



*Crafting
Positive*

Futures for Africa

Africa's Futurists
Exploring
Africa's Futures

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Charlotte Kemp

Futures Alchemist
and Strategic Coach

From the Editor

Working in Africa as both a professional speaker and as a futurist, I have often come across the notion that, if we want someone impressive to do something impressive, and to impress our clients or stakeholders, we ought to find someone from outside of Africa. Obviously this is not a view shared by everyone on this rich, wise, diverse and beautiful continent, but we do come across it often enough that we should make an effort to challenge it.

This collection of essays adds another voice in a growing chorus singing the praises of Africa.

The contributors have offered their stories to demonstrate that within Africa there are futurists and change-makers, speakers and advocates, catalysts and leaders working and learning here; creating value in Africa, for Africa.

I hope that this small collection will be an encouragement to others doing futures focussed work in Africa, and that this will be the first in a series of editions shining a light on those crafting more preferred futures for our continent, Africa.

Charlotte Kemp

Cape Town, South Africa
September 2024

The Contributors

Yelang Prue Jinka

A Catalyst for Diversity and
Change in Africa



Yelang Prue Jinka brings a wealth of experience as a seasoned media practitioner, specializing in content production, facilitation, and public speaking. With a lifelong commitment to learning and a passion for Africa's advancement, Yelang's keynote presentations focus on the power of diversity in business management. Through her company, Access Africa Channel, Yelang is dedicated to fostering sustainable diversity and intercultural communication, emerging as a thought leader in her field. With her warm and pragmatic approach, Yelang connects with audiences internationally, empowering professionals to optimize leadership, management, and team dynamics across the African continent.



Michael Haupt

A Visionary Guide in
Times of Uncertainty

For over two decades, Michael Haupt has dedicated his life to mastering the art of navigating the #TimeBetweenWorlds – a period of profound transition and uncertainty between social orders. Drawing on diverse wisdom traditions and disciplines, including evolutionary biology and indigenous knowledge, Michael illuminates the path forward amidst the current polycrisis, particularly in Africa. With a keen understanding of the Evolutionary Impulse Michael offers insights that transform uncertainty into clarity, empowering individuals to embrace emerging potentials.



Somaya El Sherbini

Empowering Organizations through
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With 17+ years in Human Capital, Somaya El Sherbini is committed to elevating people in organizational success. As Co-Founder and CEO of Opus Talent Analytics, based in Egypt, she leads a team crafting cutting-edge HR analytics. Opus's Skills Insights and Talent Intelligence drive efficiency and employee engagement. Also, as Co-Founder of RightFoot, she pioneers digital HR solutions, focusing on predictive analytics. With a global career spanning 80+ countries, Somaya empowers businesses through tailored talent strategies, emphasizing diversity and operational optimization.

Øyvind Sandve

Leadership Expert and Human Growth
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With a diverse educational background spanning universities in Norway, Germany, and South Africa, Øyvind Sandve holds a master's degree in political economy and a 2-year leadership degree from the Norwegian military school. His professional journey encompasses leadership, project management, sales, marketing, and strategic planning. In recent years, he has shifted his focus towards counseling and human growth, particularly in substance addiction-related issues. With extensive board experience in civil society organizations, Øyvind excels in motivating others to reach their full potential, making him a valuable collaborator in any endeavor.

Bruce Wade

A Visionary Leader and Pioneer in
Sustainable Innovation



Bruce Wade is a dynamic speaker, coach, and author renowned for his expertise in the Strategic Narrative Methodology, rooted in the 7 Principles of Sustainable Innovation. With over 20 books to his name and a distinguished tenure as Association President of the Professional Speaking Association of Southern Africa, Bruce's influence extends globally. As founder and director of EM Solutions, Gallant Accounting, Voices into Africa, and Sustainable African Strategies, Bruce pioneers strategic consulting and mentoring, driving sustainable growth and funding diversification through innovative approaches.



Ime Enang

Driving Social and Economic
Development in Africa

A visionary leader with 18+ years in policy analysis and strategic communication. As Executive Director at BusinessDay Media Foundation, Ime drives projects fostering trade facilitation and regulatory reform in Nigeria. With a passion for human resources and futures thinking, Ime is renowned for innovative problem-solving and consensus-building. She coaches young professionals in emotional intelligence and public speaking, aiming to advance social and economic development in Africa with a focus on Nigeria.

Saar Ben-Attar

Empowering Organizations for
Future Success



Saar Ben-Attar, founder of Ascent Growth Partners in Singapore and South Africa, has spent 20+ years guiding clients to achieve growth amidst rapid change. His expertise spans North America, Europe, SE Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, focusing on Resources & Energy, Telecoms, and Financial Services. Saar frames strategic challenges, nurtures leadership mindsets, and cultivates practical skills to transform organizations into adaptive, future-ready entities. Certified by the Association of Strategic Planning and a qualified executive coach, he empowers clients with internationally accredited coaching methods.

Africa: On The Cusp Of An Economic Miracle

2 of the 7 reasons why Africa is on the cusp of an economic miracle

PAGE 8

Yelang Prue Jinka

Without a vision to lean into, it is difficult for people to change their direction, to hope for something more or something better than the world they live in. This essay, which is an extract from a larger work, highlights just 2 of the 7 reasons why Africa has a hope for an economic miracle. It is not a fantasy nor a denial of the very real problems in Africa, but rather a potential scenario based on current events, that offers a choice for the leaders and the people of Africa to pursue a more preferred future.



Youngest global population

Country age demographics are determined by two key factors: fertility and mortality.

Throughout history, it was typical to see both birth and death rates at higher levels. But today, in most parts of the world, women are having fewer children, and innovations in healthcare and technology mean we are all living longer. The average person today lives to 72.6 years old, while the rate of births per woman has fallen to 2.5.

These trends have drastically altered the demographics of mature economies, resulting in a much older population. In many developing countries, however, births still outweigh deaths, resulting in populations that skew younger.

By 2030, the United Nations estimates there will be 1.3 billion people on the planet between the ages of 15-24. Proving to be a fountain of youth globally, the continent of Africa boasts the top 10 countries with the largest shares of young people in the world.

Somalia, Zambia, and the DRC are just a few to crack the top 10 list. The youngest country in the world is Niger, where almost 50% of the population is below the age of 15.



Young countries have significant opportunities ahead of them. A younger population means a larger upcoming workforce and more opportunities for innovation and economic growth.

While domestic markets in Africa grow in terms of labour supply,

innovation, and potential consumers, Countries in sub-Saharan Africa had the youngest proportion of population in the world with over 70% of the region's population aged below 30. In terms of median age (middle value of age distribution), Niger had the youngest population in 2019 at 15.4 years, followed by Uganda (15.7 years) and Mali (16.2 years);

The sheer size of the global young population and their decisions about size and birth spacing of their families will immensely influence population and consumer trends over the coming decades. The young population in many emerging and developing economies will benefit from a demographic dividend – a rise in the rate of economic growth due to a rising share of working age people in a population.

What does this mean for the growth index in Africa?

Economic Benefits:

- Very large workforce now and in the future meaning the growth in population has the ability to sustain economic activity.
- More investment into the economy
- More taxpayers - potential for increased rate of development.
- Causing urbanisation - more services
- School work skills.

Social Benefits:

- Increased children means more people to help look after elderly and children.
- More help around the house.
- More disposable income as more people able to work per family
- Increase in quality of healthcare and services - health improves
- Increase in potential standard of living.
- Investments into compulsory primary education - increase in literacy and education rate.
- Stronger communities



Africa is a Global growth frontier

Dr. Malancha Chakrabarty states in her research that the African continent is often described as “the new frontier” for global growth. Indeed, most of the African countries have experienced high rates of economic growth in the last decade, and five of the world’s fastest growing countries of the world are in Africa. The continent has also made substantial progress in terms of peace and security, and democratic processes have grown stronger. Africa has about 600 million hectares of arable land and the world’s youngest and fastest growing population - together, these provide an ideal base for sustained, long-term growth.

Many other things work in Africa’s favour. For instance, unlike in the past, African governments now have the agency to chart out their own development pathways. Agenda 2063, the continental framework for socio-economic transformation, lies at the heart of Africa’s vision for the future. The first ten year implementation plan has identified the following priority areas: continental free trade area; integrated high-speed rail network; African passport; silencing the guns by 2020; and free movement of people. According to Reginah Mhaule, the ratification of the continental free trade area was the most significant step towards African development. The continental free trade area presents a huge opportunity to alter the current trade paradigms by allowing African countries to restructure their economies to support industrialisation and value addition within Africa through regional value chains.



Although Africa is well-positioned to be the growth pole for the world economy, there is a high risk that extreme poverty will be concentrated in Africa by 2050. Though the high share of youth in Africa's population presents many opportunities, Africa will not be able to reap its demographic dividend if it fails to invest in human resources. This is particularly important in the context of the fourth industrial revolution which requires a highly skilled workforce. Moreover, a young and growing population means Africa would need to create millions of jobs every year. This will be a key challenge for African governments because high growth in the last decade has largely been led by commodity exports.

According to Stefano Manservigi, sustainable jobs can be created for African youth only through greater value addition within the continent. Development aid alone will not be sufficient to create well paying jobs in the manufacturing sector for Africa's youth. There is a need to de-risk private investment and augment the capacity of the private sector to invest in Africa. India's experience is also relevant for African countries. In India, the spread of public sector banks and development finance institutions played an important role in industrial development. Africa must also strive to create an effective banking system to mobilise domestic savings.

Pete Vowles suggested three ways through which the international community can ensure that Africa will not fall into a poverty trap. First, developed countries will have to meet their aid commitment of 0.7 percent of gross national income per year. Second, African countries must be treated as equal partners in development, and not as mere recipients of aid. Third, new types of development partnerships need to be forged. India and UK's partnership in Africa is a good example of triangular cooperation in Africa. India has a longstanding development partnership with Africa but the scale of its operations in the continent has expanded tremendously since the early 2000s.

