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Taking Stock of Africa Rapid Urbanisation: Preparing for COP 28 and SDGs' Goal 11 on cities and human settlement



This Monthly Review features Africa's rapid urbanization and the African governments' non-governmental urbanization and climate change coalitions' preparations for the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference. It is worth noting that the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference, or Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UNFCCC, will be held from 30 November until 12 December 2023 at the Expo City of Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The choice of taking stock of African engagement with Goal 11 (cities and human settlements) is not surprising, given that urbanization is described as one of the most profound transformations the African continent will undergo in the 21st century.

It is estimated that since 1990, the number of cities in Africa has doubled - from 3,300 to 7,600 - their cumulative population has increased by 500 million. These urbanization expansion rates make African cities the most rapidly growing in the world.

The core component of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (SDAs) is the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which consist of 17 cross-cutting goals devised to guide global action and investment for sustainable development over 15 years, ending in 2030. Goal 11 of the SDGs is devoted to cities

and human settlement, first because of rapid urbanization, particularly in the developing world. Second, because all 17 goals are cross-cutting, and cities and settlements are where all goals are implemented. Africa has decided to focus on this goal, hence the Monthly Review's choice of urban and human settlement theme. Africa urban centers are defined as boom centers where preliminary results from the 2023 update show that from 2015 to 2020, the 54 countries of Africa added more than 1 100 new urban agglomerations and 110 million new urban residents, an increase equal to more than 150% of the population of France.

Africa now has at least 8,500 urban agglomerations with 10,000 or more residents. Furthermore, existing agglomerations—including towns, cities, and metropolitan areas have expanded in area by 16% over the five years. Their impact on Africa's economic, social, and political landscape in the coming decades is also likely to be profound, where urbanization presents immense opportunities to accelerate progress towards the SDGs and Africa 2063 development agendas.

Africa's Urbanisation Dynamics 2022 reports that African urban expansion has contributed to better economic outcomes and higher living standards.

It shows that in most socioeconomic dimensions, Africa's cities significantly outperform the countries in which they are located and that the gap between the performance of African cities and the national averages is more significant than in many other parts of the world.

It is plausible to argue that one of the most underappreciated achievements of African cities over the last 30 years has been that, despite growing by 500 million people, they have maintained their economic performance, providing several hundred million people with better jobs and improved access to services and infrastructure. Positive spillovers from urbanization are also spreading to rural areas, which benefit from proximity to cities (Africa's Urbanisation Dynamics 2022).



CLIMATE CHANGE AND URBANIZATION LIKED SIX MEGATRENDS.

In August 2022, Boston Consulting Group (BCG) identified Six Megatrends That Are Changing Africa, which would transform the continent by 2050. All six megatrends are directly linked to rapid urbanization and climate change:

1. Demographics:

If today's demographic trends continue, almost half of all people under 18—about 40%—will have been born and raised in Africa. Most of this population will grow in cities, often in urban areas that doubled in size during childhood. Regardless of where they live, many may be desperately affected by the consequences of climate change. Unlocking the power of Africa's people is fundamental to achieving a brighter future for its citizens and advancing global economic growth and development.

2. Africa's Cities Will Be Crowded

Africa's Cities Will Be Crowded: Urban areas in Africa will attract an additional one billion residents by 2050.

Experts forecast the urban population to triple and the number of "megacities" densely settled areas with 10 million or more residents to increase from three (currently Cairo, Kinshasa, and Lagos) to 14 megacities. The growth of African cities will add vibrancy to the economy and culture of the region, attracting significant foreign investment and strengthening global business and trade ties.

3. The Continent Will Be Vulnerable to Climate Change:

Despite contributing less than 4% to global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, 35 of the 50 countries most at risk from climate change effects are in Africa. The continent can expect a temperature increase that will occur 1.5 times faster than the global average increase. This rapid will lead to total deglaciation of Africa's mountainous areas by 2050, rising sea levels along the coasts, and more extreme weather events, including droughts, storms, floods, and excessive heat and cold. These changes will have a catastrophic impact on biodiversity and animal habitats—especially worrying because Africa is home to 25% of the world's remaining rainforests. Climate change will also adversely affect some African livelihoods, such as farming and energy-related jobs, vulnerable to weather-related conditions. It may also intensify the threat of viruses and other health risks.



4. Africa Will Move Quickly into Digital Technology

This will occur more rapidly than many expect. Africa's digital tech sector, including software, cloud, and internet services, has experienced tremendous growth since 2010. Currently, its five-year growth rate is at 47%. Internet penetration has grown tenfold in the past 12 years, and the Internet economy will reach \$712 billion by 2050. There are more than 600 active digital and technological hubs across the continent, all making notable advances in fostering innovation with both home-grown and global companies participating. The most significant clusters of digital activity are in Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa—with Ghana, Morocco, and Tunisia close behind. With appropriate investments in infrastructure, upskilling, and education, Africa's immense working-age population could position the continent as a leader in digital services.



