

GIZ African Union

African Youth Leadership: Creating the Africa *They* Want!

Annual Report 2024

Abbreviations

AA	German Federal Foreign Office
Africa CDC	The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AFRIPOL	AU Mechanism for Police Cooperation
AGA	African Governance Architecture
APSA	African Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
AUBP	African Union Border Programme
AUC	African Union Commission
AUDA-NEPAD	African Union Development Agency – New Partnership for Africa’s Development
AWARE.....	African Women Advancing Rights and Empowerment
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
DataCipation	Inclusive and Harmonised Digital and Data Policies in Africa
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
NELGA	Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa
PIDA	Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RIA.....	Resilience Initiative Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIFA	Skills Initiative for Africa

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WELCOME

by Dr Tobias Thiel,
Director of GIZ African Union

Dear partners, colleagues, and friends,

I am delighted to present to you this special edition of GIZ African Union's Annual Report 2024, celebrating 20 years of partnership with the African Union.

Its theme, **African Youth Leadership: Creating the Africa They Want!**, spotlights the vital role young people play in shaping the continent's economic, social and political futures. The year 2024 marked an important milestone for Africa's youth. Recognising the need to invest in Africa's youthful population, the African Union aptly declared 2024 as the Year of Education: Educate an African fit for the 21st Century. This critical initiative helped reignite momentum on education, skills development, and youth empowerment across the continent.

This report arrives at a critical juncture in global affairs. Core principles of multilateralism – collective decision-making, respect for shared rules, equality among states as well as cooperation and solidarity – are being radically unravelled. In their place, transactional power politics and scaling back international cooperation erode the integrity and cohesion of the international order. Amid these shifting global dynamics, empowering the African Union – a rules-based institution anchored in African leadership – with a more robust mandate and enhanced capacities is not merely an option, but a strategic imperative for (re-)building a more just and inclusive international system. The AU's 2025 theme "Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations" presents an opportunity for reflection in this regard.

Against this background, the GIZ African Union team, comprising more than 250 dedicated professionals across 22 African Union member states, reflect with gratitude on two decades of impactful partnership with the African Union. What began in 2004 as a small capacity development project has since evolved into one of GIZ's most dynamic and wide-reaching portfolios in Africa. Today, the portfolio spans across five core sectors:



Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention; Governance; Sustainable Economic Growth; Just Transition; as well as Health and Social Development – covering nearly all the African Union's priorities under the AU's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

In this report, we share testimonials from people we work with, partners, and commissioning parties that speak to the footprint of our work. It also features youth-centred impact stories, showcasing selected highlights from our work in fostering the inclusion of women and youth, building resilient African cities, as well as empowering youth through skills development.

For 2025 and beyond, we look forward to the fresh perspectives and energy that the new leadership of the African Union Commission – elected based on merit, integrity, regional balance, and gender equity – will bring to overcoming complex challenges, fast-tracking the AU's Agenda 2063 as well as spearheading institutional reform of the Commission. We extend our sincere appreciation to the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, the German Federal Foreign Office, the European Union and other funding partners for their commitment to our shared mission in supporting the African Union.

As we embark on another year, we are eager to further deepen and expand our partnership with the African Union, a collaboration grounded in mutual trust and a shared commitment to advancing sustainable development across the continent.

Addis Ababa, May 2025

Our Vision



We are a **TRUSTED PARTNER** of the African Union



We **EMBODY CHANGE** and facilitate change processes across the continent



We **CONNECT PEOPLE, PARTNERS & IDEAS** across Africa



We foster **INNOVATION** and **SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS** to continental challenges

The African Union is the most important pan-African organisation, uniting all 55 African states. It plays a pivotal role in promoting peace and security, democratic governance, regional economic integration, and social development across the continent. The AU is a strategic partner for Germany's international cooperation.

Since 2004, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) has been working with the AU Commission as well as many of the AU's specialised institutions and agencies to jointly implement programmes and projects at continental, regional, and national level. These include, among others, the AU Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat, the AU Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL), and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

The AU-GIZ partnership is guided by the AU's vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa aiming to find African solutions to African challenges to realise the Africa that Africans want. For this purpose, its strategic framework for inclusive growth and sustainable development is the Agenda 2063. The seven core aspirations of the Agenda 2063 are designed to accelerate Africa's growth and development while simultaneously contributing to the achievement of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



AU VISION

An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.





ABOUT GIZ AU

Our Work, Team and Impact

Areas of Work

As a strong partner of the African Union, GIZ African Union is committed to advancing the continent's aspirations and global development objectives. On behalf of our commissioning parties – the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the German Federal Foreign Office (AA) – as well as additional international partners, such as the European Union, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, GIZ AU plays a pivotal role in supporting the AU's efforts in 44 of its 55 member states.