India is helping build critical infrastructure in Africa through the EXIM Bank's concessional lines of credit. One of the most successful Indian projects is a hydropower project in Rwanda which used to be highly power-deficient. The cost of power was steep in Rwanda because the country relied on imported diesel to produce electricity. The hydro project built by India now covers 25 percent of Rwanda's power requirements. Indian projects are purely demand-driven and capacity building is a key component of India's development cooperation. UK and India seek to address future development challenges by combining their experiences and knowledge. The UK Department for

International Development is partnering with Indian institutions like the Observer Research Foundation and Research and Information System to develop new knowledge and create platforms for African development.

It is important to note that peace and security are critical prerequisites for economic development. Although the pockets of conflicts have reduced remarkably and democracy has taken stronger roots in Africa, the real challenge lies in converting elections into impactful leaderships, according to Koketso Tlhabanelo. Elected governments must be accountable to the African people. In a nutshell, long-term peace and accountable governments hold the key to African development.



Chapter 999: The Abundance Project in 2035

Ecoregional Renewal in the Cape Overberg

Michael Haupt

In this beautiful essay we see a potential future scenario for a real area in the Western Cape of South Africa. Painstaking and patient work is being done today, not for short term goals but to bring about a desired, a preferred future in the year 2035. The people in the Cape Overberg have the opportunity to craft a future for themselves and their families that is only possible with this kind of ground level and broad involvement of everyone who benefits from this part of the world.



As the setting sun bathed the patchwork landscape of the Overberg's rolling wheat and canola fields in a golden hue, I made my way along the winding road into the Riviersonderend mountains. My destination was the historic Valley of Grace—known to locals as Genadendal—home of the Abundance Project.

Crossing the Riviersonderend (river without end), the vista opened up to a regenerated patchwork of vibrant syntropic farms, food forests, artisan workshops and carefully rewilded corridors. I opened the windows as the sweltering heat of the surrounding commercially farmed fields suddenly dropped, thanks to the painstakingly restored riparian forest ecosystem. This breathtaking panorama was the culmination of more than three decades of pioneering work to manifest a thriving, ecoregional economy and

“Our greatest assets were the deep indigenous knowledge of how to live in balance with this valley, and the spirit of solidarity that enabled our ancestors to establish such an abundant community long before the arrival of modernity,” explained Martin Koopman



socio-ecological way of life for the valley's 20,000 denizens.

At the turn of the 21st Century, Genadendal and the five sister villages in the valley were at a crossroads. This once self-sufficient, thriving human settlement had

experienced a spiral of poverty, ecological degradation and social fragmentation in the decades after the displacement of its original Khoisan settlers under the controversial and much-despised Group Areas Act of 1950.

Yet the valley's soils,



abundant water, fynbos and incredible biodiversity kept alive the seeds of an older, more holistic way of being. When the global crises of that era laid bare the vulnerabilities of the extractive economy, a diverse coalition of Genadendal residents recognized a unique opportunity.

“Our greatest assets were the deep indigenous knowledge of how to live in balance with this valley, and the spirit of solidarity that enabled our ancestors to establish such an abundant community long before the arrival of modernity,” explained Martin Koopman, a third-generation resident and elected ward coordinator for The Valley of Grace’s innovative Ecoregional Council. “We

realised

that we had to think about our valley as being united by common geography, ecology, culture, traditions and history. The inclusion of the heritage of early settlers was the difference that made the difference when compared to other bioregional initiatives. The people matter just as much as the environment.”

Drawing inspiration from the permaculture and Transition Town movements, the vision for an “Abundance Project” took shape—an integrated approach to restore sovereignty in food, water, housing, energy and socio-economic activity at the ecoregional scale. With

support from partners like the Wellbeing Economy Alliance (WEAll), Rotary International, local faith-based groups, and international family offices, this vision sparked to life.

The ecoregional philosophy proved vital in shifting the community's mindset from exploiting the valley as a commodity to carefully participating in and regenerating its living systems. "We stopped trying to bend the land to our will through industrial agricultural practices and imposed colonial patterns. Instead, we rediscovered how to align our lives with this ecoregion's natural flows and ecological potential," said Koopman. "We learned that ecoregions are the rooms in the house of a bioregion. We worked with other ecoregions up and downstream of our watershed, to bring back to life the crumbling ruins of our entire bioregion."

Sectoral silos and imposed boundaries between farms and settlements were removed in favour of a unified eco- and bio-regional zoning approach that optimized symbiosis across the whole valley. Residential neighbourhoods were reconfigured around ecovillage design principles, clustered and

integrated with regenerative farms and food forests to close organic loops.

Travel between the valley's six main settlements is facilitated by a free public mobility network of biogas-powered trams connecting to wider horse and cycling infrastructure. Most residents can walk or take light mobility to their places of work, learning and community life within 15 minutes.

The long narrow plots of land—originally designed in 1854 to provide a food source for each family and a place to keep livestock for domestic use—were combined into cooperative syntropic farmland. This process-based approach to food, fuel and fibre production imitates the natural regeneration of forests and provides a harmonious



integration of crops, trees, and animals.

The degraded forestry areas of the 1800s have been rewilded and reintegrated along the river banks, creating a healthy reservoir of moisture stored in its vegetable mould on the forest floor. In the early mornings, thick banks of steam can be seen rising, which later falls as gentle rain, cooling the entire valley from the scorching heat of surrounding areas. Pristine fynbos zones on higher elevations are carefully maintained as the flow of water is intentionally slowed so that it can raise the level of the underground water table.

Concentrated contour zones on the midslopes integrate agroecological cultivation of ancient and biodiverse grains, teas, herbs, fruits and vegetables with rotationally grazed livestock like cattle, sheep, goats and poultry from local farmer cooperatives.

The valley bottomlands braid together village clusters, market gardens, community orchards and activated riverine corridors that mitigate flooding while providing wildlife habitat and mobility networks. Across all areas, dynamic accumulators like bamboo and industrial hemp grow materials for

food, fuel, fibre, and shelter. Soil health is monitored across the valley and boosted where necessary with biochar soil amendments.

Beyond integrated systems of syntropic agriculture, housing and mobility, the valley has cultivated a thriving culture of skilled ecoregional artisans who interpret and repurpose its diverse natural materials. From stonemasonry to blacksmithing, ceramics to textiles, these crafts honour deep local traditions while creating high-value products and experiential offerings that attract ethical tourism. The primary cooperative responsible for branding, marketing, quality control and export of all goods produced in the valley has won multiple international awards for the quality of the Valley's handiwork.

Genadendal's renowned Khoisan music, art, food, and architecture traditions have been woven into this creative economic tapestry, breathing new life into heritage assets like the village's 200-year-old library and teachers' training college. Meanwhile, a respected bioregional research academy draws students worldwide to learn place-based practices of regenerative development, aligned with local customs and traditions.

While not without its complexities and challenges, today in 2035 the Abundance Project is a luminous example of how a network of African ecoregional communities can restore holistic abundance by rediscovering its roots. The model rippled through other river basins in South Africa. Within a few short years of demonstrating viability, the model quickly rolled north, covering the entire continent in record time.

The ecoregional renaissance did not occur overnight but through a rewilding of human habitats and mindsets alike. By the mid-2020s, a critical mass of Genadendal residents had engaged in deep “insetting” work to intimately understand this unique ecoregion's social-ecological patterns, keystone species and resource flows.

“We couldn't keep importing solutions and development models disconnected from our place-based realities,” reflected Koopman. “The turning point came when we committed to reading the valley's unique codes and recognizing how our ancestors had attained sovereignty by aligning human systems with this ecoregion's genius.”

This meant reviving and blending indigenous Khoi and San placemaking traditions like “dreaming the land” with Western approaches like the Letsema Engagement Process of collaborative visioning. The valley's early architecture—which emerged from the availability of natural materials in the immediate vicinity—was reinterpreted through an eco-cultural lens, optimizing passive heating/cooling, rainwater harvesting, and landscape integration.

Critically, the community's ecoregional awakening also catalysed long-overdue processes of restorative justice to address the traumas of colonial displacement and fragmentation. A Community Council of respected elders from all six villages was convened to oversee inclusive truth-telling, symbolic reparations for land restitutions, and the co-creation of a shared, transcendent vision for the whole valley.

“We realized that the loss of traditional ways of life, the forced adoption of European customs and beliefs, and the disruption of our indigenous communities could only be addressed by ourselves,” said Koopman. “We willed the future we wanted into being by a definition of

our own choosing. By repositioning our endlessly abundant valley as the focus and wellspring of healthy communities, we were able to dissolve our mental shackles and align around collaborative place-based stewardship.”

Three African traditions emerged as core guiding principles to guide Genadendal's ecoregional praxis:

- **Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility)** - To solve community challenges together through diligent cultivation of self-sufficiency, land-based production, and diversified artisanal enterprise.
- **Nia (Purpose)** - To make the Valley's collective purpose the building and developing of the community in order to restore the people and the land to their traditional greatness.
- **Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics)** - Fostering of social solidarity, participatory governance and collective visioning for shared abundance. A commitment to building and maintaining the community's own stores, shops and other businesses and to profit from them together.



From its ageing infrastructure, depleted soils, land-based animosities and despondency of the late 1900s, Genadendal has enacted a remarkable citizen-led revival to an abundant valley, where all living beings thrive. Unemployment has been effectively eliminated as most residents work as artisans, makers, builders, maintainers, farmers, or stewards of the valley's regenerative food, fuel and fibre systems.

Cooperative land trust models ensure equitable distribution of the valley's wealth streams. Basic needs like food, housing, education and entrepreneurial finance are secured

through collaborative Wellbeing Economy provision circles. Meanwhile, the valley's unique Genadendal Genuine Progress Indicator ensures sustainable use and replenishment across all resources.

At a national level, Genadendal's pioneering ecoregional transition has catalyzed South Africa's ruralpreneurship revolution. A growing network of biohubs spread up and down the Riviersonderend and Breede rivers. The bioregional living laboratory model for place-sourced development inspired peer-learning exchanges in other river basins, eventually spreading across the nation, the continent, and the globe.

The revival of the Valley of Grace stands as a potent reminder that the

keys to true prosperity in Africa have always resided in our celebrated traditions of living as ecological kin. By steadfastly choosing to establish solid roots in ecoregional identity and follow the community's trajectory encoded in the land itself, the people of Genadendal have transcended cycles of dependency.