5. The Region Will Be More Open to Intracontinental Cooperation:

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent food crisis have demonstrated to African decision-makers in the public and private sectors that the continent needs to become more self-sufficient. Its countries and businesses must cooperate and reduce their reliance on international support. A few initiatives have begun to move Africa in this direction. For example 2018, 44 of the 55 African countries signed the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA), establishing the world's largest trade bloc in population and land area, covering 1.3 billion people. As of 2021, it has been signed by 54 member states and is gradually advancing to becoming operational. visas, and existing barriers to trade—it could produce substantial positive economic value. "The



AfCFTA is very promising. Its potential impact in fighting key continental challenges such as food insecurity is huge," comments former Senior Vice President of the African Development Bank Charles Boamah. "The political will that enabled this landmark agreement needs to be sustained to assure effective implementation and full realization of the promise."

Another indicator of support for intracontinental cooperation was the African Union's adoption in 2015 of Agenda 2063, a blueprint for future projects such as high-speed rail systems. There is also more interest in strengthening continental and regional organizations such as the AU, Southern African Development Community, and the Economic Community of West African States.

6. Africa Will Be a More Active Source of Innovation And Entrepreneurship:

About 22% of working-age Africans start small businesses, compared to 18% in Latin America and 13% in Asia. The continent has a history of breakthrough innovation in recent years, including mobile payment and digital healthcare platforms. The continent's entrepreneurial culture is especially promising from the standpoint of gender parity. Women from Africa are twice as likely to start an enterprise as women in other geographies. The continent's digital hubs support this rise in innovation but are not limited to information and communications technology. Entrepreneurship in Africa is beginning to fuel transformative change in energy, health services, pharmaceuticals, sustainable agriculture, and land use sectors. The agricultural sector could grow to as much as \$320 billion per year in annual revenues by 2030, helping to solve the challenges of food shortages related to climate change. Africa could even evolve into a breadbasket for Europe and the Middle East.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Climate change seriously threatens African cities and settlements' socioeconomic achievements and population well-being. Below, five significant climate change impacts on Africa will be outlined:

1. The Region Will Be More Open to Intracontinental Cooperation:

Africa has the highest rate of urbanization in the world, and predictions are that half of Africa's population will live in urban centers by 2030. Urban climate-related migration is driven by a range of factors, including sea level rise, extreme weather events like hurricanes and flooding, and temperature and other weather-related changes like droughts that undermine rural communities' ability to make a living from farming and livestock (Climate Change and Urban Migration Sub-Saharan African).

2. Flooding:

The frequency of climate change-induced flooding has increased during the last three decades, and so has an increase in climate-driven migration, which exacerbates the rapid, uncontrolled expansion of informal settlements in high- and low-elevation inland cities, especially with expansion onto floodplains, that is, land already at flood risk. In high-altitude cities, informal settlements are often on steep hillsides, where they are at risk of mudslides and washed-out infrastructure. Flooding from extreme rain runoff leads to health risks from water contamination aggravated by poor sanitation and dense habitation (Climate Change and Urban Migration Sub-Saharan Africa).



Financing Climate Adaptation in Africa: Challenges and Strategic Pathways



Climate change represents a critical challenge for Africa, a continent already grappling with multifaceted socio-economic pressures. The confluence of global events, notably the COVID-19 pandemic, the escalating food and energy crisis, and the conflict in Ukraine, have intensified the vulnerabilities and the adaptive challenges facing Africa in the wake of climate change. These external shocks, acting synergistically, have heightened the immediate humanitarian needs and underscored the long-term resilience deficiencies within African nations.

Understanding the nuances of this problem requires delving into the interplay between environmental changes and socio-economic stability. Climate change in Africa manifests through extreme weather events, fluctuations in rainfall patterns, and increased temperatures, leading to agricultural disruptions, water scarcity, and health crises. Concurrently, the COVID-19 pandemic has strained healthcare systems and economies, while the food and energy crisis, compounded by the Ukrainian conflict, has led to soaring prices and supply chain disruptions.

The difficulty for Africa is more than merely in addressing the immediate fallout of these crises but in marshaling substantial financial resources to bolster long-term resilience.

This necessitates a strategic framework that aligns primary relief efforts with sustainable development goals. Investments are imperative to fortify infrastructure, enhance agricultural resilience, promote renewable energy, and strengthen healthcare systems.

This approach would mitigate the impacts of current crises and prepare Africa for the inevitabilities of a rapidly changing climate. The challenge lies in mobilizing the required financial capital and international cooperation to actualize these resilience-building measures.

