentially global and can only be directly influenced by Africa to a limited extent. This results in a clear dependency in the global context, where Africa has not had a particularly perceived voice so far. Apart from the available raw materials, which are very important for many countries in the world, there is currently greater interest in Africa due to the increased presence of China and, at present, Russia in particular, which is making intensive efforts to find additional partners at its side due to the war of aggression on Ukraine. With regard to the dramatic climate impacts in Africa, however, such more intensive international contacts are of little help in remedying the problem areas mentioned above. Here, Africa is dependent on the global world as a whole and its future behaviour with regard to a reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, whereby certain positive regional effects can undoubtedly also be achieved through the protection of its own tropical forests and corresponding reforestation.

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<sup>161</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/2021/10/1103362>, retrieved 01/06/2023.

<sup>162</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/09/1126221>, retrieved 30/05/2023.

<sup>163</sup> <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/great-green-wall>; retrieved 01/06/2023.  
[https://www.dw.com/de/die-große-grüne-mauer-wie-steht-es-um-afrikas-vorzeigeprojekt-\(the-great-green-wall-how-is-africa's-flagship-project-doing\)/a-52970906](https://www.dw.com/de/die-große-grüne-mauer-wie-steht-es-um-afrikas-vorzeigeprojekt-(the-great-green-wall-how-is-africa's-flagship-project-doing)/a-52970906), retrieved 01/06/2023.  
<https://www.unccd.int/our-work/ggwi>, retrieved 01/06/2023.

### 4.2.3 Migration as a last resort

There are many different facets to the topic of migration. This chapter will focus on the forced departure from the previous place of residence for various reasons. In contrast to this, there are a large number of very well-trained specialists, especially in the medical field, who emigrate from the "southern countries" to the industrialised countries for better pay, to study medicine in greater depth or due to an otherwise impossible expansion of their specialist knowledge. According to the World Bank's "World Development Report 2023", to which greater reference is made below, their number amounted to 25,000 doctors in 2018, almost a quarter of all medical professionals trained in sub-Saharan Africa. <sup>164</sup>

In general, it is obvious that in a dramatic situation in their home country, the first thing people think of is trying to bridge a certain period of time in another region, preferably not too far away. The next step would be to move to a state bordering their own country or - if personal contacts even exist - to emigrate to another African country further away. The intention to leave for one of the industrialised countries inevitably means a much more fundamental decision and a greater amount of preparation, especially if this is to be done with a large family. There is also the risk of being refused entry. The option of attempting an illegal entry of a single family member and the subsequent reunification of the others is likely to require even considerably more preparatory time and also financial resources due to the high risk involved. <sup>165</sup>

It can also be assumed that in the cases mentioned above, migration is usually the last resort out of a depressing situation, because apart from leaving home, there is the risk of possibly not seeing other family members or friends again for many years or even never. High personal risks exist for people who try to enter Europe, for example, through irregular channels by means of the smuggling industry. Since 2014, almost 50,000 people have died in this way. <sup>166</sup>

The causes of migration are manifold. In Africa in particular, climate change is one of the top reasons, followed by civil wars or wars with neighbouring states, individual political persecution by the state or certain political groups. Religious conflicts with Islamists such as the Al Shabab militia have also become a permanent challenge, as they intend to establish their own state in Somalia, for example. <sup>167</sup> Due to a high number of unemployed and thus greater competition, or for other reasons, the loss of one's own job can occur and be the reason to look for a new job in a nearby or distant foreign country. In this case, the extent to which one's own knowledge and skills correspond to the demand profile of the target country is decisive for real success. If this is not the case and there is no refugee status, extremely difficult living conditions can arise for these people; this applies in particular to women and children, who often have to fight their way through alone in such cases.

The scale of current global **migration** is only revealed by the total of 184 million people (including 37 million refugees), or 2.3% of the world's population, living outside the country of their nationality, almost half of whom are in low- and middle-income countries. Yet, in 2020, over 84% of migrants lived in a country that was wealthier than their own. <sup>168</sup> Thus, poor living conditions due to too low monetary incomes, mostly caused by lack of agricultural yields and thus accompanied by hunger and malnutrition,

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<sup>164</sup> World Bank.2023. World Development Report 2023, op. cit. p. 138.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid, p. 12.