The denizens of the Valley of Grace have unlocked the generative codes for socio-ecological resilience and flourishing that ancient philosophies celebrated: Ubuntu, circular wholism, and spontaneous presencing. While being deeply shaped by its unique Overberg bioregion, the Abundance Project shows how distinctly African futures can emerge when we commit to reading the world in the patterns of the land underfoot.





The Future of Work is here

Somaya el Sherbini

Aligning the skills of people with the
needs of the workplace

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I remember having a discussion with my mentor and from a personal interest, I wanted to know will my job be obsolete, what skills did I need to have to stay relevant?... it was an interesting discussion about how we as a company were trying to think about these things and not only be ready ourselves, but pave the way with innovation that was enabling and how we were even thinking about the types of jobs we needed in the next 5 to 7 years and what those jobs would look like... a couple of years into the decade, I was attending my daughter's school graduation, she was going to start a new and very critical time in her life, she needed to make some big decisions about what she wanted to study as an undergraduate student and I wanted to think through this idea of 'future of work' and give her some advice that might help her as she was shaping her future. I started my research and learned a whole lot from peers working around me doing different things across different parts of the globe.

Like some people, I was fortunate, had a thriving career in one of the top 5 Global Technology companies. I was surrounded by people who were smart, always asking questions and leading the way, two steps ahead, in terms of how things were done and what the future might hold.

I remember in the first few years of the decade starting 2010, there was a lot of talk about something called 'the future of work'. People were talking about jobs being replaced, automation that would replace things we were very used to and saw as must haves, like book keeping, customer service, marketing communication, and even a new workplace that would adapt to people and machines working side by side.

I started a mini project with some peers around career progression. How can you utilize your work experience, your studies, the things you enjoy learning about, the skills you think you have that you can weigh in on, when you're doing your day to day job in a specific role... it was two years of work, the outcome of which was a charter that we developed as an aid for people

trying to think about their professional careers, guided by some principles and in parallel a tool that Department or Team Managers needed to be wary of, as they thought about the roles, responsibilities and potential of their teams.

As we were working on this project someone came across a book called '[The Fourth Industrial Revolution](#)'. Reading the book, I remember my first impressions were, how relevant would this be? Would it only be adapted in tech lead companies? Will it really be happening as early as 2020?

I left my corporate employer in the earlier part of 2017, as I was preparing for my new venture

setting up a Consultancy Practice, I started talking to a lot of the local companies and entrepreneurs, this was not specific to a single market in the Middle East and Africa. Our first assignment was with a Corporate institution in the Oil and Seeds business, surprised as I may, the 'future of work' did not ring any bells, they weren't aware of what or how jobs and skills would need to adapt to what was being talked about in 'The Fourth Industrial Revolution'. I started mentoring scaling up startups, those are startups that have a proven track record of running a successful business, securing customers and making money. They also probably have done that by securing interest and investments from a Venture



‘A lot of my work has shifted into how to interrogate the present more effectively, and to then be able to better understand how the future might unfold.’

Futurist Consultant

Capital, a PE or even Angel Investors. Not to my surprise, they were supposed to be the people with the agility and adaptability to make change, create space for their people to try new things and pivot on the strengths of what they recognize as what is best in their people because they didn't have rigid structures and they didn't have the luxury of a lot of resources. What I discovered is they wanted to buy skills and proven experience across the board. They wanted supermen and women for all the jobs. A majority of the time, they fell into the Entrepreneurship space by pure coincidence. They had an idea they thought would be a killer idea, they were being pulled in by some old friends, they wanted to be their own boss, or simply, they wanted a job that would give them big money, fast. That's why it's no surprise that why approximately 20% of new businesses fail during the first two years of being open, 45% during the first five years, and 65% during the first 10 years. Only 25% of new businesses make it to 15 years or more. ([Global Entrepreneurship Monitor](#)). Does that mean that entrepreneurship is

for everyone? I think the argument is what are those 'signs' that you look for. These are the things that institutions call skills and capabilities. Back to my mini-project when I was with my Corporate Employer, it is a mix of things. It is about the things you're comfortable with that come naturally, examples: you build connections easily, you know how to leverage people around you and know how to get the best out of people. It is the things you learned in school, college, continued education What you learned from a job or assignment, ... if I sum it up, it is a mix of things that are sometimes called 'soft skills'.... The skills that help you deliver on a role, whether you are a banker or in an operational role in a finTech company. What it is not are the steps of the process, hand-offs, ... based on a lot of data gathering, be it formal studies, or judgement of independent writers, or even The Fourth Industrial Revolution ... there is consensus that these are the enabling skills ...

1. Emotional Intelligence
2. Agility
3. Critical Thinker
4. Flexibility
5. Tech Savvy
6. Collaborative
7. Team Driven
8. Problem Solver
9. Learner
10. Embracing a growth Mindset

Fast forward Post COVID, the direct and indirect implications of those years have certainly brought forward clear evidence on the importance of a balanced life style that focused on 'what are my priorities?', 'my wellbeing', steady, predictable income. The trends changed to people now valuing the hybrid work model. We are now more versed and more accepting. With that said, it is still coming with a relative feeling of un-certainty of what is next.



The number of startups that are being built around employability and gig jobs has been increasing annually over the last 5 years. The gig economy workforce was projected to increase 3X from 7.7 million in 2021 to 23.5 million in 2030. COVID fat tracked how many people had to work remotely for 2+ years, a lot of people left the workforce, others realized that flexibility was a priority for them.

The increased globalization has accordingly created opportunity for companies to employ remote workers from any place in the world, thus the increasing rise of the Gig economy ([OECD](#)).

For Africa the rise of the numbers of those that can fill Tech jobs has surged between 2020 and 2021 ([size of Africa tech](#)), not only because of the skills and capabilities but because of its young population, 450M in the working age. With close to 1M tech jobs open in the US alone, companies like Andella ([andella.COM](#)) ([Top GIG platforms for Africa Talent](#)) have set up businesses where they employ Africa Tech Talent for US and European companies. The Big 4 consulting institutions have all set up centers in Egypt as an example that offer digitalization focused jobs that serve the region of Europe, Middle East, Africa.

In a study conducted by financial services company Payoneer, around 21,000 freelancers from 170 countries around the globe were interviewed. The report shows that Africa holds 10.1% of the world's freelancers – and will continue to grow ([freelancing in Africa](#))

Business leaders across all types of businesses, of all sizes, are concerned about their bottom line, business continuity and whether their budgets are realistic. Being a

realist, for some, making a decision to focus on the short term is the priority.... cutting costs across the board, irrespective of whether they will impact the mid to long term, is an approach that some businesses have opted to take. Even though these decisions might salvage the very short term, this is a strategy that certainly puts the mid and long term at risk.

On a personal level, and as a company that believes in the changing dynamics of the world of work, we believe that the 'future of work' was triggered into full speed ahead by COVID. We strongly believe that we should look at the glass half full resulting from this situation and think about the repercussions forced on us because of this situation. Would small businesses be thinking about their ability to capture knowledge given constraints on the size of their workforce? How are they becoming more efficient? How are they capturing information about their performance, that would help guide their decisions, given that resources are always limited?

For mid-size businesses, did they spend enough time building their brand and attracting 'A-Players'? have they invested enough time, effort and resources in building the

Technological advancement can have a huge impact on the HR department of an organization.

It allows the company to improve its internal processes, core competencies, relevant markets and organizational structure as a whole.

... This will lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness of its Human Capital.

capabilities of their teams, knowing that if they really want to scale, exponentially growing and being more intentional about their potential, it all starts with having the right size of resources, who continue to learn and grow, as the business grows.

For the big organizations, it is really about the efficiency. How has data helped in shaping their future focused decisions? Where has this lead them?

There are clear signs of the lessons learned from COVID.

- 1) Technology is a priority. Irrespective of size, industry or maturity, it is the future. For the future of work, it is non-negotiable.
- 2) Be conscious of how cost cutting can and will impact

your mid to long term. From a future of work perspective, prioritizing your internal processes, adopting simple tools to continue to build the capacity of your team, ensuring that you are able to identify and prioritize what the 'skills of the future' would be for your business

3) Building and staying true to your employer brand is a key asset. If your business promotes learning and growth, be sure to make that a priority where your time, effort and investments are channeled.

How relevant is this for the African Continent?

Very! The future is all about skilling ahead of the need. This helps bridge the gap between job availability and employability. The skills market is pointing towards skill gaps predominantly in the Digital Skills area, Africa needs to get ahead of the curve.

Businesses adopting things like data analytics technology allows them to better understand what they have, what they need and accordingly be better prepared.

A number of African countries have made strides in directing findings from developmental institutions towards skilling. There continues to be a gap because, the effort is not

well directed. The fundamentals need to be bridged in k12 studies and higher education curriculum that are still not future focused.

Additionally, measures need to be put in place to understand the effectiveness of trainings delivered and how they translate into real results effectively. These results could be job creation, they could be focused education that builds specific capacity in areas that are becoming essential by the day. Examples are in the areas of artificial intelligence, climate related innovation, and financial solutions.



One key area that globally countries are concerned about is financial inclusion. Now that automation controls all ways of transacting, availing credits for small businesses, participation of those who are underrepresented in the financial equation, are becoming more critical by the day. Africa has the

advantage of mobile penetration. A lot of startups have creatively innovated in this space, however the gap still exists.

Additionally, Governments play a pivotal role. Having access to the talent data in country, helps better understand where you are best positioned to compete, how you can channel your country's educational strategy and how you most opt to create jobs.



The opportunities that are un-taped in businesses, irrespective of their size, is the ability to leverage the power of idea generation, collaboration and problem solving that exists within your workforce. Being able to unlock that power by driving a culture of collaboration and teamwork, expanding thinking and different points of view and embracing all types of diversity

(gender – age – thinking styles ...), is food for thought.

A key differentiator will be the understanding and analyzing of people data. People data analytics is a new field, introduced and adopted by corporations as they face rising issues with traction and retention. Over the last ten years the subject has been studied but is making small strides. Innovation in this area is still in it's prime years.

The topic of people data is very complex. In an organization, it sits distributed across different systems and most of the time independent on PCs, share points or even in the knowledge that a person has gained through institutional knowledge, or persona Knowledge and experience gained. At a country level, the amounts of data are massive, knowing where to start becomes another level of

complexity. However this will be the next level of intelligence and differentiation. Bringing more objectivity and reasoning in how data is managed and insights are generated will be a key differentiator for the future of work or future of innovation for that matter.