A detailed examination conducted by the Climate Policy Initiative and the Global Center for Adaptation reveals that Africa received an annual average of \$29.5 billion in climate finance during 2019 and 2020. Approximately \$11.4 billion, representing 39%, was allocated specifically for adaptation efforts. This allocation is pivotal, as adaptation measures are essential for Africa to cope with the adverse impacts of climate change. However, when scrutinizing the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) - a vital element of the Paris Agreement, where countries outline their climate action plans - it becomes evident that the continent's financial needs for adaptation are significantly higher. These NDCs project that, from 2020 to 2030, Africa's adaptation finance requirements will be close to \$580 billion. This figure is crucial in understanding the scale of investment needed to adequately prepare the continent for the challenges posed by climate change. However, when scrutinizing the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) - a vital element of the Paris Agreement, where countries outline their climate action plans - it becomes evident that the continent's financial needs for adaptation are significantly higher. These NDCs project that, from 2020 to 2030, Africa's adaptation finance requirements will be close to \$580 billion. This figure is crucial in understanding the scale of investment needed to adequately prepare the continent for the challenges posed by climate change.



As illuminated by recent analyses, the current trajectory of adaptation finance in Africa starkly contrasts the continent's burgeoning needs in the face of climate change. If the prevailing financing pattern persists, Africa is on the brink of a substantial funding deficit. By the end of this decade, the anticipated shortfall is projected to be around \$453 billion. This gap highlights a critical deficit in current financial commitments and signals an urgent call for a comprehensive reassessment and augmentation of global financial support. Delving into the composition of existing adaptation finance reveals that the majority originates from multilateral development institutions, which contribute 53% of the total funds. African governments provide a significant portion of 23%, while bilateral agencies contribute 16%. Notably, the role of the private sector in adaptation finance is minimal, accounting for a mere 3%.

Within this small segment, the predominant contributors are institutional investors, including foundations, insurance companies, asset management firms, pension funds, and endowments, representing nearly 90% of private sector commitments.

A critical aspect of the current financing structure is the predominance of loans, which constitute over half (53%) of the adaptation finance commitments to Africa. This reliance on loans raises concerns about the long-term financial sustainability and debt burden for African nations, particularly in the context of adaptation, where the benefits are widespread and long-term and often do not generate immediate financial returns.

Given these dynamics, there is a pressing need for a strategic shift in Africa's financing adaptation approach. This shift should encompass increasing the total amount of finance directed towards adaptation and reconsidering the financing mechanisms. Emphasizing grants and innovative financing solutions that do not exacerbate debt burdens, alongside encouraging greater private sector involvement, could be pivotal in bridging the substantial financial gap and ensuring that Africa is adequately equipped to navigate the challenges of climate change.

The climate finance landscape in Africa, particularly against its considerable adaptation, resilience, and biodiversity needs, underscores the pivotal role of concessional finance from bilateral donors. Given Africa's fiscal constraints, scaling up various sources of climate finance is imperative. This includes the augmentation of funds from multilateral climate entities and development banks and the mobilization of substantial private finance.

A significant increase in bilateral finance is essential to meet Africa's escalating climate finance requirements. By 2025, The Climate Policy Initiative has proposed that bilateral finance should, at the very least, double from its 2018 level, emphasizing a greater allocation of grants and a larger share dedicated to African nations. Moreover, Africa necessitates amplified support from development finance institutions (DFIs) through concessional and market-based lending windows.

The recent successful replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA) provides a solid foundation. However, there is a pressing need for ambitious replenishments of other crucial funds, including the African Development Fund and critical concessional climate funds like the Global Environment Facility and the Climate Investment Funds. In addition to these sources, the proposal to establish a Resilience and Sustainability Trust within the International Monetary Fund, alongside contributions from philanthropic entities, could offer critical concessional support. This is further accentuated by the proposal for recycling Special Drawing Rights (SDRs).



Given the enormity of financing needs, Africa should also have access to market-based windows of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) for investments that generate revenue. However, the current investment landscape in Africa is constrained by the fact that only four countries are rated investment-grade, and more than half of the continent's countries with credit ratings have experienced downgrades since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this context, private investment and finance can be significantly enhanced. However, realizing this potential hinges on implementing large-scale risk mitigation strategies by DFIs. Such strategies are crucial to offset the investment risks inherent in most African countries. These strategies could catalyze the flow of private capital into the region, effectively bridging the vast financing gap.

Therefore, a multifaceted approach is needed to increase concessional funding, strategically use market-based financing, and leverage private finance through risk mitigation.