<sup>167</sup> cmei: Islamists in Somalia attack peacekeeping force, FAZ, 05/06/2023, p. 4.

<sup>168</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2023>, retrieved 03/06/2023.

are obviously the decisive motivation for so-called "economic" migration. The number of forcibly displaced people worldwide was 103 million in mid-2022 and the number of refugees 32.5 million.<sup>169</sup>

One of the main drivers of this situation is global climate change. Accordingly, over 40% of the world's population, i.e. 3.5 billion people, live in places that are highly exposed to the dramatic consequences of this climate change. In the future, however, Africa will be most affected. It is expected that up to 86 million people will migrate within their own borders in 2050. There are also large areas whose future habitability is fundamentally in question, such as the Sahel region.<sup>170</sup> In the Lake Victoria basin, it is estimated that 38.5 million people and in West Africa 32 million will have to change their location if appropriate countermeasures are not taken in time.<sup>171</sup> A particularly critical point here is the already existing food shortage in sub-Saharan Africa, which affected an estimated 140 million people in 2022 and whose number is likely to increase further due to climate change.<sup>172</sup>

**Refugee movements**, which are usually based on forced displacement, are often sudden and rapid; in this case, the affected persons usually concentrate in the nearest safe area, which, however, usually has only a limited number of possible host countries. Moreover, these refugee groups usually include a large number of vulnerable people, with children accounting for approximately 41%.<sup>173</sup> In cases where people have fled their country due to well-founded fear of persecution, conflict or violence, or are at risk of doing so if they return, they are entitled to international protection in accordance with the 1951 International Refugee Convention. According to this, they cannot be sent back to their country of origin, regardless of the amount of accommodation costs incurred. This also applies to those migrants who face particular challenges such as certain women and children (especially girls), LGBTQ+ persons, and victims of racism, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination.<sup>174</sup>

Within Africa - as everywhere else in the world - there are considerable differences in the way migrants and refugees are received. In South Africa, people of different ethnic origin may experience a certain degree of xenophobia. Accordingly, there have been attacks on this group of people in urban and informal settlements by marginalised South Africans who see themselves competing with migrants for jobs and thus a better quality of life. There have also been such violent xenophobic attacks in Somalia and Zimbabwe.<sup>175</sup>

A total of around 8 million internally displaced persons are assumed for sub-Saharan Africa; of these, around 2.4 million people originate from South Sudan alone, although the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan are equally important in this context. More than half of all refugees are accommodated in only 10 countries that lie on the border of the countries of origin. As of mid-2022, over 99% of refugees from South Sudan were in neighbouring countries such as Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan.<sup>176</sup>

But there are other examples such as Uganda, which was one of the first countries to integrate refugees into their National Development Plan - such as the one for 2021-25. This involves government ministries,

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<sup>169</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>, retrieved 05/06/2023.

<sup>170</sup> World Bank.2023. World Development Report 2023, op. cit. p. 2.

<sup>171</sup> The World Bank: Climate change could further impact Africa's recovery, pushing 86 million Africans to migrate within their own countries by 2050, Washington, 27/10/2021.

<sup>172</sup> The World Bank. Africa's Pulse: An analysis of issues shaping Africa's economic future, 10/2022.

<sup>173</sup> World Bank.2023. World Development Report 2023, op. cit. p. 4.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid, p.198.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid, pp. 49, 54.

<https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>, retrieved 05/06/2023.

departments and agencies in a comprehensive approach to develop district-level solutions for both refugees and the local population. This goes as far as giving refugees with experience in agriculture a piece of arable land to work in coordination with the host community. In this way, the community also benefits from the use of public funds and the refugees become independent of external help.

The country of Ethiopia has also taken similar positive initiatives for refugees by giving them equal access to the public education system from 2020. For this purpose, teaching permits were also granted to refugee teachers. In addition, 1,500 refugees were able to enrol in the country's public universities. As positive as these examples are, they inevitably only reach a small proportion of the refugees in the respective countries. What is ultimately much more important, however, is the positive message to the respective country's own population by signalling that the local government is trying to integrate this group of people more strongly and, to some extent, on an equal footing in the country's social life.