What is important as a next step? For one, Africa has a lot of potential, its labor force is well suited and ready for the future needs of the

work markets, with that said, the next generation of workers, Gen Z, need to harness their softer skills, be aware of their strengths and know how to make the best use of them being digital natives.

The next 20 years will see more and more push towards flexi-working, which is work from anywhere, at any time, it is all about the output. This will, more and more, create opportunities for Africans across the continent, irrespective of their location. It also puts a lot of responsibility on governments, funding institutions, and policy makers to continuously push the envelope, making better use of innovation to solve for and create opportunities for all types of jobs, including the lower skilled workforce.

Buzz words on the minds of institutional and governments, business and HR leaders, engagement – motivation – purpose driven, are all low hanging fruits, waiting to be harnessed. **The future of work is certainly aligned with what employability are driven by** These are truly the drivers.

Our mission is helping businesses maintain, scale, and transform in a predictable manor, while focusing on their core asset **The People.**



Delve into Africa's tumultuous past of repeated exploitation and oppression and then consider how Africa can escape this cycle. Let us have a conversation about transformative change, tracing those historical cycles and their awful legacy, while pointing towards a brighter future. This essay proposes a ten-step plan for Africa's resurgence, it champions the idea of renegotiating contracts, fostering entrepreneurship, and embracing sustainable innovation. With a rallying cry to awaken Africa's potential, it paints a picture of hope and possibility for a continent on the brink of a new dawn.



Breaking the Chains

A Blueprint for Transformation

Bruce Wade

Africa has been the beating boy of the world since the beginning of time. Her natural resources and people have been enslaved and sold and exploited for many thousands of years. Yet we sit upon an earth still filled with such wealth and potential that so many other countries can only dream of owning, yet we continue to survive and gain any sort of viable grip on a sustainable future.

Looking back at history we can see the cyclonic behaviour of the greed of man fuelled by his driving ego, to rule and conquer those around him to ensure that his reign is endured, no matter the cost to his kingdom or himself.

Africa is no different. Africa has been invaded and plundered through power struggles since the beginning of history. The early advanced civilizations of Africa started with the Egyptian civilization, which lasted for over 3,000 years. Despite being one of the most advanced and well-known civilisations in the world, with contributions to mathematics, writing, medicine, art, and architecture, their human rights were appalling. The head of state or Pharaoh, ruled from a demi-god platform passing out punishment, often worse than death to those who opposed him.

Further down the Nile River another ancient civilization, the Kingdom of Kush, emerged around 1000 BCE. The Kingdom of Kush was known for its advanced ironworking and metalwork, its control of trade routes, and its strong army. Also, the Kingdom of Aksum, located in what is now Ethiopia, emerged around the first century CE and became a major power in the region, controlling trade routes that were secured by a well-equipped and trained army. Both these armies went on raiding parties to devastate all who were different or opposed their rule of law. Many human and natural resources were obliterated to avoid any further rise in opposition.

In West Africa, we saw the Kingdom of Ghana emerging in the 5th century. This was followed by the rise of the Kingdom of Mali in the 13th Century. Further south we see evidence of great civilisations of the Shona tribes in modern-day Zimbabwe. Their ruins depict a vast empire stretching across the central African plains commanding many millions of citizens.

Even further south in KwaZulu Natal of South Africa the rise of the Zulu nation that dominated the southern region almost alienated all other tribes, those surviving only to end up in great teams of slaves and battle decoys.

The low value on human life to self-promote the leader that they followed has led Africans to a life of kill or being killed. Rule or suffer the consequences.

All these early kingdoms ruled their subjects with an iron fist, one of control and conquer with the mandate to obliterate anything that stood in opposition.

Then as other outside empires rose and explored Africa from Europe and the East, the same cycle was repeated: Invade and plunder, rape



and pillage all resources leaving the land crippled and enslaved.

Visiting ships filled with men equipped with far more advanced military and fighting techniques were able to subdue the opposed might of any tribe that remained. Those who fell were subdued but were also quick to renegotiate a place of power and work for the invaders to provide resources in the form of gold, jewels and of course human capital for the slave trade. It is said that more slaves died in the initial part of the slavery pipeline than towards the end. This part, often kept from our history books, as it serves no agenda, shows that tribe-on-tribe violence to capture and sell slaves to the ships came at great cost to life and tribal alliances.

In the last 200 years, this cycle has been repeated over and over again. Foreign powers come here for what they do not have, they find what they want, they 'negotiate' a deal and then plunder what they can take. Leaving Africa and her people



poorer and worse off than before. How much more can Africa take before it crumbles beneath the pressure of this continual vacuum on her resources?

The majority of countries within Africa today are so enslaved by the mindset of this cycle that anyway out seems impossible. The only viable option is to dig a little deeper and seek short-term personal gain for political survival through further exploitation and corruption. And so, a small handful of leaders and people in the loop gain financial wealth and power at the expense of an entire nation.

African countries are now forced to buy back the natural resources at a markup that they once owned but then sold to other outside corporates. This includes oil, gas, food, and minerals.

We have all but given up our natural resources of minerals, oil, fish, and animals to outside countries through long-term financially unviable contracts. We have disempowered our people through poor education, self-belief, and emotional enslavement. We have very little hope of restoring the economy that is tied up with hundred-year loans so vast that any hope of getting out is fiscally impossible. Any future negotiations are done and managed by outside powers who only have their interest at heart and even



though a 'friendly' outcome is reached, these when implemented just push the deadline of doom a little further into the future, making it all but impossible to negotiate a way out from under the hammer.

But maybe there is an achievable solution, maybe something that we as a continent can do together. A collective effort to rise above the past and embrace a new identity a new future for the continent of Africa and her people.

Maybe some of our leaders have already indeed seen the way to a brighter future and a place where the sunrises on a new day for Africa filled with hope

and potential.

But this comes at the greatest

cost of all. A cost that unfortunately most leaders are not willing to pay: their ego.

For a man of Africa to stand in front of his peers and admit that he is or has been wrong and then move forward in power is something that not many have been able to achieve. Normally failure in any form is met with a swift trip to exile or execution, followed by a quick scramble for power to pick up the pieces and claim the previous seat of power.

Changing a man may be easy.
Changing his family is a little harder.
Changing his tribe, his community,

and his region becomes difficult. Changing an entire country is almost impossible. But it has been done and will continue to be done by leaders who are willing to risk their own identity for the good of a greater future that may not include themselves. The sacrifice of their ego.

Through working with many different communities across Africa and understanding the pathways to sustainability we have developed a simple model that depicts the hierarchical needs of an entrepreneurial society. This model follows a three-prong approach to

personal
development:
Social, Mental
and Emotional.

These feed the basic human needs of: I Belong, I Understand, and I Care.

The model goes on to depict that any society needs to obtain at least level three status before any form of economic empowerment can happen. Any form of entrepreneurship programmes, and business education below this line simply drives the members of society further down the list of potential, making them more reliable on the state from free handouts and support.

But even if intervention is given at the right level and is well funded

and supported, the outcomes are always dependent on the leadership style of the region. Poor, self-serving leaders will place themselves before the outcome and disrupt the end goal.

What if we could develop a new blueprint for the future of Africa and her people? What if we could look out towards a blue horizon and collectively hope for a future void of war, corruption and fiscal exploitation? Maybe it is a pipe dream, but maybe there is a way to start getting there. Here is my proposal to do just that. A 10-step plan for the recovery of Africa. Just a handful of key projects will change the future of the countries willing to lean in and adopt these as their own, as some have already done. But we need more to be able to reach that tipping point of change that will begin to affect the future outcomes of not just small regions, but collectives of countries.

Here is my list of the top 10 projects to heal our Africa:

- 1. We need to learn how to negotiate to take back control from those who have enslaved by through fiscal and historical agreements.** These contracts need to be renegotiated with a mindset of win-win or scrapped altogether.
- 2. We need to begin to understand our problems.** Unpacking these through the eyes of the past but with plans for a future that supersedes them, not includes them. We have become emotionally enslaved by our past so much so that this yoke of disability creates blinkers for our future and limits our ability to rise above to a new future.
- 3. We need to empower our people.** Not only through better education and economic hope but by not creating a system of reliance on handouts and safety nets. Free will never build anything but reliance and enslavement. People who stand in lines for free handouts only build long lines of people. People who understand that their fate rests in their own hands and their actions, build a different mindset and a future filled with hope.
- 4. We need to remove those who are in positions of power who do not buy into a future of country empowerment.** Those families, tribe leaders, Statesmen and Dictators who are only in power through power need to take a step sideways and be replaced with people of true leadership and hope. Leaders should be elected through free



and fair elections that are done in the open and in front of the rest of the world. Leaders need to adopt a position as the Governing Party, not the Ruling Party. Just this mindset will change how we act when in a position of authority. Leadership is to serve, not rule.

5. **We need to implement a zero-tolerance for corruption among leaders.**

This needs to be filtered down to remove all contractual corruption and fiscal skimming that has become an everyday occurrence at all levels of operation throughout Africa. Each time a slice of the pie is taken for something that it was not initially intended; it reduces the effect on how much it can feed at the end of the line.

6. **We need to begin to solve our problems and not cry out for aid from others at every issue we encounter.**

Developing this mindset will help not only our financial situation but empower the economy to rise and rebuild on its own without having to wait for the UN trucks to come and do it for us.

7. **We need to rebuild the financial model that currently exists in most regions.**

The money needs to be earned outside the home region. This is done through migrant workers and daily commutes often lasting hours. The earned money is then also spent outside the home region because the availability of resources within the region is poor or just a replication of this model on a larger scale. This earn and spend outside a region model, disempowers the region, shrinking it in both economic and emotional powers. Reversing this allows for money to flow into and retain within a region, building up the economy and its people.

8. **We need to develop strategic partnerships for wealth creation.**

This is required through open negotiations of investment and partnership that always have a win-win destination. Wealth

creation through the understanding of the true worth of our resources and then the fair distribution of that wealth to all those who participate in the pipeline of its procurement. This means that no under-the-table contracts for heads of state with zero kickbacks to those in the pipeline and full disclosure of all negotiated outcomes at all times.