This approach should align with African nations' unique fiscal and economic realities, ensuring they can effectively meet their climate finance needs while fostering sustainable development. CPI. ADB. UNFCC





Africa's Pivot: Navigating New Geopolitical Currents



The year 2023 has found the world at a pivotal juncture in global geopolitics; we find ourselves amidst shifting sands and realignments that render the future nebulous. One of the foremost challenges in considering this unprecedented phenomenon is the vastness of its inherent unknowns. With its myriad actors and agendas, the emerging world order remains fluid and unpredictable. The interactions of states, non-state actors, and transnational networks, layered with the influence of evolving ideologies, technologies, and environmental challenges, produce a *mélange* of possibilities. However, despite its inherent uncertainties, this transformative epoch holds the potential to be a harbinger of a paradigm shift, wherein historically marginalized regions such as Africa may transition into positions of global relevance.

As the shadows of 'Pax Americana' (a term describing the period of relative global peace and stability led by the United States post-1945) begin to wane, the world finds itself on the cusp of a profound geopolitical transformation.

A multipolar order is burgeoning, characterized by the rise of dynamic new powers challenging the erstwhile status quo. These nations, bolstered by rapid economic growth and strategic alliances, have begun to wield

influence on par with the traditional Western powers, thereby redefining the global power dynamics. Central to this transformation is the emergence of diverse regional and international blocs, reflecting and contributing to this new world order we are witnessing. Consider the G20, a conglomerate of the world's most influential economies.

Originating as a reaction to the 2008 financial crisis, it encapsulates the intertwined destinies of developed and developing nations, navigating collective economic challenges and solutions.



Similarly, the G77, though established during the Pax Americana, has matured into a vocal advocate for the Global South. Representing a diverse array of developing nations, it champions equitable international economic relations and seeks to counterbalance the historically skewed power dynamics.

Further, the BRICS coalition has emerged as a particularly resonant indicator of the evolving contours of international relations. As an amalgamation of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, its genesis is rooted in the collective aspirations of these burgeoning economies, each aiming to redefine their place in a historically Western-centric global paradigm. The coalition stands not merely as an economic consortium but also as a manifestation of the geopolitical aspirations of its constituent nations, with a shared vision to recalibrate global power dynamics.



A watershed moment in the trajectory of BRICS came with its recent expansion. The induction of Argentina, Ethiopia, Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is symbolic of the bloc's ambition to be more than a counterbalance to Western power structures. This expansion not only diversifies the geographical and cultural matrix of the bloc but also amplifies its global heft, both economically and demographically. The new BRICS, post-expansion, wields control over a staggering 36% of the worldwide GDP, serving as an economic behemoth. Furthermore, the bloc holds significant demographic sway, with its collective populace accounting for almost half the global population and boasting some of the fastest-growing populations and economies.

In a comparative analysis, the G7, symbolizing the pinnacle of Western economic prowess, appears somewhat diminished. Representing 27% of global GDP, its influence cannot be denied. However, this coalition's average GDP growth rate hovers around 2%, a modest figure juxtaposed with the BRICS nations' robust average of 6%. Furthermore, the G7's demographic imprint is limited, encapsulating less than one-tenth of the world's inhabitants. This demographic limitation is further compounded by a sub-replacement fertility rate, with all member nations registering rates below the 2.1 (per woman) threshold necessary for population stability. Conversely, the BRICS nations report an average fertility rate of 2.4. Such disparities underscore a transformative shift in global economic and political dynamics: the historical hegemony of Western powers is gradually giving way to a more heterogeneous, multipolar international system.

In analyzing these dynamics, it becomes imperative to contextualize the rise of BRICS within the broader framework of international relations. Its evolution, marked by strategic expansion and increasing global influence, reflects the dynamism and fluidity of the contemporary global order. The bloc's meteoric rise and its comparative positioning against groupings like the G7 elucidate the transition from a unipolar world dominated by Western powers to a multipolar landscape where diverse nations collectively assert their global agency.

As evidenced by the induction of 2 new African states into the ranks of BRICS, The African continent is increasingly recognized as a pivotal axis within the sophisticated global geopolitics and economics arena. Encompassing a dynamic amalgam of 54 distinct UN-affiliated nations and endowed with a vast array of resources, Africa's salience in the contemporary global configuration is undeniable. Delving into an analytical assessment, one observes a current iteration of the "scramble for Africa," where significant powers, both traditional and emergent, vie intensely to cement alliances and safeguard their strategic interests. This scenario resonates with historical contestations yet is intricately adorned with modern nuances.



In the global demographic tableau, Africa presents a unique and compelling profile. Predominantly youthful, the continent boasts a population where a significant majority are under 25. When juxtaposed with the prevailing aging trajectories in many developed regions, this demographic configuration lends Africa a distinctive advantage, often termed the 'demographic dividend.'

This dividend is not merely a numerical advantage. Embedded within it is the potential dynamism of a young workforce, marked by adaptability, innovation, and resilience. As the global economy grapples with challenges ranging from technological disruptions to evolving industry demands, Africa's youthful demographic emerges as a reservoir of untapped human capital, poised to be harnessed for myriad sectors.