Our work focuses on the following five key sectors:

Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention: We strengthen mechanisms for conflict resolution, crisis response, and peace consolidation to foster stability and security across the continent.

Governance: We enhance governance structures, promote democratic principles, and support institutions that foster inclusive and accountable leadership, and women's rights.

Sustainable Economic Growth: We drive economic resilience, innovation, and employment opportunities to ensure long-term prosperity for African societies, and regional economic integration.

Health and Social Development: We support health systems and social policies that enhance well-being and inclusion across diverse communities.

Just Transition: We facilitate climate-responsive policies, access to sustainable energy, rural development, and green economic transformation for a sustainable future.

GIZ AU's programmes and projects align with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and the AU's aspirations of the Agenda 2063, reinforcing the pan-African vision for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress, and collective prosperity.

AGENDA 2063 AND ITS 7 ASPIRATIONS



1
A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development



2
An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance



3
An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice, and the rule of law



4
A peaceful and secure Africa



5
An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics



6
An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children



7
Africa as a strong, united, resilient, and influential global player and partner

Programmes and Projects at GIZ African Union

Governance



ICBP	Institutional Capacity Building Programme (01/2024 – 12/2026, EUR 6.5 million)
AWARE	African Women Advancing Rights and Empowerment (07/2023 – 06/2026, EUR 9.0 million)
SFIFD	Strengthening Development Financing in Africa through Combating Illicit Financial Flows and Effective Debt Management including the multi-donor action “SecFin Africa” (07/2024 – 06/2028, EUR 24.4 million) *
GFG	Good Financial Governance in Africa including the multi-donor initiative “Fighting Illicit Financial Flows in Africa” (02/2019 – 06/2025, EUR 11.0 million) * / ****
BRIDGE	Boosting the Rights of Individuals with Disabilities in Africa (11/2024 – 10/2028, EUR 8.0 million)
F4F	Forest4Future (01/2020 – 06/2027, EUR 0.7 million)
K4T	Supporting Linkages Between Research and Economic Policy in Africa (01/2022 – 06/2025, EUR 0.4 million)
SFF	Debt Management (08/2023 – 10/2025, EUR 0.5 million)



Sustainable Economic Growth



AfCFTA	Support to the African Continental Free Trade Area including the multi-donor actions “Team Europe Technical Assistance Facility to Support AfCFTA and Continental Economic Integration” and “Trade in Services” (08/2020 – 06/2026, EUR 70.0 million) * / **
AfPQ	Alliance for Product Quality in Africa (03/2023 – 03/2026, EUR 5.0 million)
Migration	Support to the African Union on Labour Migration and Free Movement including a contribution for “Action on the Joint Labour Migration Plan (JLMP)” (01/2022 – 12/2025, EUR 14.7 million) ***
DataCipation	Inclusive and Harmonised Digital and Data Policies in Africa including the multi-donor “Data Governance in Africa Initiative” (06/2020 – 07/2026, EUR 41.3 million) *
Cyber	Partnership for Strengthening Cybersecurity (02/2023 – 06/2026, EUR 0.5 million)
SIFA	Skills Initiative for Africa (01/2023 – 12/2025, EUR 7.9 million)
HMCCC	Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change including a contribution for “Improving the Implementation of Climate-Resilient and Gender-Responsive Approaches to Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change” (12/2023 – 03/2027, EUR 0.8 million) ***



All programmes and projects are implemented on behalf of the German Government.



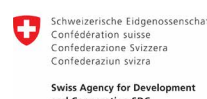
* Co-funded by



** Co-funded by



*** Co-funded by



**** Co-funded by



Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention



APSA-AGA	Support to the AU in the Area of Peace, Security and Governance (05/2022 – 04/2026, EUR 13.7 million)
TANA	Support to the Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa (07/2021 – 04/2025, EUR 5.0 million)
AUBP	Border Governance – Support to the African Union Border Programme (07/2023 – 06/2026, EUR 15.0 million)
AFRIPOL	Programme to Build and Strengthen the Police Structures in Africa (01/2023 – 06/2026, EUR 1.7 million)



Health and Social Development



SCPRA	Strengthening Crisis and Pandemic Prevention in Africa including the multi-donor action “Strengthening One Health Coordination in Africa: Support to Africa CDC” (12/2021 – 02/2028, EUR 23.9 million) *
BACKUP Health	Global Programme Health Systems Strengthening including the “Support Structure for the Team Europe Initiative on Manufacturing and Access to Vaccines, Medicines, and Health Technologies in Africa (MAV+)” (04/2020 – 03/2026, EUR 3.3 million) *
PROH	Pandemic Resilience, One Health (09/2024 – 08/2026, EUR 5.2 million) *
OHDA	One Health Data Alliance Africa (01/2022 – 12/2025, EUR 2.5 million)
S4DA	Sport for Development in Africa (08/2022 – 06/2025, EUR 2.1 million)