However, it is not always possible to win refugees and countries of origin over to joint concepts. In 2021, for example, the Gambia refused to allow around 2,000 of its own citizens, who did not have legal residence status in Germany but had been prepared for return through training, to re-enter the country in view of the potential social consequences for their own country. In addition, however, Gambian migrants preferred to remain in Germany despite their insecure status.<sup>177</sup> From their perspective, this is quite understandable, as they know that they will at least be guaranteed shelter and food in Germany and continue to have hope that they will eventually receive an official residence permit. On the other hand, this will also strengthen the efforts of European countries to take appropriate measures in advance to avoid similar situations in the future.

In general, it must be taken into account that completely uncoordinated immigration can often cause domestic political difficulties for a receiving state - especially over a longer period of time - if a certain order of magnitude of the number of people arriving is exceeded. This is shown by the current discussions in Europe and other countries, where different strands of argument are currently coming together. What is decisive in this context, however, is that the fundamental human rights conventions of the UN and the EU are upheld in any case. For a receiving country, it is usually a matter of first helping those persons who had to flee from conflict areas or for political, ethnic and similar reasons, because life and limb were directly threatened. However, there will always be a certain grey area with exceptions, where, for example, the professional skills of a person play a role. If they have gained their training and practical experience in a field for which there is an urgent need in the potential host country, the chances of obtaining a right to stay are likely to increase considerably. This is likely to be the case even if the person comes to the country of choice only of his or her own volition, as a voluntary migrant, so to speak, and cannot invoke a possible threat in the country of origin.

The fundamental question, however, is how the migration of qualified workers, e.g. to Europe, should be evaluated, especially from the perspective of the country of origin. In the World Development Report 2023, which has been cited repeatedly, the authors try to argue this situation into a win-win outcome. In addition to the positive effects for the country of immigration, they generally assume that in the case of well-managed migration by the country of origin, the subsequent transfer funds can contribute to poverty reduction and development in the country of origin. Thus, remittances from migrants abroad would provide a stable source of finance for families in the country of origin to support, for example, children's education, health care, housing and future family entrepreneurship. In addition, migrants

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<sup>177</sup> World Bank.2023. World Development Report 2023, op. cit., p. 290f.



could transfer new ideas, knowledge and technologies to their country of origin. It is important that the two groups of countries work closely together.<sup>178</sup>

Certainly, given the large number of countries of origin, there are situations where this approach can be successfully implemented. However, also with regard to the very difficult situation of many countries in Africa, it is known from direct conversations and reports that many of the state agencies are not in a position in terms of personnel to establish and supervise such contacts; moreover, many migrants - in view of the high cost of living in the new country outside Africa - often only have smaller financial means left over that can be transferred to the home country. Thus, the original hopes are often not fulfilled to the extent expected.

In the case of highly qualified workers who emigrate to an industrialised country ("brain drain"), possible transfer amounts are likely to be much larger; whether this is actually sufficient to compensate for the many years of training costs and the later theoretically possible added value in the home country seems at least questionable. In addition, these professionally competent people often leave a large gap in their country of origin. Similar fears exist in Ghana and especially Kenya, where there are many start-up centres with highly qualified young people, but who are also unable to create a sufficient number of jobs. However, if there were to be a mass exodus of these qualified young people, this would have serious negative consequences for the country's economy.<sup>179</sup>

The situation is different if, as mentioned in 3.2.2 "Outstanding examples of local enterprises", the qualified workers return to their home country after years abroad equipped with a certain capital stock and set up new enterprises. This could possibly create many jobs and trigger corresponding tax payments to the state. However, experience shows that such an ethically justified and, above all, successful return will only occur in a limited number.

For the reasons mentioned above, the government of Zimbabwe intends to enact legislation against the brain drain in the health sector, as around 4,000 workers have migrated to other African countries and the UK since the beginning of 2021, despite severe staff shortages. The reason for this was the low salaries and the lack of medicines and medical equipment. However, by hiring the professionals from Zimbabwe, the other countries have violated a WHO code of conduct from 2010, which is, however, not binding.<sup>180</sup>

The example given from the health sector shows very well how hard the international distribution struggles are fought, be it material or human resources. Here, the three states of Botswana, Namibia and South Africa, to which medical professionals have migrated, are direct neighbours of the aforementioned Zimbabwe - and yet it was obviously not possible to agree on a fair settlement of the issue.