9. **We need to develop a game plan that supersedes the political game.** All political leaders are governed by the duration of their term. It becomes a game of survival as well as get-as-much-as-you-can whilst in power for your term in office. True leaders will seek to plan and implement solutions that will supersede their term in the hope that the legacy they start will benefit the people and not just the politician.

10. **We need to develop the mindset of an entrepreneur.** One that sees problems as opportunities to be solved and not wait with a victim

mindset, for others to come to the rescue. Problems should be openly discussed and put forward to be solved by the community for the community. Proposed solutions are tabled for further discussion and funding, so when implemented, the community has the buy-in mindset of achievement and collective growth.

Not an easy list, but I believe essential items that need to be addressed to shift the momentum away from the drain spiralling that most countries find themselves in.

Further to this I would add in some of the principles from the 7 Principles for Sustainable Innovation. These have been developed with business development in mind but cater just as well for teams, corporates, and governments.

These principles are used as guiding lights in the darkness to show the way towards a sustainable future that is not only profitable but aims to build up all who fall within the system.



The first and main principle states: "Always do the right things right at the right time with the right people in the right place."

The keywords here are 'Always' and 'Right'. Always is a simple word to understand, it is not sometimes, it is always. It does not say 'only when others are looking' or 'just before an audit'. It is always and always is always. It should be as simple as that.

The second keyword is 'Right'. This one is harder to define, and it often takes many hours of discussion to agree on what this definition is. If people agree on the first word, which they normally do in a short space of time, then it becomes harder to define the second as they begin to look for loopholes to feed their ego and need for corruption

and power and financial gain. But as we persist with this exercise, an end goal is defined and even though we may agree to disagree, it is an agreement, and the process can then move on.

The key action to maintaining this principle is to define the trigger and response when the principle is violated. What happens when either the Always or Right is not adhered to? That becomes the bigger discussion. A discussion with outcomes that can change the course of history for a nation. When do we expect others to speak up and when do we want them to turn a blind eye to what is happening?

Your answer to this will define your destiny.

Africa has the potential to rise as a sleeping giant and become a major player in the world economy. She is filled with potential, hope and resources, that if managed and cared for in the right way, she will help build up people, families, tribes, and nations that will be worthy to take their places at the tables of history, for the right reasons.

Arise Africa Arise.



Ime Enang

In a diverse country like Nigeria, with over 250 ethnic groups with unique traditions and beliefs, how can we formulate a vision for the future? We cannot begin crafting futures scenarios without first going back to understand the world view and fundamental core values of all citizens. And by failing to do so we may lose the wisdom passed down from elders and ancestors that can speak to our future.



How we read the future

Starting with meanings, what is the future?

In Hausa, the future is called Laifi. It refers to the time or period of time that is yet to come after the present moment or the current time. In Igbo, it is called ọgụgụ ọrụ which means "tomorrow" or "the day to come" and in Yoruba, it is called ọjọ kan meaning, one day or "the day to come". It can also refer to the future in general. The fact that the future has representations in the three main ethnic groups of the largest country in Africa presupposes that there is a perception of the future among the people.



Some common themes and beliefs about the future can be identified across different ethnic groups and religions in Nigeria. Many Nigerians view the future as uncertain and unpredictable. This perception is often shaped by socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, insecurity, and political instability, which have contributed to a sense of insecurity and anxiety about the future.

Nevertheless, many Nigerians remain optimistic and hopeful about the future, drawing on their faith, cultural heritage, and resilience to navigate challenges and overcome adversity. Nigerians also place a strong emphasis on family and community, and support systems that provide a sense of belonging, security, and hope for the future.

Nigerians believe in the power of hard work, education, and entrepreneurship as a means of improving their lives and securing a better future for themselves and their families. The desire for progress and development is a common theme across different ethnic groups and religions in Nigeria.

Religion plays a significant role in shaping Nigerians' views of the future. Many Nigerians are deeply religious, and their beliefs in the afterlife, judgment, and the power of prayer and divine intervention can shape their perspectives on the future. Christians and Muslims, the two largest religious groups in Nigeria, believe in a final judgment and reward or punishment in the afterlife, which can influence their sense of accountability and responsibility in shaping their future.



How do Nigerians think of the future?

It is a fact that Nigeria is a diverse country with over 250 ethnic groups, each with its unique traditions and beliefs. In many Nigerian cultures, there is a deep respect for tradition and a belief that the future can be understood through the wisdom passed down from elders and ancestors.

In many Nigerian traditions, the study of the future involves divination and other forms of spiritual practices, such as consulting with mediums, interpreting dreams, or reading signs and omens. Divination is often seen as a way of communicating with the spirit world and gaining insight into the future. Diviners are highly respected in many Nigerian cultures, and their knowledge and skills are often passed down from generation to generation.

Moreover, many Nigerian cultures have a rich oral tradition, and stories and proverbs are often used to impart wisdom and provide insights into the future. Elders and community leaders are often seen as sources of knowledge and guidance, and their advice is highly valued.

While the role of tradition in the knowledge of the future varies across different Nigerian cultures, it is clear that tradition plays an essential role in shaping the beliefs and practices of many Nigerians. Traditional knowledge and practices are often seen as a way of maintaining cultural identity and passing down values and beliefs from one generation to the next.



The Yoruba people are an ethnic group in Nigeria with a rich culture and traditions that have influenced many other cultures across West Africa and beyond. In Yoruba tradition, the study of the future is closely tied to divination, which is seen as a way of communicating with the spirit world and gaining insight into the future.

One of the most well-known forms of divination in Yoruba tradition is Ifa divination. Ifa divination is a complex system that involves the casting of palm nuts or other objects to generate a pattern, which is then interpreted by a diviner or priest known as a *babalawo*. Ifa divination is used to provide guidance and insight into various aspects of life, including health, relationships, and the future.

In Yoruba culture, diviners and *babalawos* are highly respected and considered to be repositories of wisdom and knowledge. They are often consulted by individuals and communities for guidance and advice on important decisions.

Moreover, in Yoruba tradition, there is a belief in the power of ancestral spirits, who are believed to play a role in shaping the future. Ancestral spirits are often venerated and honored through offerings and rituals, and their guidance is sought in matters related to the future.

In addition to these, many Yoruba cultural practices and beliefs also offer guidance for understanding and preparing for the future. For example, the

concept of ori in Yoruba culture refers to an individual's inner consciousness and destiny. By understanding one's ori, a person can gain insight into their purpose in life and work towards achieving their goals.

In Yoruba tradition, the future is seen as being shaped by a complex interplay of spiritual and physical forces, and the study of the future involves understanding these forces and how they interact.

In Hausa tradition too, divination is used in the study of the future.

The Hausa have their own divination systems which include the use of cowrie shells and the interpretation of dreams. Cowrie shells are often used in a system called Bori or Bori spirits, where a diviner (known as a Mallam or Bori priest") uses the shells to communicate with the spirits and seek insights into the future. The interpretation of dreams is also an essential component of Hausa divination and is seen as a way of receiving messages from the spiritual realm.

The Hausa also have a rich oral tradition, and storytelling is an important way of passing down cultural knowledge and providing guidance for the future. Elders and community leaders are highly respected in Hausa culture, and their knowledge and guidance are often sought on future matters.



Astrology is another significant part of Hausa tradition, and many people consult astrologers for insights. Astrologers may use various methods, such as the position of the stars and planets at the time of an individual's birth, to make predictions about their future.

Islamic teachings play an important role in the Hausa understanding of the future. Muslims believe that Allah is the



ultimate source of knowledge about the future, and that He alone has complete control over the universe and human destiny. Many Hausa Muslims seek guidance from Islamic scholars and religious leaders on future matters including issues such as marriage, business, and other important life decisions.

The Igbos are endowed with a rich cultural heritage that includes a complex system of religious beliefs and practices. In Igbo tradition, the study of the future is often tied to the concept of fate and the belief that events are predetermined by the

forces of the universe.

The Igbo have a variety of divination systems, the most famous of which is the system of Ifa divination, which is also practiced by the Yoruba people. In Ifa divination, a diviner (known as a dibia) uses palm nuts or kola nuts to communicate with the spirits and obtain guidance on specific issues or questions. The dibia interprets the patterns and symbols to provide insights as well as guidance on how to navigate current challenges or future situations.

In Igbo tradition, there is also a strong belief in the power of ancestral spirits and the role they play in influencing the future. Ancestors are often seen as intermediaries between the living and the spirit world, and their guidance and wisdom are sought through divination and other spiritual practices.

Moreover, the Igbo have a rich oral tradition, and stories, myths, and proverbs are often used to impart wisdom and provide insights into the future. Like the Yorubas and Hausas, elders and community leaders are also highly respected in Igbo culture, and their knowledge and guidance are often sought on matters related to the future.

In Igbo tradition, there is also a belief in the power of sacrifices and offerings to appease deities and spirits and influence the future. Religious leaders, known as Ndiichie, often play a central role in these rituals and ceremonies.

Igbo culture places a strong emphasis on the concept of destiny or chi, which is believed to be an individual's personal god and is seen as guiding their life path and future. The Igbo also have a strong belief in the power of prayer and supplication to the divine to influence the future.

That said, the perception of the three main ethnic groups in Nigeria in the study of the future, demonstrate close ties to the belief in fate and the power of ancestral spirits, divination practices to provide insights and guidance on matters related to the future. They all place significant value on oral tradition, by elders and community leaders, and divination practices all play a role in shaping the understanding of the future among the major ethnic groups in Nigeria.

Common Sayings about the Future

One common feature among Nigerians is the expressive manner of communication. Communication is laced with allegories and the first is of these with regard to the future is an admonition.

- "The future belongs to those who prepare for it today." This saying

emphasizes the importance of planning and taking action in the present to secure a better future.

- "No one knows tomorrow." This saying highlights the unpredictability of the future and the need to be prepared for anything.