Just Transition



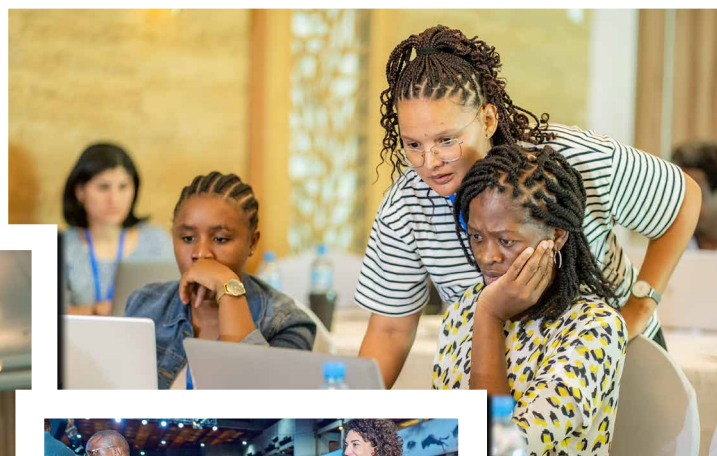
SLGA	Strengthening Advisory Capacities for Land Governance in Africa (11/2014 – 02/2026, EUR 47.8 million)
RIA	Resilience Initiative Africa (07/2022 – 06/2026, EUR 16.5 million)
PIDA	Green Infrastructure Corridors for Intra-African Trade – Support to PIDA (11/2021 – 10/2025, EUR 13.5 million)
AEEP	Africa-EU Energy Partnership (04/2018 – 09/2026, EUR 11.7 million) *
ABF	Agri-Business Facility for Africa (01/2020 – 06/2027, EUR 1.0 million)
BlueSec	Global Water Security – Cooperation for Resilience and Conflict Prevention including the multi-donor action “Blue Africa” (01/2024 – 10/2027, EUR 12.2 million) *
AgSys	Global Programme on Sustainable Agricultural Systems and Policies (03/2023 – 12/2027, EUR 0.5 million)
LiveSys	Catalysing Transformation Towards Sustainable Livestock Systems (01/2024 – 12/2028, EUR 2.5 million)
Energy	Accelerating the Energy Transition in Africa (01/2025 – 11/2027, EUR 16.5 million)



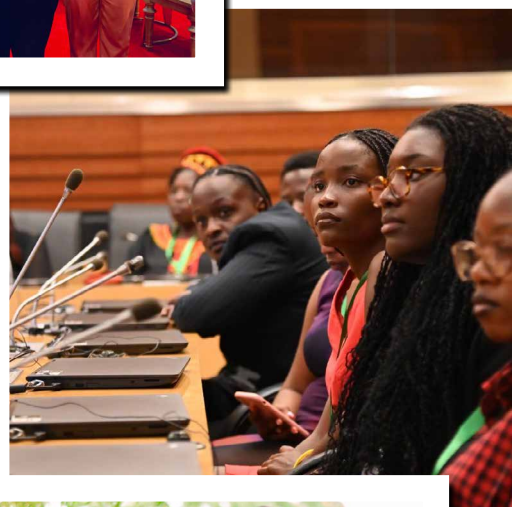
Our Work in 2024



6,000+ professionals
enhanced their skills through trainings



Private sector and civil society engagement
was strengthened in **50+ continental
initiatives**, fostering inclusive and
impactful decision-making



11,000+ people connected,
collaborated, and exchanged knowledge at
100+ events across the continent



Our online campaigns reached
5 million+ social media users,
driving awareness and engagement