Africa's demographic profile, characterized by its youth and sustained fertility rates, is not merely a statistical highlight. It is a strategic fulcrum around which the continent's socio-economic future and position in the global matrix will pivot. Discerning investors and geopolitical strategists would do well to recognize and engage with this dynamic, as it is poised to shape the contours of global economic and political landscapes in the ensuing decades.

Moreover, in the evolving narrative of global resources, Africa occupies a singular, pivotal position, underscored by its formidable agricultural potential. The continent has approximately 1.2 billion hectares and arable tracts, representing 65% of the world's residual uncultivated fertile expanses. Such expanses denote Africa's latent capability to transform its agricultural landscapes and hold profound implications for global food dynamics.

Regarding minerals, Africa's substantial endowment is particularly vital, underlined by its abundant Critical Rare Earth Minerals (CRMs) reserves. As the worldwide narrative shifts emphatically towards sustainability and technological progression, the strategic significance of CRMs intensifies, positioning Africa at the epicenter of this evolving paradigm. The continent's mineralogical portfolio is characterized by staggering concentrations of critical minerals, pivotal for driving the transition to green energy and technological innovations. Dominating the global landscape with 85% of the world's manganese reserves, 80% in both platinum and chromium, and 47% in cobalt, Africa's geo-strategic importance becomes indisputable. Beyond their conventional uses, these minerals are quintessential components in manufacturing next-generation technologies, from renewable energy systems to advanced electronics.



Transcending its erstwhile peripheral role, Africa is on the cusp of metamorphosing from a mere regulatory conformist to a pivotal influencer in crafting the contours of the emergent global order. Within this milieu, Africa's allure is dual-faceted: it is a focal point in geopolitical strategizing and a veritable epicenter of investment opportunities. Its allure for stakeholders—institutional investors or sovereign entities—is potentiated by a landscape replete with untapped potential.

Historically characterized by external dominion and passive rule adherence, Africa's trajectory is poised for a dramatic paradigm shift. The continent, endowed with attractive material and demographic assets, is uniquely situated to partake in and actively influence the crafting of a renewed global order. This calls for a proactive, assertive, and visionary African leadership willing to transcend historical legacies, challenge extant norms, and advocate for an international framework that echoes the continent's aspirations, challenges, and potential. The onus, thus, is on Africa to rise, not as a mere participant but as a pivotal architect in the global discourse.

In the ever-shifting tapestry of the global arena, Africa stands poised to transition from being a peripheral entity to a central protagonist. The continent's path forward must be characterized by eschewing ephemeral benefits and favoring a more profound, long-term strategic vision.

Africa must delineate a multifaceted strategy that underscores its sovereign prerogatives, discerns authentic partnerships, and proactively molds the global narrative.

A passive stance is untenable; Africa must be at the vanguard of legislative and regulatory innovations that secure its future. Notwithstanding the manifold challenges, Africa boasts an array of indigenous resources and a rich cultural heritage, which, if harnessed, can significantly benefit itself and serve as a beacon for global progress.