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<sup>178</sup> World Bank.2023. World Development Report 2023, op. cit., p. 9f.

<sup>179</sup> Bröll, Claudia: Betriebswirtin, jung und motiviert, sucht Job (business economist, young and motivated, looking for a job), FAZ, 13/06/2023, p. 6.

<sup>180</sup> Erbe, Barbara/Stoffner, Julia: How can Zimbabwe keep its health forces? in: World Views, 3-2023, p. 36f.



## 5 Consequences for a future Africa

The assessment of an entire continent with regard to its future development is a special challenge, as this can also be seen as presumption in a certain sense, after all, we are talking about 1.4 billion people in the most diverse regions of the continent with very individual living situations. Without the author's decades of involvement with Africa as a whole, this would probably not be even remotely justifiable; an advantage here, however, was also the wide range of in-depth contacts on the ground. All this information and experience, however, does not necessarily lead to a realistic and independent assessment of the situation in Africa. Therefore, it was important to the author to be able to support the central statements with concrete facts as far as possible. The assessment of whether the available data from all sources have been collected correctly and how they are to be interpreted and weighted in terms of their significance in often quite multipolar target systems is thus one of the central challenges of this publication.

For an African continent striving for independence, the process of **decolonisation** was inevitably of central importance. However, it was only after the end of the Second World War that a special dynamic developed for this objective; it reached its conclusion when the former Italian colony of Eritrea also gained its final independence in 1992. In the case of South Africa, this process took even longer in purely formal terms, as the country only received a majority government in 1994 after free democratic elections and was thus definitively decolonised.<sup>181</sup>

In the case of South Africa, this development took place barely thirty years ago, so that the inner connection to this liberation struggle still seems very real for the majority of the population and is likely to have a deeper inner connection. If the period of decolonisation during the 1960s and earlier is also taken into account, the result is a total of almost 40 countries, i.e. the majority of states in Africa, which have now gained their freedom for around 50 years. At the same time, however, this means that the majority of African citizens today - namely the younger and middle generations - have not personally experienced this situation. Nevertheless, it is understandable that many politicians and artists continue to deal with this theme of decolonisation, which is so important for the continent. In addition to this fundamentally positive fact, however, a whole series of wars and conflicts are taking place between or within African countries, which, apart from the great suffering of the population, are also slowing down any further progress in development. In addition, there are various countries where at least the legitimacy of the last elections is in doubt, which in turn causes mistrust and slows down the further development of the respective state.

In view of the current difficult political situation in countries such as Burkina Faso, DR Congo, Cote D'Ivoire, Mali, Sudan, but also Ethiopia, the priority concern of politics and civil society in Africa should be to agree in an intensive but constructive dialogue with the various social currents on fundamental elements of a form of government that allows people of different origins and traditions to live together peacefully. This could form the basis for adequate living conditions for as many parts of the population as possible, although this goal could inevitably only be achieved through a multi-layered process and over a longer period of time.

For this to happen, however, a general consensus would have to be reached that all those involved - as in many other countries of the world - accept that the borders and language areas that were changed in

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<sup>181</sup> Mabe, Jacob E. (ed.): Das Afrika. Ein Kontinent in 1 000 Stichwörtern (The Africa. A continent in 1,000 keywords), op.cit., p. 148f.

the past - often by force - will not be called into question again. It is thus necessary to maintain the framework conditions that have existed for several decades in the meantime - binding for all - in order to achieve the necessary stability for a future-oriented development in these countries.

This **consensus-oriented approach** to Africa's political and social situation must be placed on a broad common basis - even without the background of colonialism. Accordingly, as a signal of departure, concepts should be developed, for example for large cities with a particularly high number of inhabitants, to steer the often existing chaos of inner-city traffic with its enormous environmental pollution and the enormous loss of time for all involved into more orderly channels; this could contribute to promoting a humane coexistence of the respective society. However, this still requires a whole range of other improvements, such as the targeted creation of jobs or the rehabilitation of slum areas without displacing the people living there. For these urgently needed tasks, there is still plenty of room for responsible action by the respective city governments in most major cities in Africa. But equally, the neglect of rural areas must be stopped in order to better utilise their potential for the benefit of the entire population and also to at least reduce the existing rural exodus.