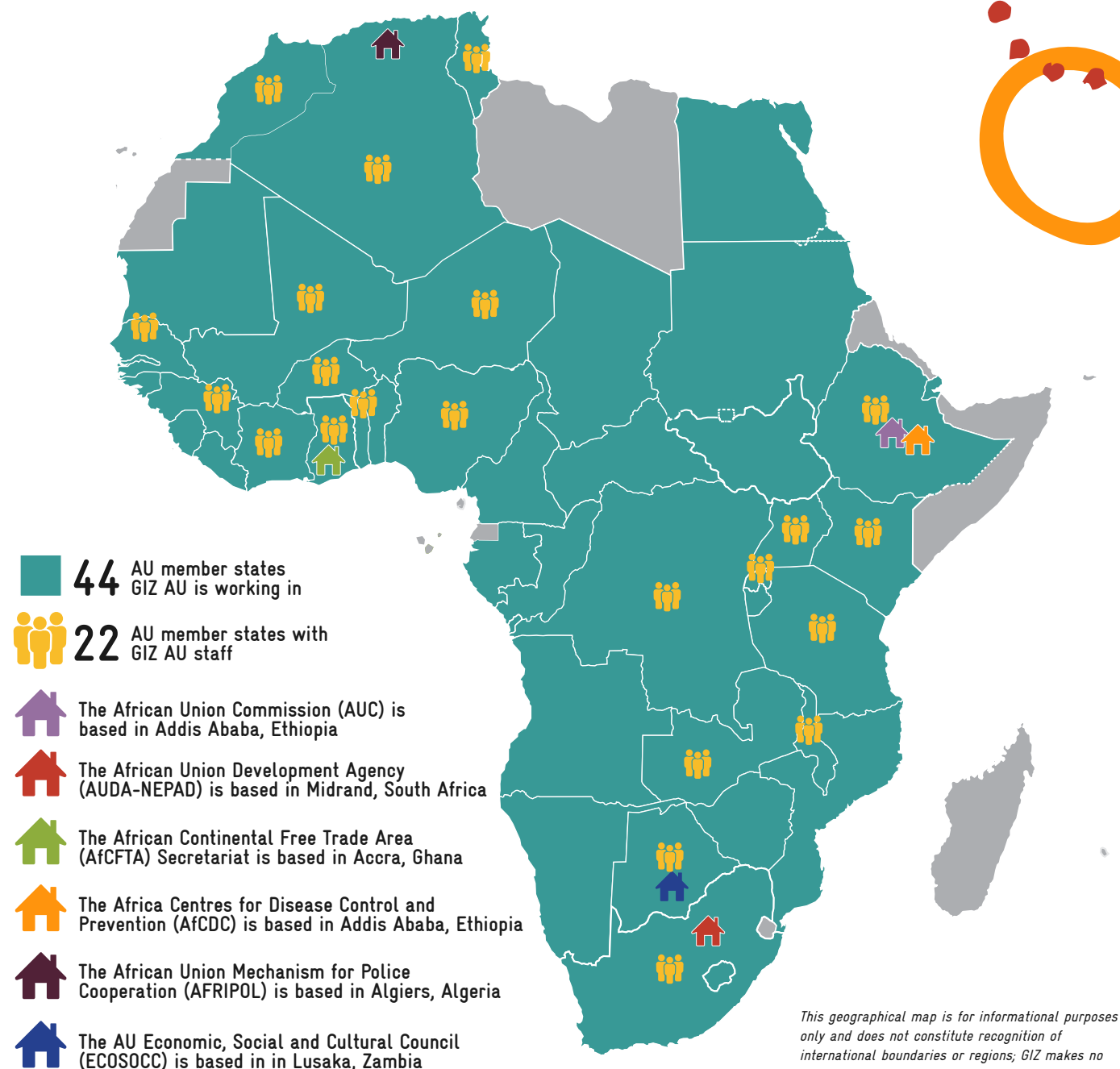
Together with our partner, we developed
100+ knowledge products to
accelerate regional integration



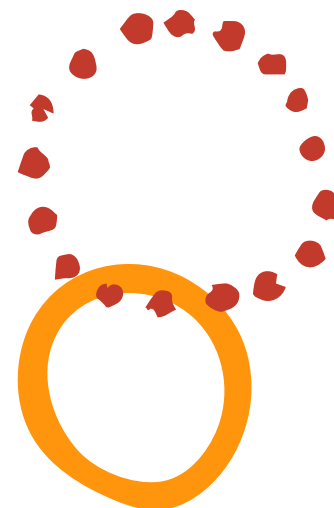
We ensured that statements on
human rights, gender equality, and
climate protection are included in
41 official AU policy documents