- "The future is bright." This optimistic saying suggests that good things are in store for the future.
- "We shall see what the future holds." This saying acknowledges the uncertainty of the future and suggests a wait-and-see approach.
- "The future is not promised." This warning reminds us of the importance of living in the present and making the most of each day.
- "The future is in our hands." This saying stresses the power of individuals and communities to shape their own future through their actions and choices.
- "The future is for the fearless." This saying emphasizes the importance of taking risks and being brave in order to achieve success in the future.
- "The future is a blank canvas." This saying suggests that the future is open to endless possibilities and can be shaped in any way we choose.
- "The future is now." This saying emphasizes the urgency of taking action in the present in order to create a better future.
- "Tomorrow will take care of itself." This saying shows the importance of living in the present and not worrying too much about the future. It suggests that things will work out in their own time and that one should focus on the present moment.
- "E go better": This pidgin English saying translates to "It will get better". It is often used to encourage people to stay positive and hopeful about the future, even in difficult times.



The notion of the future in Nigeria as a mystery is pervasive. This explains the need to resort to intermediaries in the form of priests, elders and diviners whose role is primarily to provide interpretation of spiritual knowledge.

The future is considered as uncertain which calls for divine assistance. This is evident in the preoccupation of Nigerians with religion.

Finally, Nigerians view the future with hope and optimism despite all. This reality shows up in what people call resilience of Nigerians. There is always a positive way of interpreting even the most horrendous happenings.

That said, I find this a convenient point at which to leave you with an expression of our incurable optimism. Whatever happens, be assured that “e go better!”



A manifesto for the builders of African Futures

Saar Ben-Attar

African Futures is a term sure to draw attention

By engaging in African futures our attention is not actually in a futuristic scenario but very practically in the actions we take today. Present and future are never completely separate. This essay goes back in history to demonstrate the future-focussed mindset of Africa's populations and then demonstrates success stories among the countries in Africa that have shown how their change of mindset can redirect the destiny of their country and their people.

African futures, a term that is sure to draw attention. Whether you are a firm believer in the continent becoming the world's premier growth market of the 21st Century, the last unexplored global growth opportunity, or whether you are concerned perhaps whether African countries can realise such bright prospects, ones that are strikingly different, more affluent and secure than what you see as the African continent of today, putting the words Africa and Futures together, is sure to draw a response.

By engaging in African futures, we draw our attention not merely to a future date, a futuristic scene from the Black Panther series. Rather, Africa Futures draw us to the decisions we make today, those that lead us towards such an envisioned future of the continent and its people. The present and the future are never completely separate.

Engaging in African futures also draw us towards taking action, and the unexpected terrains we could face along the way. Futurist Amy Webb reminds us that today we live in the actioning era. That is, an era that requires a new kind of scenario, where we connect the near term and the far term. In this era, African nations can rehearse their own

futures, not merely follow the futures set, dystopian or otherwise, by other nations. The future of Africa, perhaps for the first time, is set by its own people. The future of prosperous nations and innovative solutions, the future of jobs and

"A futures mindset is a broad term that describes our ability to recognise that the future is not a linear extension of the past or present, but rather a multitude of possible paths, each influenced by a complex interplay of decisions, events, and trends.

inspiring workplaces, the future of collaborations and competition, co-existing, for us to creatively draw on.

As a result, Africans are anticipating, exploring, and preparing for potential future scenarios of the 21st Century. It is not a mere intellectual exercise they are engaged in. These African champions are testing new capabilities and piloting new moves, to challenge how we have done things in Africa so far, and to navigate a new path towards their desired futures. They are the masters of a new, meta-discipline, that we have come to call, leading from the future.



How has this meta-discipline come about? Here, as much as we would like to take credit, we must look to Africa's past. You see, anticipating the future is nothing new to those leading in Africa. Here, on African soil, we find African futures often hiding, in plain sight.

From Ancient Egypt to Pre-Industrial South Africa, African Futures are abundant

The Egyptians are widely regarded as the foremost global superpower of the ancient world for about 3 000 years. Its supreme reign lasted until its conquest by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C. and during those ancient times, it possessed an array of tools to anticipate and prepare for the future. Acutely aware of its dependence on the river Nile for precious water resources, an understanding of astronomy of the times was a critical capability to

master. Combined with a measure of scientific curiosity, ancient Egyptians drew much of their attention to predicting, with fair accuracy I must add, the annual flooding of the river. The Egyptian calendar based their agricultural cycle of planting and harvest on such astronomical observations. Spot the star Sirius at its brightest in the sky, and the Egyptians knew that the Nile would soon begin to flood.

With such periods of flooding, the Nile brought precious water and fertile new soils to the dry lands along its path, readying the surrounding areas of the river for Egyptian farmers to plant their crops. Practices such as crop rotation, pastoral nomadism, and the sacred protection of forests and water sources were based on an understanding of such ecological cycles and the need for sustainable resource management, by the Egyptian empire.

We have little first-hand account of the Egyptian mathematical models

of the time, as very few of them survived to this day. Yet we know that they were held in high regard by competing empires, such as the Babylonians. It was a testament to the Egyptians' ability to anticipate and plan for future agricultural cycles, ensuring food security, an imperative for their society to thrive over centuries.

The ancient Kingdom of Aksum, spanning from present-day Sudan to what is now Eritrea and Northern Ethiopia, presents another ancient-day proponent of early forms of foresight, the art and science of anticipating the future. Aksum was strategically positioned along emerging trade routes of the time, connecting North Africa and the Mediterranean on the one hand, and India and the city-states of the Arabian sea shores, on the other.

The leaders of Aksum anticipated a world where international trade and commerce between the Mediterranean and Asia would flourish. In such a scenario, Aksum would become a hub for inter-continental trade, connecting Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. This foresight was not accidental but a result of careful observation and understanding of regional dynamics. It prompted proactive decisions such as minting their own currency, one of the very few issued in Africa without direct influence of outside culture such as the Romans or Greeks, that dominated commerce

respectively, in those ancient times. It enabled Aksum to flourish economically and culturally, alongside these empires, propagating its economic prosperity, on the back of minted coins, in the centuries that followed.

The Aksumite empire reached the peak of its influence during the 4th and 5th centuries C.E., extended throughout the regions lying south of the Roman Empire, from the fringes of the Sahara in the west, across the Red Sea to the inner Arabian desert in the east.

There were clear limits the ancients' use of foresight in Africa, though. The Egyptians did not match the Babylonians' mastery of



astronomical computations and their predictions of the flooding of the Nile suffered as a result. The Aksumite rulers, despite their many innovations and naval power, did not anticipate geopolitical shifts, such as the decline of the Roman empire. Nor did they anticipate how demographic changes spurred onto populations under their rule, would be plagued by climatic shifts and outbreaks of water-borne diseases. Many moved to the Ethiopian highlands and, over time, the Aksumite rulers lost their access to the Red sea and control over trading routes. Climate change, it seems, while more sporadic in those years, has had a marked impact on African populations, even in centuries past. Looking back, we can see evidence of futures thinking in African cultures, and a mix of tools to draw on, to address pervasive challenges and envision desirable futures. Some succeeded, others failed to build on such diverse perspectives of what could emerge. Yet embracing a mindset that is future-full rather than future-less was at the heart of these attempts. That is where our story heads next.

Future-full or Future-less: It's all in a mindset

Our mindset is a lens through which we see the world. It comprises our underlying beliefs, assumptions and attitudes, which guide our thinking and filter any information which we feed our minds with. A mindset open to new information, flexible in the face of change, and proactive in considering a range of possible futures is essential for effective future planning and decision-making.

The ancient Egyptian rulers, for example, relied heavily on a consistent annual pattern, which precipitated the flooding of the Nile. It led to beliefs about the role of nature in their prosperity as an empire, and attitudes towards the impending seasons and agricultural practices which take full advantage of such annual cycle. Such a mindset was cultivated, not only in individuals but in the society, as a collective. After all, there was clear evidence of it working for centuries. At the same time, it lacked an



openness to multiple futures, where this pattern could fundamentally change course, because of environmental or climatic shifts.

The good news is that our mindsets can evolve. We humans have an incredible capacity to cultivate new mindsets. These can be viewed as new mental muscles, allowing us to open to new information, shift perspectives and hold an evolving picture of the future, along multiple paths.

A futures mindset is a broad term that describes our ability to recognise that the future is not a linear extension of the past or present, but rather a multitude of possible paths, each influenced by a complex interplay of decisions, events, and trends. An ability to entertain multiple perspectives and ideas simultaneously without prematurely converging on a single 'truth', considering a wider range of possibilities and iterative learning, where insights from experiments are used to refine understanding and adjust strategies, in keeping pace with evolving realities. Such a futures mindset helps us become more perceptive of the emergence of futures and, at the same time, more adept in our decision-making today.

African builders of the future

Where do we find builders of Africa's futures in today's uncertain world? Are they distributed well across this vast continent or are there countries, perhaps sub-regions where the conditions for a futures mindset to thrive are prevalent, even commonplace?

Assessing such prevalence against a set of criteria in each of the 54 countries comprising this continent is a mammoth undertaking. However, with the use of AI technologies, a variety of data sources can be brought together to provide us with a perspective that is data rich, yet open to human interpretation and discernment.

As in our exploration of ancient Egypt or the Aksumite empire, there are some tell-tell signs of a futures mindset at work, beyond mere individual expressions. For example, we looked for countries which demonstrate resilience to short-term crises, from sharp economic downturns to natural disasters. Such resilience, we found, leads to a diversified approach to future planning, not in all cases, but in many, and so serve as a directional marker for a futures mindset at work.

A second criterion was transparency in both government and business policies. Leaders in these countries would more openly communicate their visions, their strategies, and progress towards realising these.



There would be signs of wider involvement in the process through various mechanisms. Futures thinking, in these countries, is being woven into the fabric of society, making it a standard practice rather than a discretionary one. Globally, countries such as Singapore come to mind. Which nations demonstrate a similar approach on African soil?

Not surprisingly, futures literacy was another criterion. Here we were looking for both formal foresight education and continuous learning, as an indicator of African builders of the future employing a futures mindset. Countries that regularly engage in international collaborations and knowledge exchanges were highlighted here, where global insights are adapted to

local African contexts, and African insights feed audiences further afield. In these African nations, we found the economy to be more diverse and often having a clear intent to achieve such diversification, reflective of their futures thinking and often unconstrained aspirations.

Lastly, we had to contend with false starts, African nations that looked promising at first, as adopters of a futures mindset, where the business community, as an example, was engaged in futures thinking and doing, yet the country as a whole was lacking in one of the six criteria we employed. The result of such a pattern, we found, was a false start. A country that significantly lacked any of these six criteria was prone to its futures building efforts faltering

after several years. Confidence waned and talent migrated to countries where the prospects for leading from the future were more consistent and pronounced. Sometimes such talent would migrate elsewhere on the African continent, other times builders of the future became part of the African diaspora, in countries further afield.