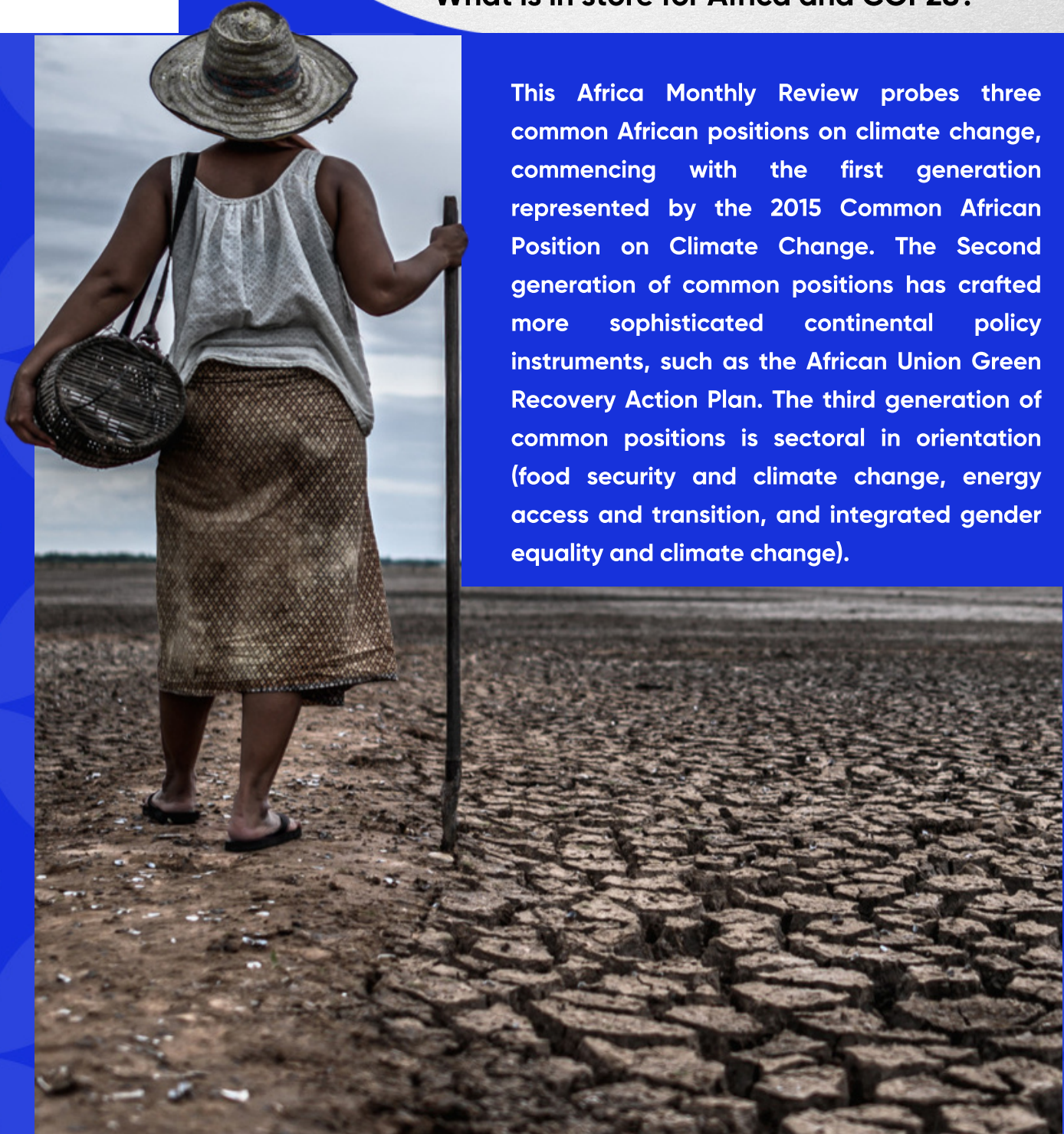
The continent must recognize the importance of self-interest in international relations when navigating the convoluted worldwide geopolitics and economics corridors. Hence, Africa's prerogatives must always be at the forefront.

Establishing balanced global alliances demands a symphony of sagacious diplomacy, forward-thinking strategies, and unwavering allegiance to the holistic progress of the continent—and, by extension, to the world's shared prosperity. WB. IMF. The Economist. ADB. Georgetown PPR.

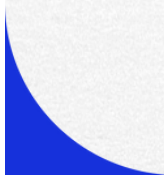


Generations of Common African Positions on Climate Change:

What is in store for Africa and COP28?



This Africa Monthly Review probes three common African positions on climate change, commencing with the first generation represented by the 2015 Common African Position on Climate Change. The Second generation of common positions has crafted more sophisticated continental policy instruments, such as the African Union Green Recovery Action Plan. The third generation of common positions is sectoral in orientation (food security and climate change, energy access and transition, and integrated gender equality and climate change).



First-Generation CAPCC Instruments

Africa's first-generation common position on standard climate change, known as the Common African Policy on Climate Change, is inspired by the Africa Agenda 2063 and the Common African Position (CAP) developed while preparing the Sustainable Development Agenda (SDGs). The African commitments to a common position on climate change are informed by CAP, where both documents represent the aspirations of the African people and their contribution to the global debate on the formulation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Standard African Policy on Climate Change is also anchored by realizing the vision of Agenda 2063, which requires authentic transformation.

CAP is therefore based on the following six pillars that are critical to African aspirations:

- 1) structural economic transformation and inclusive growth;
- 2) science, technology, and innovation; people-centered development; environmental sustainability, Natural Resource Management, and Disaster Risk Management; peace and Security; and finance and Partnerships.

To remind the reader of the content of the Common Africa Position on Climate Change as we are preparing for COP28, we reproduce its 12 articles. An allied aim for producing the articles is to enable the reader to appreciate the policy commitments endorsed and their state of play. These are as follows:

1

1. Increase the capability of Africa, Lest Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDs to dress adaptation to climate change more effectively through support to national climate change adaptation programs such as NAPA and similar country-driven adaptation programs. The Global Environmental Facility (GEF) should set aside more financial resources in the area of adaptation to climate change, which should include a special fund for Africa in this regard.

2

Mobilize and provide additional financial resources to Africa for climate-friendly technologies to address the urgent adaptation and mitigation needs of Africa and other developing countries.