Facts and Figures



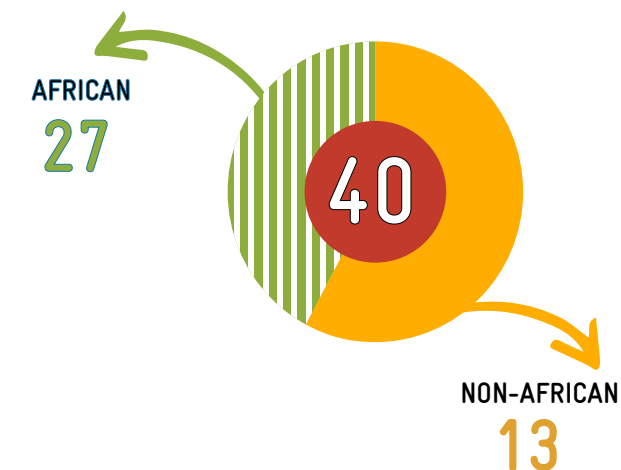
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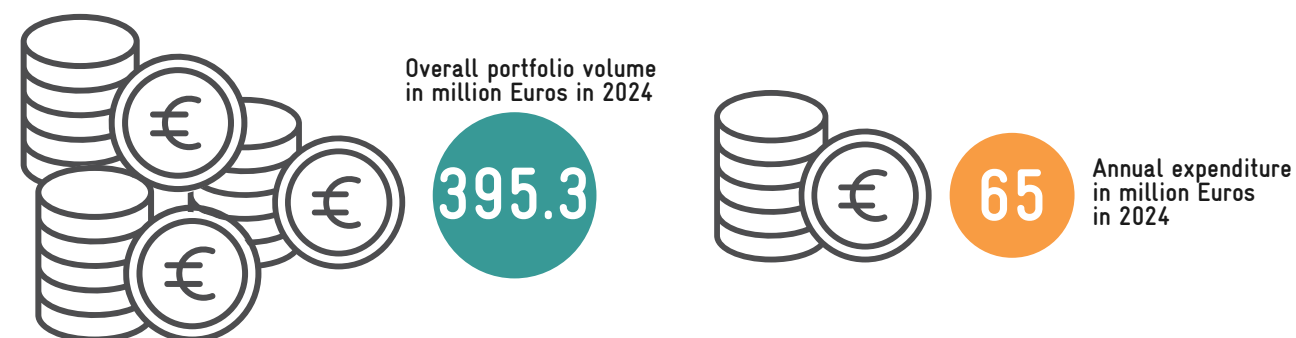
THE GIZ AU TEAM



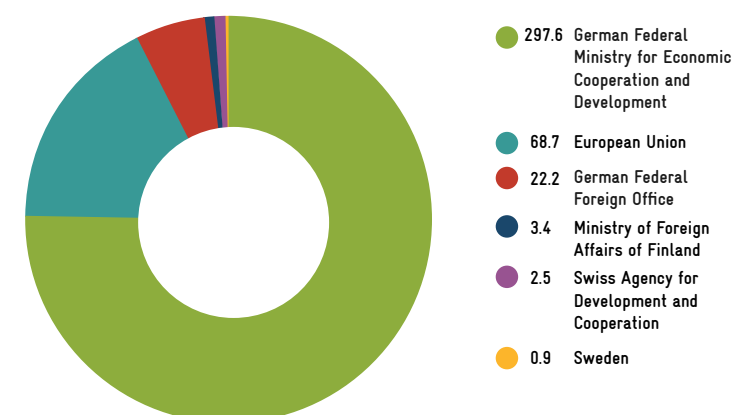
NATIONALITIES



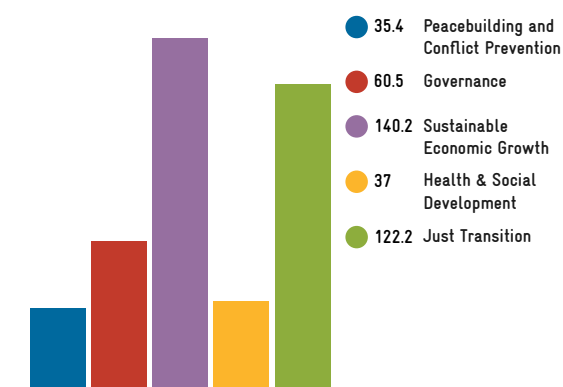
BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE



Funding by source in million Euros



Funding by sectors in million Euros



National



Regional



Continental



20 YEARS OF AFRICAN UNION-GERMANY PARTNERSHIP



2004

Formal initiation of the partnership between the recently formed African Union and Germany by launching the Institutional Capacity Building Programme

2005

Start of support to the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) with a focus on conflict early warning, mediation, and the African Standby Force

2006

Cooperation with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), strengthening human rights initiatives across the continent

Support to the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and NEPAD on institutional reform and capacity development

2008

Launch of the African Union Border Programme (AUBP), initially in six countries, later expanding to 35 AU member states. To date, over 8,000 km of borders have been better defined to prevent conflict

Support to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP): For more than 12 years, Germany supported CAADP to promote climate-resilient agriculture in more than 30 African countries