We found examples of this in countries such as Kenya and South Africa, who met most of our criteria, yet where transparency of Government has eroded and education results, especially at secondary and tertiary levels leaving much to be desired.

At the top of our list of African nations embodying a futures mindset, where we anticipate to find a concentration of builders of Africa's future (per capita), are Mauritius, Rwanda and Namibia. Let's briefly look at these nations in turn.

African Champions of their Future(s)

Rwanda has shown great resilience in its three-decade long recovery from 1994. The country, while having some of the continent's more fertile lands, has been reducing its reliance on agriculture and investing in sectors like technology and tourism, aligned to its Vision 2050. It

has been welcoming entrepreneurial talent particularly over the past decade and supporting international collaborations in the areas of FinTech, such as Rwanda's KIFC and Singapore's Elevandi. Listening to Hortense Mudenge, Head of Strategy at Rwanda Finance, I realised during our interview, how Rwanda's focus on sustainable finance is advancing its developmental goals while promoting STEM education. A small nation with multiple futures beckoning on its path.

Mauritius is another country which ranked highly in our ranking of African Futures. As with Rwanda, its small economy has shown resilience in the face of economic shocks, some external to the continent, yet

"African builders of the future no longer need to build hesitantly alongside or under global influences. They can build collaboratively, while competing for the best ideas, for the brightest talent, that calls Africa, in some way, home."

central to Africa's trade with the world. Mauritius is positioning itself as a gateway for investment into Africa. In the most recent and 34th edition of The Global Financial Centers Index, Mauritius extended its lead in Africa's most highly rated financial centers. Ranked 68th, it



ingredient but not enough. I had the opportunity recently of sitting down with James Mnyupe, the country's Presidential Economic Advisor and former MD of investment firm Allan Gray, in Namibia. We spoke about a series of collaborative pilots and off-take agreements struck with the European Union and major Asia-Pacific nations, such as Japan and South Korea. This small nation could, under one scenario we considered, buoyed by Oil and Hydrogen, break away from its Southern African nation pool and triple its GDP in just over a decade. Such scenario was unimaginable a decade ago. Today, it is possible and to some, rather plausible.

leapfrogged 13 places in 2023, and is second only to Casablanca in Morocco, which in 54th place in the global rankings. There is a clear trend emerging in the country's focus on cross-continental trade, especially with Asia, that can infuse a futures mindset, on this small nation.

Namibia is another fascinating example. As with Rwanda and Mauritius, this small nation of 2.5 million inhabitants, was highly dependent on its much larger neighbour South Africa. Yet, it was a small collective of individuals that began to test a rather speculative scenario at the time. Recognising Namibia's abundant solar and wind resources, the country had the potential of becoming a forerunner in the emerging Green Hydrogen economy. Imagination was a needed

Put together, these nations illustrate how a futures mindset is not only possible but an essential ingredient for the builders of Africa's futures. As with Africans who were anticipating, exploring, and preparing for potential future scenarios in centuries past, today's builders are engaged in foresight, but this time they are far better equipped, more broadly informed of a multiplicity of signals, and ever more connected with builders of future possibility from around the world. African builders of the future no longer need to build hesitantly alongside or under global influences. They can build collaboratively, while competing for the best ideas, for the brightest talent, that calls Africa, in some way, home.

Africa's future of Pan-Africanism

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Replacing old ways with co-creation

The very real obstacles and challenges in Africa need to be balanced with the hopes and dreams of her people. What many may find to be a hopeless situation offers a true opportunity to test the power of futures thinking approaches, realistic scenario planning and the power of co-creation. This essay explores these concepts and offers a few ideas of areas to concentrate on.

Øyvind Sandve



There have been many advocates of a united Africa. These dreams have taken various shapes, but in many Africans this dream lives on. Is this vision utopic? What will a united Africa look like, and how will it come about? This essay will try to balance the strengths and weaknesses of the African continent, how to mitigate the weaknesses, and to reinforce the strengths. By looking at some common thoughts about Africa and her obstacles, I will look at the new opportunities of technology and the concepts of co-creation and consciousness. The essay will try to advocate a possible way towards unification: a massive investment directed towards the next generation of youth by the ones in power, into soft knowledge and evolution of consciousness, in addition to cutting ties with nepotism and corruption. This essay will claim that tweaking and imposing facade-changes will never bring actual change in Africa. For change to come about, there needs to be a fundamental shift in society, based on altering the focus onto the next generation. When African youth step out of the survival paradigm and enter higher consciousness, the African continent will experience a golden era, which might bring about positive change throughout the whole world.

This essay is more an exercise of the mind about how the future could unfold given certain circumstances. I have been blessed in life with various opportunities and most often taken them all. This has led me to five institutions in four different countries, and an array of different fields and levels in the work scope. I have lived in both South Africa and Nigeria for around 2,5 years, and this is the reason Africa is dear to me. Combined with a curious mind and an interest in the concept of consciousness, this has led me to widen my horizon without fear of judgement and academic shaming. I have never been, nor will be, a specialist in any field. For me, holistic thinking is the most rewarding way of working, and I find that specialising and thinking holistic is often an incompatible task.

I do believe that Africa will have its time to shine, despite many doomsday predictions. However, I do not think trying to become Europe or USA will do either the continent nor its people any good, and my prediction is that Africa

needs thinking-outside-the-box experiences to prosper. Africa is not East Asia with its strong work ethic and discipline, nor is it the USA with its "winner takes all" mentality, nor is it Europe with its semi-socialist systems. Africa is enormously diverse. Ridden with a multitude of obstacles which impede the development, especially south of Sahara. These seven factors are not exhaustive but give an indication of the array of problems.

1. Political instability
2. Corruption
3. Poverty and inequality
4. Lack of skilled labour
5. Environmental degradation
6. Debt and financial instability
7. Lack of infrastructure

Are these obstacles equally problematic? No, but how do we focus on what should be addressed first? What correlates and what is causation? What other factors intersect with the variables at play? This is why Africa is so complex. To find the core of the issues is like chasing mist. Thousands of books have tried to explain Africa and her faulty progress. Why won't the measures that have been taken work? The answer might lie in Africa's social fabric.

Many monarchies have learned that an heir to the throne might not always be qualified just because the person is the offspring to the king and queen. And often the new monarch has chosen to find his or her own way to rule the land. Africa has an abundance of natural resources on its continent, but one resource has been neglected over centuries: its people. A bit over-simplified, we can say that the magic ingredient of the success of the tiger states and the second-tier states in Southeast Asia was primary education. A massive investment in primary education bore fruits, not instantly, but after a full generation. That is why political stability is a key factor in achieving anything at all. Without this, the six other obstacles will grow rapidly, and reinforce each other.

The question we ask next is: Is there any hope? And the answer is: Yes! But that hope does not lie with the diamond or the gold, the oil, or the copper. It

lies with the African people and the emerging IT-revolution, which now enters a new phase with AI becoming a new branch in this revolution. The IT revolution has had a significant



impact on individuals, providing access to vast amounts of information and possibility for learning. It has enabled people to work remotely, collaborate with others from around the world, and learn new skills through online platforms and it offers African youth access to more education.

The next generation

When the children of Africa will have the same right to ten years of quality schooling as their counterparts all over the world, they will prosper and introduce a new type of leadership. They will be different, as they will not only be Africans, but they will be world citizens, residing in Africa. Their level of consciousness can be dramatically higher than previous generations of leaders and nepotism and corruption can well be challenged. The new and old will merge into a new African leadership model, which has a different set of values than the west.

Addressing governance challenges in any region requires a multifaceted approach. While public engagement is crucial, it's important to recognize the complexities involved in political and social change.

The concept of a strong civil society is often cited in political science as a key factor in promoting accountability and good governance. In recent years, technology and social media have emerged as powerful tools for civic engagement and organization.



The events of 2010 in North Africa, often referred to as the Arab Spring, demonstrated how digital platforms can facilitate rapid information sharing and coordination among citizens. Social media played a notable role in

these movements, allowing people to connect, share experiences, and organize on an unprecedented scale.

However, it's crucial to note that technology alone doesn't drive social or political change. Rather, it can act as a catalyst, amplifying existing social dynamics and providing new avenues for expression and organization.

As we consider the potential for technology to impact civic engagement and governance, it's important to recognize the diverse contexts across different African countries. We also need to acknowledge both the opportunities and challenges presented by digital technologies and use these tools to complement, rather than replace, traditional forms of civic participation. The interaction between technology, civil society, and governance continues to evolve, offering both opportunities and challenges for citizens and leaders alike.

We might claim that the results of this revolution were not lasting or impressive in nature, however, it shows the immense capability it has for organising a revolution. And this was almost fifteen years ago. Since then, social media has exploded together with the exponential growth in smartphones, reaching 1,4 billion units in 2020. Africa lags behind with around 40 % of the population having access to the internet, due to many living in rural areas. This will increase rapidly, and in 10-20 years all Africans will most likely have access to the internet, and most Africans will have access to a smartphone as well. Let the revolution begin. Kids growing up with access to the internet and a lust for learning, will bring change. Many current leaders across Africa face complex challenges, including economic pressures and systemic issues that can sometimes lead to misuse of power. However, there's hope for positive change. The emerging generation of African leaders shows promise in promoting transparency, accountability, and sustainable development. Their focus on education, innovation, and ethical governance may help address longstanding issues and drive progress across the continent. This new wave of leadership has the potential to bring fresh perspectives and solutions to empower communities and foster growth

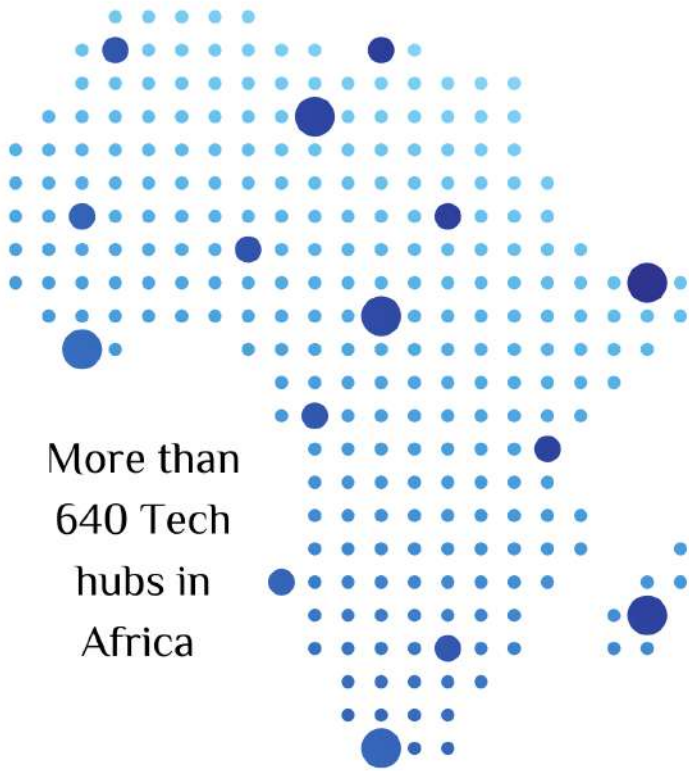
The rise of digital technology and increased access to information is changing how younger generations engage with politics and governance. As transparency increases through smartphones and internet access, citizens are becoming more aware of political challenges, including issues of accountability and fairness in leadership.