At the same time, in some countries, such as Kenya, **IT technology** is already well advanced, while in other countries there is still a great need for action. However, this area of activity should not form an isolated sphere of action for specialists, but must be based on a growing number of business enterprises that are able to use this technology in a targeted way to further develop their business activities. In the field of small-scale trade and also in the private lives of many people, considerable progress has already been made in this area in individual African countries. Now it is important to use this technology in a broader approach for the creation of new jobs or the modernisation of existing ones.

Africa's fundamental advantage over most other continents is the abundance of its **natural resources**. However, climate change has already had a strong negative impact, e.g. on the availability of the elementary resource "water". In the future, this will be more a matter of managing a scarce resource. If it is not possible to implement a more targeted control of water use in the individual countries of the African continent, the growing consumption on the one hand and the lower precipitation on the other may lead to a shortage situation and thus to increased domestic migration movements. In view of the previous deficits of the state administrations and due to the various internal conflicts, the future development in dealing with the available water must be viewed very critically. This is also likely to have a direct negative impact on the agricultural sector, but also on the important fisheries. Moreover, it must be remembered that the agricultural sector is of central importance for the continent, as it employs two thirds of the working population.

**Forest management** must be viewed in a similarly critical light. There is no doubt that individual states are making efforts to conserve forests - although often only temporarily, depending on the government. However, corruption and - as in the DR Congo - a lack of government control over certain forest areas are likely to cause the currently available areas to decrease further, partly due to illegal logging. Thus, the initiative of the 7,800 km long "Green Wall" across Africa, which was announced in 2007 and provides for afforestation and the restoration of currently infertile land, must be classified as little successful so far. If its general concept is to be questioned, it is evident that only 15% of the target for the year 2030 have been implemented so far.

Africa's real wealth lies underground with its **mineral resources** such as oil and a wide variety of minerals. Actually, these deposits could be the basis for a reasonable prosperity of the continent. However, as already described above, they are the starting point for recurrent massive corruption and enrichment, the use of violence and the causing of environmental damage. Certainly, they also currently

provide many jobs at the most diverse levels for the population, but the theoretically given potential for prosperity for the various states is not being used in an appropriate manner. It is precisely here that Africa's systemic weaknesses are particularly evident, whereby presumably only the diamond sector is in a better position due to regulations that have been implemented in the meantime. Even if Africa has considerable resources of mineral resources, their volume will visibly decrease over time due to their exploitation for international marketing, but also due to growing domestic consumption. Due to the political situation in many African countries, there is little hope that in the foreseeable future a growing share of the revenue streams will be used responsibly for future-oriented investments and for improving the living conditions of the population at large. However, this should be a central field of action for the rulers of the individual regions of Africa.

Based on these considerations, Africa's **economic growth rates** were analysed in more detail. Only the two countries Ethiopia and Cote d'Ivoire showed a considerable increase for the period 2010 - 2020, while the other countries had to show higher declines for various reasons. At the same time, the base values of GNP in Africa are still very low, which should actually facilitate a percentage increase. One of the main reasons for the low growth is probably that intra-African trade is still the lowest by far compared to the rest of the world's continents. The causes are both the external and internal conflicts of various countries; in addition, there are the great weaknesses of local governments and administrations. These factors are also likely to be one of the triggers for the low level of foreign direct investment, which is much lower even compared to Latin America. It remains to be seen whether the Pan-African Free Trade Area, which has been established in 2022 after many years of negotiations, will be able to generate significant impulses. All in all, only Africa's raw materials, whose long-term declining importance has already been pointed out above, must continue to be seen as a possible growth driver. Thus, in terms of the economic development of the continent, no immediately positive perspective can be seen in the sum of the African countries that could lead to at least a considerable improvement in the living conditions of the population.

Quite the opposite of these expectations, Africa is being overwhelmed by a flood of old clothes from Europe, most of which cannot find a second buyer and are then disposed of in an environmentally unfriendly way. In this way, any traditional clothing production in Africa is also brought to a standstill. More long-term potential is usually shown by companies in the supply industry in the car sector, through which many jobs with the corresponding income have been created in South Africa, for example. However, there is strong international competition in this sector, which is likely to increase considerably in the future due to Chinese production.