Launch of the Strengthening Advisory Capacities for Land Governance in Africa (SLGA) Programme. Since then, the project has trained over 3,500 individuals and supported 15,000 knowledge products and datasets for better land policies across Africa

Start of support to the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA). To date, Germany has supported 69 infrastructure projects in the energy, transport, water, and IT sectors

Agenda 2063 The Africa We Want

2013

Adoption of Agenda 2063: AU member states adopt the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want – Africa's blueprint for transforming Africa into the global powerhouse of the future

2012

First Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa taking place with German support, providing a platform for African leaders to develop African solutions to the continent's security challenges



2015

The AU and Germany sign an agreement on development cooperation to deepen their ties and further formalise the support of GIZ and other German implementing organisations

2016

Inauguration of the Julius Nyerere Peace and Security Building in Addis Ababa, built with German support, by Chairperson of the AU Commission Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and German Federal Chancellor Dr Angela Merkel



Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) launched to boost youth and women's employment

2018

Establishment of a dedicated GIZ office for the African Union, reflecting the growing partnership and its continental scope

Signing of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Framework for a single continental market. Germany supports this Agenda 2063 flagship project by working with AU institutions, regional economic communities, and AU member states



Adoption of the Free Movement Protocol, a key step towards intra-African mobility. GIZ works with the AU and international partners to improve migration governance

2020

Support to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) during the Covid-19 pandemic. GIZ's work strengthens the preparedness of African institutions for current and future health challenges



2021

Launch of the AU Digital and Innovation Fellowship, a year-long programme to embed African tech talents in AU departments. Fellows from ten African countries co-create digital solutions and drive the AU's digital transformation from within

2022

The AU Media Fellowship launches to enhance media development and journalism across Africa. It empowers journalists and creators to tell development-driven stories from African perspectives, shaping narratives by and for Africans

2024

The AU and Germany celebrate 20 years of partnership at the new GIZ African Union Office in Addis Ababa. The Director-General of the AU Commission and the German Ambassador reaffirm their commitment to many more years of cooperation

Reflections



“At the African Union Commission, we are very happy with the partnership that we have with GIZ. We are celebrating 20 years of this successful partnership, and we are looking to yet another cycle of 20 years to reach our common ambitions.

– H.E. Ambassador Dr Fathallah Sijilmassi
Director General of the African Union Commission



“Over the past two decades, our partnership with the African Union has contributed to establishing key frameworks, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area. We have also supported many young innovators and peacebuilders across Africa. The youth we have engaged are not waiting – they are building the Africa they want. GIZ is proud to walk this path with them.

– Anna Sophie Herken
Member of the GIZ Management Board



“Together, we have developed norms and standards to better institutionalise gender equality. As a result, many AU member states, AU organs and civil society organisations have enacted additional laws and policies at national and regional levels to promote gender equality.

– H.E. Bineta Diop
Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union
Commission on Women, Peace, and Security



“Africa is forging its own distinct path towards continental integration and sustainable development. For Germany and Europe, the African Union has been a key partner. We share a common interest in upholding the rules-based multilateral order. Since 2004, Germany has supported the AU in realising the ambitions of its Agenda 2063. We are proud of the important impacts GIZ has achieved as part of the German Development Cooperation, and we remain committed to our close partnership with the AU.

–H.E. Jens Hanefeld
German Ambassador to Ethiopia and
Permanent Observer to the African Union

“The partnership has demonstrated that real change happens when young people are engaged, empowered, and equipped. We must continue building an Africa where youth are at the forefront of shaping policies, preventing conflicts, and driving sustainable peace.

– Simone Mbodé Diouf
African Youth Ambassador for Peace (AYAP) for West Africa



Perspectives from Former GIZ African Union Directors



Dr Uwe Kievelitz
Director of GIZ African Union 2013-2017

Can you take us back to the early days of the AU-Germany partnership. What were the key priorities at the time?

When I stepped into the role of Director, the partnership was already well established, particularly in the areas of peace and security, as well as governance and human rights. Our close advisory support to the Deputy Chairperson's office was a key asset that gave our work political weight and strategic direction.

As the AU's importance grew in an evolving African context, Germany significantly increased its support. This allowed us to expand into key areas like education, agriculture, and infrastructure, while also strengthening efforts in border management and police reform.

What key achievements of this partnership are particularly proud of?

During my time, our cooperation grew significantly in scale and impact, reflected in bold, new, continent-wide programmes in various sectors.

Coming from a background in peace, security, and governance, I was especially proud of some powerful symbolic moments such as the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights making its first decisions, a functioning peace and security architecture taking shape, and key border agreements reached in conflict-affected regions. These milestones showed that we were on the right track.