3

Enhance the participation of Africa in the market-based mechanisms to address climate change through the demonstration of market-based project activities, support the institutional capacity needs, and build a critical mass of experts within Africa in carbon trade and international climate change negotiation skills.

4

Provide technical and financial support for Africa to increase energy availability, particularly in the rural areas, energy diversification or and ensuring energy security for investment promotion in climate change-friendly development areas,

5

Ensure equal treatment of Africa in addressing climate change by providing financial support and incentives for mitigating CO2 emissions by avoiding deforestation and acting as a global carbon dioxide sink.

6

They are restructuring the current global system of participating in market-based mechanism terms of Clean Development Mechanism CDM within the Kyoto Protocol, which has left Africa as a spectator. CDM rules and Procedures only work against Africa if there is a deliberate move to address the current barriers

7

Support countries in addressing their vulnerability to climate change through support for early warning systems, adaptation needs assessment, and adaptation activities.

8

Support the development of innovative indigenous and other technologies for both adaptation and mitigation to climate change, such as drought-resistant crops, crop diversification, improved farming technologies, better irrigation techniques, and control of climate-related diseases such as malaria and dengue fever.

9

Support the development of infrastructure resilient to the impacts of climate change, such as sea-level rise, recurrent floods, and other impacts of extreme weather events.

10

Support the establishment of climate centers within Africa and cooperative mechanisms (South, North, and South) to address regional-specific climate change impacts and adaptation needs.

11

Provide technological and financial support to non-SIDS African countries, as well as low-lying, land-locked, and other African countries that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

12

1. Conduct gender impact analysis to identify gender-specific needs and protection measures related to floods, droughts, and other disasters and involve women in all aspects of decision-making about adaptation and mitigation, including disaster risk reduction and choice of adaptation technologies.

Global Crises Impeding Implementation

The commencement of SDGs' global and regional policy processes could not have come at a more inopportune global and African continental and national economic and other crisis spurred by an accolade of unfavorable circumstances. The African economies were reeling from, for example, the recovery from the 2007-2009 global financial crisis, which began to show signs of decreasing about six years later. For example, in 2015, global economic growth was expected to be 2.8%, and growth in developing countries and some high-income countries was set to disappoint again. The rising borrowing costs will compound the challenges many developing countries face as they adapt to an era of low commodity prices. Risks to this economic outlook remain tilted to the downside. Growth prospects in sub-Saharan Africa were experiencing a sharp slowdown (IMF, 2015 and 2016).

When COVID-19 struck, the economic forecast seemed upbeat. World economic growth was expected to rise from 3.1% in 2016 to 3.5% in 2017 and 3.6% in 2018. However, this optimistic mood was shattered when the COVID-19 pandemic struck. The continent was impacted by a sluggish global economy, worldwide inflation, high borrowing costs, and a cost-of-living crisis. In many cases, inflation is too high, borrowing costs are still elevated, exchange-rate pressures persist, and political instability is an ongoing concern. The war in Ukraine has exacerbated an already desperate economic situation, leading to economic slumber in many countries (Regional Economic Outlook for Sub-Saharan Africa, 15 October 2023).

These crises must have left their imprint on African growth to date: widespread and rapid increase in inflation in 2022 prompted monetary policy tightening worldwide, which continues to weigh on global growth in 2023. In 2022-2023, Many African economies suffered slowing external demand, higher domestic interest rates, elevated sovereign spreads, and ongoing exchange rate pressures. In addition to high debt levels and profound structural challenges, these factors have combined to reduce access to external funding.

For example, SDGs (Goal 1) on halving poverty is one of the most important goals because poverty also indicates improvements in income, health, education, and others. Unfortunately, Africa is losing the battle against extreme poverty. Before the pandemic struck, over 445 million people – equivalent to 34% of Africa's population – lived below the poverty line. About 30 million (African Development Bank) Africans fell into extreme poverty (living on less than US\$1.90 a day) when COVID-19 broke out in 2020. Africa isn't likely to meet SDG 1 – to end poverty in all its forms for 97% of the population. Africa has the largest share of extreme poverty rates (The Conversation), with 23 of the world's poorest 28 countries at disproportionate poverty rates above 30%.

The African continent had sought what I refer to as second-generation climate change policies rather than succumbing to economic pressures and abandoning its climate change obligations to its people and also to the global policy thrusts it committed to. It is worthwhile mentioning that these policies have drawn considerably from the Common African Position on Climate Change (2014), enacted before the onset of COVID-19.