What is really positive are **start-ups** by Africans who have lived abroad for a longer period of time and have been able to gain experience there, which they are now creatively applying to new enterprises. The aforementioned Ibrahim Abouleish and Mo Ibrahim are particularly outstanding examples of this in the agriculture and mobile banking sectors; however, similar start-ups with a corresponding broad impact have become rarer at the moment. This is especially true in the IT sector, where there are also a large number of creative people in Africa, who, however, after implementing many concepts, obviously do not see much innovation potential in this sector for Africa anymore and return to the USA, for example, or migrate there.

The further expansion of **wind and solar energy**, for which Africa has good prerequisites, has been the focus of larger national and international companies for years, so that there will certainly be a considerable number of new jobs here, but these alone will probably not be enough for the upcoming generation.

In the long term, the **digital sector** could undoubtedly be a major job creator. The question is how much employment potential it really brings with it, because the current unemployment rate in Africa is still well above the level of, for example, December 2008. With this knowledge in mind, migration to the USA, Europe or Asia will remain an obvious option for very qualified Africans. This is unlikely to change, at least over the course of the next decade, with even the current huge investments by Google, Amazon and Microsoft in the modern technology sector, as they are competing with other national and international technology companies with too little focus on the interests of local society.

**The granting of patents** in Africa was also examined more closely in order to assess the risk of migration, as they have a significant informative value with regard to the future economic potential of a continent and its individual countries. However, a comparison of the years 2010 and 2020 shows a considerable decline in the number of patents approved in Africa during this period, whereas there were considerable increases in Latin America and Asia - but also worldwide. Similarly, the other factors, such as the share of local applicants, the share of patents granted worldwide and the growth rate of patent approvals, showed that Africa was at the bottom of the list. Within Africa, on the other hand, there were considerable differences between the individual countries in terms of patent applications and applications filed by local companies/individuals. South Africa leads by a wide margin in the total number of patents granted, although in terms of local applicants, Egypt is first and Nigeria in third place, followed relatively closely by Kenya.

Universities and colleges play a central role in the **education** of future potential **applicants for patents**, because the majority of their graduates will inevitably later work in companies or a state administration. However, it is generally important to know how much importance is attached to freedom of research and teaching as well as academic exchange - and thus the promotion of creativity - at these educational institutions. A corresponding assessment is made by the **Academic Freedom Index/AFI**. According to this index, a decline in academic freedom has been observed worldwide over the last ten years. For North Africa in particular, there has been a sharp decline, but for sub-Saharan Africa the picture has been stable. Without a doubt, the political situation of a country plays a very important role in this context, because it is responsible for whether a free spirit of creativity has sufficient development potential in the respective country. However, currently in Africa, at least unstable situations or even considerable political changes with a partly negative tendency can be observed in important countries. This applies, for example, to Senegal and, to a certain extent, to Nigeria, which, however, are currently still ranked at the second best level of the index. In general, therefore, patent development in Africa still has a long and arduous road ahead of it in comparison to its international competitors, in order to be able to take up a position commensurate with the size and importance of the continent.

After the economic and technological aspects, the main focus for a continent in the process of development is on redressing **social imbalances** in a broad sense. The term **modern slavery** is understood to mean, on the one hand, forced labour, from which almost 4 million people in Africa suffer. Forced marriage affects well over 3 million people, especially women and girls. The depressing thing here is that numerous African governments tolerate this fact and in some cases impose forced labour themselves. Countries such as Eritrea, Burundi and the Central African Republic are worth mentioning here, but also large states such as Nigeria and the DR Congo. Reform efforts are being made mainly by Tunisia and Cote d'Ivoire; however, only limited resources are available for such initiatives and ongoing internal political conflicts in a number of states are slowing down these activities. The unsatisfactory conclusion is that no progress is likely to be made in this area, at least in the short term.