But the most symbolic achievement, and a lasting mark of our cooperation during my tenure, was the opening of the AU's new Peace and Security Building, constructed with German support.

What made the partnership successful during your tenure?

I always saw our experienced and dedicated colleagues as a key factor in our success. I was fortunate to inherit a strong team and to bring in new, outstanding professionals with the technical expertise, management experience, and interpersonal skills that made it possible to build strong, trust-based partnerships with our counterparts in the AU. Beyond that, my time was also marked by excellent relationships with our commissioning parties. We were able to work towards a widely shared vision of cooperation and support.

How did your time at GIZ African Union shape your understanding of pan-Africanism and multilateral cooperation?

It taught me both the importance and the challenges of pan-Africanism and multilateral cooperation. To gain political momentum in a changing world, Africa has to become more united, take on leadership, and address its problems and conflicts internally. But achieving this among 55 countries, which is twice as many as in the EU, requires different levels of integration, both regionally and continentally. I have always valued Germany's support across all levels: national, regional, and continental.

I also gained insight into the dynamism of a new, young generation of Africans, full of energy and creativity, and more business-oriented than ideological. It gives me hope that the foundations of classic Pan-Africanism (which was essential in its time) will give rise to a strong and pragmatic internationalism for the future.

What did working with the AU mean to you personally?

Working with the AU meant thinking more politically than in other GIZ contexts, acting on a large scale without losing sight of reality. It required being in tune with our commissioning parties in Germany, translating political priorities into actionable programmes, and vice versa.

It also meant exchanging daily with fascinating people, within our office, across institutions, at conferences, and during visits across Africa. It was a time of meaningful encounters and deep human learning, staying connected to global issues and the everyday realities of African people. I miss it a lot!



Dr Inge Baumgarten
Director of GIZ Togo, director of GIZ African Union 2017-2022

Can you take us back to the early days of the AU-Germany partnership. What were the key priorities at the time?

Our shared vision was always anchored in the AU's Agenda 2063. The early years were defined by building robust institutions and providing tangible support to flagship pan-African initiatives. For example, we contributed to the "Silencing the Guns" campaign and backed the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) to launch advanced training programmes and academic collaborations. IPSS would go on to host the secretariat of the Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa. These early efforts laid a strong foundation for ongoing collaboration in capacity building and pan-African development.

What key achievements of this partnership are particularly proud of?

I'm proud of the meaningful outcomes achieved through our collaboration with the AU. Two key milestones reflect the value and impact of our joint efforts:

Our work on the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) demonstrated investment not just in infrastructure, but in livelihoods and inclusive growth: Between 2012 and 2018, PIDA projects generated around 142,000 direct and 117,000 indirect jobs, while delivering over 16,000 km of roads, 4,000 km of railways, and 3,500 km of energy transmission lines.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we worked with Africa CDC to deliver over 1.4 million test kits via the EU Humanitarian Air Bridge to more than 25 African countries. This marked the beginning of a broader and

ongoing partnership to strengthen health systems across Africa.

What made the partnership successful during your tenure?

Transparency and accountability, anchored in our shared vision of mutual partnership and trust. We brought this to life through a clear mission: developing sustainable solutions to improve livelihoods while fostering continental connectivity and global engagement. To build confidence among diverse stakeholders, we invested in communication to showcase joint achievements and amplify the voices of partners at all levels. Yet the true catalysts were the human connections – GIZ staff alongside AU counterparts, and policymakers, civil society leaders – that transformed dialogue into tangible outcomes.

How did your time at GIZ African Union shape your understanding of pan-Africanism and multilateral cooperation?

My time at GIZ AU deepened my appreciation for pan-Africanism and the power of multilateral cooperation. I have long admired the AU's founding vision of equality, opportunity, and a united Africa with a strong global voice.

GIZ felt like a natural fit with the AU, given its broad expertise and presence across African countries and regional organisations. I learned that diversity of people, ideas, and approaches is a true strength in multilateral work, helping to bridge perspectives. At the same time, I experienced the complexity of aligning political agendas and achieving tangible progress.

What stood out most was GIZ's role as a bridge-builder. This experience reinforced my belief that Africa's unity and collaboration are not just ideals, but essential tools for creating lasting, positive change across the continent and beyond.

What did working with the AU mean to you personally?

Working with the AU was more than just a job. It was a privilege and a journey that shaped how I see our joint future. I gained a better understanding of the challenge and opportunity of bringing pan-African initiatives down to the everyday realities of individual countries. Now, working in an AU member state, I often draw on those lessons to help connect local priorities with the bigger continental vision. The moments of connection, inspiration, and warmth, and the rich Ethiopian coffee will stay with me the most.