Second-Generation CAP Policy Instruments

On 15 July 2021, the African Union launched the African Union Green Recovery Action Plan, which focuses on five priority areas: 1. Climate finance, including increasing flows, efficiency, and impact of funding. 2. Supporting renewable energy, energy efficiency, and national Just Transition programs. 3. Nature-based solutions and focus on biodiversity through work on sustainable land management, forestry, oceans, and ecotourism. 4. Resilient agriculture by focusing on inclusive economic development and green jobs; and 5. Green and resilient cities, including a focus on water (flooding and water resources) and enhancing information, communication, and technology.

The alignment between the Green Recovery Action Plan (2021-2027) and Africa's Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy is precise. In 2022, Africa launched its 10-year African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032). The overall objective is to strengthen the adaptive capacity of affected communities and manage the risks related to climate change. More specifically, it aims to 1) enhance the adaptive capacity of affected communities and manage the risks associated with climate change. 2) Pursue equitable and transformative low-emission, climate-resilient development pathways. 3) enhance Africa's capacity to mobilize resources and improve access to and development of technology for ambitious climate action; and 4) enhance inclusion, alignment, cooperation, and ownership of climate strategies, policies, programs, and plans across all spheres of government and stakeholder groupings.

This position was taken to make Africa partly better positioned for COP27 but partly, and more crucially, to make up for the aftermath of the medium and long-term impacts of a world in crisis. It also builds on the Common African Positions (CAP) on the SDGs and Climate Change.

The new Strategy supports the commitments made by African countries under the 2015 UNFCCC Paris Agreement. It is guided by the existing national climate efforts and aspirations of its 55 Member States, as expressed through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and long-term, climate-resilient development and decarbonization visions and long-term adaptation goals contained in national Long-Term Strategies (The Africa NDC Hub).



COP27 was dubbed Africa's COP because, for Africa, a specific focus has been placed on ensuring energy security and access, diversified economic growth, and environmental sustainability. Africa also called for the more affluent countries to live up to their pledges. The conference acknowledged the need to increase climate-related financing and investment to the developing economies that have not yet fully delivered the \$100 billion in annual climate financing to Africa as agreed upon at the 2009 COP. The UN launched a campaign for developing the Climate Solidarity Pact, an arrangement the G20 will use to double climate financing to Africa. The African Union stated that wealthier nations must deliver on their financing pledges and double annual climate financing to Africa to \$200 billion. In comparison, U.S. President Joe Biden pledged to quadruple his country's yearly aid to global climate action initiatives to \$11 billion by 2024.



Third Generation CAP Instruments and COP 28

The third generation of Common Africa Positions policy instruments targets SDGs-specific sectors that have lagged despite Africa's concerted efforts:

1

Africa's Common Position on Food Systems: This shared position is propelled by Africa's food security, which was already on a downward trend before the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of which was substantial. As of August 2022, 140 million people across 35 African countries were living in crisis or worse (IPC 3 or higher) acute food insecurity, representing an annual increase of 17% (20 million people). In addition, the effects of climate change on Africa's agri-food systems are systemic and projected to leave at least 30 million more people at risk of hunger by 2030. Therefore, efforts to strengthen the climate resilience of Africa's agri-food systems are ongoing and critical.

2

In 2022, Africa adopted the Common African Position on energy access and transition, which aims to commit the continent to a comprehensive approach that charts Africa's short-, medium-, and long-term energy development pathways to accelerate universal energy access and transition without compromising development imperatives. It is considered a significant step forward towards ensuring and confirming Africa's right to a differentiated path towards the goal of universal access to energy, ensuring energy security, and strengthening resilience while at the same time acting responsibly towards the planet by improving the energy mix

3

In 2023, Africa adopted a Common Position to integrate gender equality into the Climate Change Action Agenda. At the core of the gender CAP is the recognition that despite women being disproportionately affected by climate change, they play a crucial role in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Women have the knowledge and understanding of what is needed to adapt to changing environmental conditions and develop practical solutions. Women and girls are essential, effective, influential leaders and change-makers to address climate adaptation, mitigation, and solutions. But they are still a largely untapped resource.

Africa has put considerable effort towards preparing for COP28, complete with a new climate change strategy and action plan and three prominent sectoral common positions on SDGs considered pivotal for maintaining a balancing act between climate change adaptation and mitigation and development aspirations. The Common African Positions are signposts. The overall objectives have also been codified earlier under the Continental Green Recovery Action Plan, which aims to bolster:

- 1) Climate finance, including increasing flows, efficiency, and impact of funding.
- 2) Supporting renewable energy, energy efficiency, and national Just Transition programs.
- 3) Nature-based solutions and focus on biodiversity through work on sustainable land management, forestry, oceans, and ecotourism.
- 4) Resilient agriculture, by focusing on inclusive economic development and green jobs; and 5) Green and resilient cities, focusing on water (flooding and water resources) and enhancing information, communication, and technology.

The December Africa Monthly Review is hoped to critically assess how Africa had fared in taking advantage of its amicable preparations months before COP 28.





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