A similar picture emerges with regard to **corruption**. In Transparency International's "Corruption Perceptions Index", only 13 African countries are in the group with the more positive assessments, but

most of them only have a small population, such as the Seychelles. In the generally weaker second group of 40 African countries, these are mainly large and, above all, resource-rich countries such as Nigeria, which only achieved a very poor ranking. The fact that the fight against corruption is not successful in very many states, or has even been abandoned to a certain extent, is shown by the fact that this behaviour also spills over into public institutions such as schools and hospitals, with salaried teachers and doctors taking up private and better-paid activities in their professional fields practically in parallel. In this way, society's trust in public institutions declines and often conforms in its behaviour to the example set. The rapidly turning wheel of corruption in Africa - despite all the efforts of upright people - is thus difficult to slow down, let alone bring to a standstill.

The **introduction of the Corporate Social Responsibility/CSR concept** among companies in Africa must be regarded as a similarly lengthy process, although more than 40% of the countries have already adopted the ISO 26000 standards or are in the process of doing so.<sup>182</sup> However, a certain reluctance to do so can be felt - especially from the university environment. The main argument is that the basic values of CSR have been known in Africa for a long time, but that they have to be implemented in a differentiated way. On the other hand, general reservations are expressed about multilateral corporations, which are ultimately primarily concerned with increasing their net income and less with the implementation of concrete accompanying social measures. Taking these critical arguments into account, it is likely that a considerable amount of time will pass before ISO 26,000 has a concrete positive impact on the reduction of social imbalances in Africa.

In general, it can be assumed that the **political stability of the African continent** is inconceivable without at least the hope of a prosperous future. It is therefore very helpful that the Australian "Institute for Economics and Peace/IEP" has investigated this topic and created a global peace index. As a result, however, the African continent comes off unsatisfactorily, as only 15 African countries (corresponding to 15% of the total) are found in the better group of the ranking; in the lower-ranked group, however, there are 36 African countries, which, at 45%, make up almost half of all the countries included in the index worldwide. In the overall ranking of the three aspects of conflict, security and militarisation examined, Ghana, Botswana and Namibia scored best among the African states, which is not surprising given their already long-term performance. The **DR Congo** received the worst scores, followed by **Sudan** and **Ethiopia**. Overall, however, the index for the future of the continent of Africa shows the serious **weaknesses in political performance that have** existed for many years now and that this will probably not change in a positive sense in the next decade - also to the chagrin of the continent's own population.

The "Ibrahim Index of African Governance" compiled by the **Mo Ibrahim Foundation/MIF** broadly confirms this impression, but also introduces additional new aspects or deepens others. For example, 54 African states are assigned to a ranking after the analysis of four thematic blocks, which shows that of the larger countries, only South Africa and Egypt are represented in the first block of 27 states to be rated more positively. Although this group also includes smaller states such as Tunisia, Ghana or Namibia, the overall critical picture of governance on the African continent is once again clearly underlined. The only bright spot was that the position of women in 42 African countries has obviously improved considerably.

In Africa's economic and political context, **regional organisations** with a wide variety of tasks also play a special role. In the beginning, these were mainly focused on the domestic market, but now they are increasingly trying to take on a function in cross-border crisis situations. In this way, they hope to

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<sup>182</sup> Note: As of 17/03/2021, 18 countries in Africa had adopted the standards and 5 countries were still in the review process, <https://iso26000.info/all-countries>, retrieved 17/03/2023.



establish contacts with international organisations in order to obtain as well financial resources from abroad. The starting points for this are national disasters or military conflicts within a country or across its borders. However, the number of regional organisations is currently disproportionately high, resulting in overlapping tasks. Presumably, an appropriate reduction of these organisations could only be achieved through a shortage of funding commitments from international partners.

In the international context, however, the **African Union/AU** has the main function of coordinating intergovernmental contacts, since it itself corresponds to a large extent to the task profile of the European Union/EU. After a longer start-up phase, the AU is now also perceived more strongly internationally. In addition, the Western industrialised countries are currently trying to prevent China and Russia from further expanding their position in Africa. Accordingly, in February 2022, the EU announced a joint investment package of €150 billion with the AU to finance projects from the AU agenda. Through these strengthened contacts with important international partners, Africa may also have the possibility of the AU or another important country such as Nigeria being admitted to the G20 as a second African organisation or national country alongside South Africa. The chances of this happening are not bad at present.