This heightened awareness may lead to increased civic engagement and calls for reform from younger demographics. They may seek to address perceived shortcomings in current systems and push for more transparent, inclusive governance structures.

The digital age is likely to continue shaping political discourse and expectations, potentially leading to significant shifts in how governance is approached and scrutinized in many parts of the world.

Co-creation

And this is where it gets interesting. What comes next? To get rid of something, it must be replaced by something better. What is the next big thing for Africa? Co-creation. The term was labelled by visionary and futurist Barbara Marx Hubbard, a woman of remarkable insight about many topics and fields, still vibrant and working until her death in 2019 at 89 years old. Her view was that consciousness is evolving, and that we are at the brink of a new age due to the exponential development within sciences like genealogy, nano-technology, AI, IT, robotics and other technological fields of study. So, what is co-creation? It is the belief that individuals and communities have the capacity to actively participate in shaping their own future and the collective future of humanity. It involves engaging in conscious, intentional, and collaborative efforts to co-create a more sustainable, just, and thriving world. This thought has inspired many into exploring new paradigms of human potential and societal transformation. Her thought was that we will all do better if we utilise what the other has, which in other terms is synergies. So, let's say we have this dream of co-creation, and the next generation stepping up and taking control over the chronic flaws within much of Africa's political system. How do we initiate this revolt? Do we need another Nelson Mandela?



More than
640 Tech
hubs in
Africa

Dreams

No, we need dreams. Millions and hundreds of millions of dreams. Dreams about a united Africa who takes care of all its citizens, and where people are safe, taken care of, and have meaningful lives. And these dreams will influence and affect others across the continent. Social media and new technology will assist this process, and it is a process that is irreversible. Once the dreams are out there, they are unstoppable. Of the 1,3 billion people in Africa, almost 800

million are below the age of 20 years. Imagine arming these youth with dreams, ambitions, and hope. And soon they will have all this. Because they will soon have access to the internet, and they will learn about the infinite possibilities of the world. There will be a shift from a win/lose dichotomy to a create/share dichotomy. They will be hungry for knowledge and determined to absorb every possible opportunity. Dreams might seem absurd and childish in this context about solving complex obstacles, but this paper disagrees. If a person cannot dream it, he cannot become it. Dreams are to humans as institutions are to society. You can kill some judges, but that won't destroy the judiciary system. You can kill demonstrators, but you cannot kill the dream of freedom. Africa once rose against the tyranny of violent oppressors but till suffers from an extreme colonial-hangover, which has lasted around 70 years.

While international financial institutions play a crucial role in global development, there's ongoing debate about the most effective ways to support economic growth and reduce poverty in developing regions, including parts of Africa. Some argue that direct financial aid to governments may not always reach its intended recipients or achieve desired outcomes due to various challenges in governance and implementation.

An alternative approach gaining traction is focusing on expanding access to education and information technology. Investing in digital infrastructure and

internet connectivity could potentially empower individuals and communities by providing access to educational resources, economic opportunities, and increased civic engagement.

The widespread adoption of smartphones in many African countries has already demonstrated the transformative potential of technology. Prioritizing universal internet access could further accelerate this positive impact.

When considering aid and development strategies, it's important to explore methods that ensure resources directly benefit the intended recipients. This might involve innovative approaches to aid distribution, increased transparency measures, or investments in foundational infrastructure and services.

Ultimately, finding the most effective ways to support sustainable development and poverty reduction requires ongoing evaluation, adaptation, and collaboration between international organizations, local governments, and communities.

Sustainable development in Africa may benefit from a shift in focus towards education, healthcare, and civil society infrastructure rather than military equipment. Collaboration between international partners and local communities could prioritize knowledge sharing and capacity building.

The emerging generation of African innovators and leaders presents an opportunity for co-creation and collaborative problem-solving. By fostering open dialogue and embracing diverse perspectives, we can work together to address complex challenges and create positive change.

Emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, offer new tools for innovation and idea generation. When used thoughtfully, these technologies could inspire creative solutions and foster new approaches to longstanding issues. For instance, young people might use AI as a brainstorming tool to explore novel ideas for community development or social entrepreneurship.

However, it's crucial to approach such technologies as supplements to human creativity and local knowledge, not replacements. The most effective solutions will likely come from combining technological insights with deep understanding of local contexts and needs.

By embracing collaborative approaches and leveraging both human and technological resources, we can work towards a future of shared progress and mutual understanding.

Potential solutions

This list is AI's answer to the question "how can co-creation look on the African continent":

1. **Participatory Governance:** Co-creation can be applied in governance processes to involve citizens in decision-making and policy formulation. This can be achieved through participatory mechanisms such as citizen assemblies, community consultations, or collaborative platforms that engage diverse stakeholders in shaping public policies and programs.
2. **Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship:** Co-creation can foster social innovation and entrepreneurship by involving local communities and individuals in developing solutions to address social and environmental challenges. Initiatives that encourage collaboration, knowledge sharing, and resource pooling can empower African communities to co-create sustainable and impactful solutions.
3. **Community Development Projects:** Co-creation can be applied in community development projects to involve community members in designing and implementing initiatives that meet their specific needs. This approach ensures that projects are rooted in the local context and benefit from the knowledge and expertise of the community.
4. **Technology and Digital Platforms:** Co-creation can leverage digital platforms and technology to engage a broader range of stakeholders, facilitate collaboration, and enable knowledge sharing. Online platforms and social media can provide spaces for African communities to co-create solutions, exchange ideas, and mobilise resources.
5. **Arts, Culture, and Creativity:** Co-creation can be embraced in the arts and cultural sectors to promote local creativity, preserve heritage, and foster cultural exchanges. Collaborative artistic projects, community-based festivals, and cultural initiatives can involve artists, performers, and community members in co-creating shared cultural experiences.
6. **Sustainable Development and Environmental Initiatives:** Co-creation can be applied in sustainable development and environmental initiatives to involve local communities, experts, and policymakers in

designing and implementing solutions that promote environmental conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods.

7. **Education and Skill**

Development: Co-creation can be integrated into education and skill development programs to involve learners, educators, and other stakeholders in shaping the

curriculum, learning methods, and relevant skills for the African context. This participatory approach can enhance the relevance and effectiveness of educational initiatives.



These ideas could be explored in co-creation workshops and time could be spent more wisely than we do today. If we have faith in the next generation youth in Africa, we should start addressing them as the future leaders.

Africa's young population represents a significant potential for positive change and innovation. As this generation comes of age, they have the opportunity to shape their countries' futures in unique ways, potentially developing new approaches to leadership and governance.


Many young Africans are already demonstrating creativity, resilience, and a strong commitment to addressing societal challenges. Their fresh perspectives and idealism, combined with increasing access to education and technology, could lead to innovative solutions for long-standing issues.

While every region faces its own set of challenges, Africa's demographic dividend and rich cultural diversity provide a unique context for potential transformations in leadership and societal progress. The continent's youth-driven initiatives and grassroots movements are worth observing, as they

may offer valuable insights for global discussions on governance, sustainable development, and social innovation.

Endnote

As I am writing this essay and the night turns into 17 May, Norway's National day, I feel an urge to write this endnote. What is peculiar about this day, which I personally hold so dearly, is that it is one of quite few national days, which is exclusively a celebration of and for children. The parades are usually organised according to schools with banners, bands and large Norwegian flags at the head. The children wear their nicest clothes and often national costumes, hold hand-held flags, sing rehearsed songs and shout cheers. And this happens in absolutely every corner of the country. Youth holding powerful and inspiring speeches about their vision. It is nationalism, but not on the grown up's terms, but a celebration of children as the most important resource we have. This almost 150 years long tradition was advocated by our most famous poets, superstars of their time. In co-creation with the education system and media, they created synergies which were needed in a nationalistic cultural war between the colonial Swedish rulers at the time. Norway was under colonial rule until 1905. This co-creation has shaped Norway radically and turned our core value into a very mild and including nationalism. Henrik Wergeland is often seen as the strongest advocate for these parades, and his work spans many areas of society. He was a poet from the age of 13 to his early death at 37, being the most renowned and celebrated poet in our history. He was imaginative and productive with several vocations and could easily be labelled a co-creator. It is not only the kings and generals who change history, sometimes it is enough to be an inspiring human being.

A stylized map of Africa is the central focus, rendered in a vibrant, multi-colored gradient from purple and blue at the top to yellow and orange at the bottom. The map is set within a circular frame that resembles a stained-glass window, with geometric patterns in shades of blue, yellow, and purple. Two acacia trees are silhouetted against the sunset background, one on the left and one on the right. A small yellow diamond shape is located on the eastern coast of Africa. The overall aesthetic is artistic and evocative of a sunset over a savanna.

Futures are co-created. Let us keep this conversation going. Should you wish to contribute to the next journal, please be in touch, or reach out to the contributors to explore more about they work that they do in Crafting Positive Futures for Africa