Africa's greatest challenge for the coming years will be the continuing **population growth**, which currently peaks at 2.5% p.a. worldwide. There is a considerable range here, e.g. 1.0% p.a. for South Africa and 3.7% p.a. for Niger, with 6.2 to 6.9 children per woman assumed for the latter country. The reasons for this situation are manifold, but to a very large extent they are related to traditional values, which obviously cannot be changed in the short term. It is assumed that even in 2050 the population in Africa will increase by 1.74% p.a. and the total population could then amount to about 2.4 billion people. In view of the continent's many existing problems, this situation could lead to hardly controllable developments and corresponding conflicts with dramatic consequences.

But future **climate change** will also have a serious impact on the African continent. In mid-2022, the greenhouse gas emissions caused by Africa amounted to only 2-3% of global emissions, while the continent's share of the world population is almost 18%. Africa also has the lowest CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita of all continents. However, the consequences of the foreseeable climate change are dramatic for Africa: a rise in sea levels on the coasts of up to 4 mm/p.a., an increase in extreme cyclones, reduced food production due to the loss of rainy seasons, as well as negative effects on the health of the population due to the increased spread of infecting insects. In addition, there are many critical consequences for the economy, especially the agricultural sector. In general, a temperature increase of 2°C would result in a 5% reduction in GDP for Africa as a whole, and at 3°C even 8%, combined with dramatic losses for the poorer population in particular, especially for women and children. A solution to this problem for Africa could only be found through a considerable reduction in global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, although the implementation of corresponding strategies is currently still the subject of fierce debate. However, certain positive regional effects could also be achieved in Africa through the conservation of its own tropical forests and corresponding reforestation.

As repeatedly stated above, living conditions in Africa are very difficult for the majority of the population, so it might be obvious for many to think of **emigration/migration**. In addition, besides climate change as a cause, many people are directly or indirectly forced to leave their country for a stay in neighbouring countries, other African countries or abroad because of extremely difficult political conditions, civil wars or military conflicts with neighbouring countries. Many people also try to get abroad unofficially for various reasons - possibly via so-called traffickers. In the latter case, a considerable amount of money is usually needed to flee, coupled with the willingness to take a high risk for one's own life and possibly that of one's family. In the last decade, tens of thousands of people have died in this way.

If, in conclusion, the substantive guideline of the chapter "**Difficult political orientation of the continent**" is taken up again, it must be concluded that the consequences of climate change, the effects of the COVID pandemic and the Russian war of aggression on Ukraine have undoubtedly contributed greatly to the current largely negative political and economic development in Africa. At the same time, however, the above analyses show that there are considerable structural deficits on the African continent in many important economic and socially relevant areas, which are also partly caused by injustices in world trade, but which are probably to be sought first and foremost in the shortcomings of the politicians of the respective African country.

However, Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine triggered an increasingly strong shift in foreign policy weights in Africa. Moscow is trying to compensate for its international isolation through intensive efforts to establish new or strengthened partnerships, especially in Africa. In addition to the visit of Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov to South Africa, the small kingdom of Eswatini, Angola, Eritrea as well as Mali in January/February 2023, the joint naval exercise of Russia, China and South Africa (off the latter's coast) that followed in February had attracted particular international attention.<sup>183</sup> If this trend were to continue, it would have political consequences and possibly also alter trade and financial flows for at least a number of African states in the medium term.

It will also be crucial for Africa's future that fair conditions are established for international trade and other areas and that Africa is treated as an equal partner. Certainly, international support within the framework of development cooperation should also be continued consistently and intensified. However, it seems sensible to cooperate primarily with those countries where a serious will for independent and sustainable development in the interest of their citizens is discernible. This should take place primarily within the framework of cooperation at eye level and not be mainly oriented towards the interests of the donors. It is important that African states receive the full acceptance and recognition to which they are entitled; only then will long-term and also successful cooperation last. At present, however, the chances for Africa's sustainable and prosperous development in the coming decade must still be viewed very critically, taking into account all relevant factors.

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<sup>183</sup> Bröll, Claudia: Propaganda coup. South Africa's navy practices with Russia and China to strengthen old ties, FAZ, 17/02/2023, p. 10.



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