YOUTH

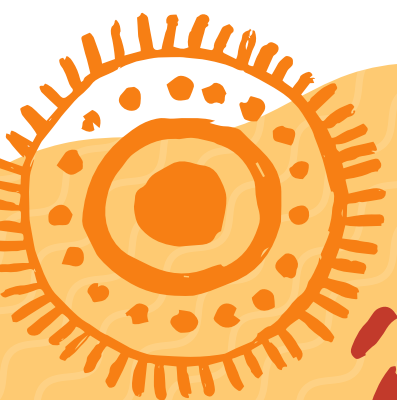
Africa's future is undeniably linked to its youth. By 2050, The continent's population is projected to reach approximately 2.5 billion people, nearly doubling from around 1.5 billion in 2024. With over 60 per cent of the continent's population under the age of 25, young people are shaping Africa's economic, social, and political landscapes. This report highlights their role as catalysts for change, innovators, and leaders in building a sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous Africa.

The African Union recognised the immense potential of young people through its 2024 Theme of the Year, which focuses on education and skills development. This vision aligns with Aspiration 6 of the Agenda 2063 – a people-driven Africa that empowers its youth.

By investing in youth, GIZ and our partners are investing in Africa's future. Their voices and actions ensure that Africa not only meets the challenges of today but thrives in the opportunities of tomorrow – towards a future worth living.

An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of its people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children

– Aspiration 6 of the AU's Agenda 2063



ወጣት የነብር ጣት
(Amharic) The youth
is the tiger's claw.
from Ethiopia

No matter how full
the river, it still
wants to grow.
from Congo

The child who
knows how to
wash his hands
will eat with the
elders.
from West Africa

Umuthi ugotshwa
usemanzi.
(IsiZulu) A tree is
bent while it is
still wet.
from South Africa

التعليم في الصغر كالنقش على الحجر.
(Arabic) Learning in youth is
like engraving on stone.
from North Africa



TRANSFORMING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES

Creating Prosperity for Women and Youth through Collaboration



African women and youth hold immense potential to drive economic growth and social change. However, deep-rooted gender inequalities and economic barriers continue to limit their opportunities.

More than half of the continent's population comprises women and girls. Yet, discriminatory social norms and practices persist, restricting access to education, employment, finance, and political participation. Meanwhile, youth unemployment remains a pressing issue, with over 72 million young people – two-thirds of them young women – lacking employment, education, or training opportunities.

To address these systemic challenges, the African Union has adopted legal and policy frameworks to promote gender equality and economic inclusion. However, these commitments are realised unevenly. The AU-German project African Women Advancing Rights and Empowerment (AWARE), in alignment with the principle “From Policy to Practice”, is working to bridge this gap by advancing rights, resources, and representation for African women and youth.

SDGs



Agenda 2063



Transformative Change Through AWARE



The AWARE project embraces a bold, gender-transformative approach by applying the 3Rs framework: rights, resources, and representation. It supports continental initiatives addressing structural root causes of gender inequalities equipping women and youth with the tools they need to thrive. A key element of this work is its partnership with the AU Commission's Women, Gender, and Youth Directorate through the Women and Youth Financial and Economic Inclusion Initiative (WYFEI). This initiative will unlock USD 100 billion by 2030 for at least 10 million women and youth, fostering inclusive economic growth through investments and access to financial services.

In July 2024, the WYFEI convened a Technical Meeting in Accra, Ghana, gathering 200 stakeholders from across the continent and beyond to evaluate progress, accelerate implementation, and strengthen collective action. The event served as a platform for key actors to align on the next steps, ensuring that the initiative continues to drive meaningful change and economic empowerment for African women and youth.

Turning Policy into Action: Achievements in 2024

Empowering young women entrepreneurs is at the core of AWARE's mission. One of its collaborations is with the Ugandan women network Mkazipreneur and its Bold Women Cohort, a National Social Security Fund Hi-Innovator Programme. This initiative provides women and youth entrepreneurs with essential skills in financial literacy, product marketing, and network-building. As a result, they are equipped with the confidence and tools to improve and scale up their businesses.

Trainings for Entrepreneurs

Participants undergo intensive training in financial management, strategic planning, and business development. They gain insights into goal setting, self-motivation, and growth strategies to enhance their long-term success.

Pitch Day & Investment

The programme culminates in a Pitch Day, where entrepreneurs present their business ideas to a panel of investors. In 2024, nine out of eleven businesses successfully secured USD 20,000 each through the Mastercard Foundation, allowing them to hire additional staff, expand operations, and increase profitability.

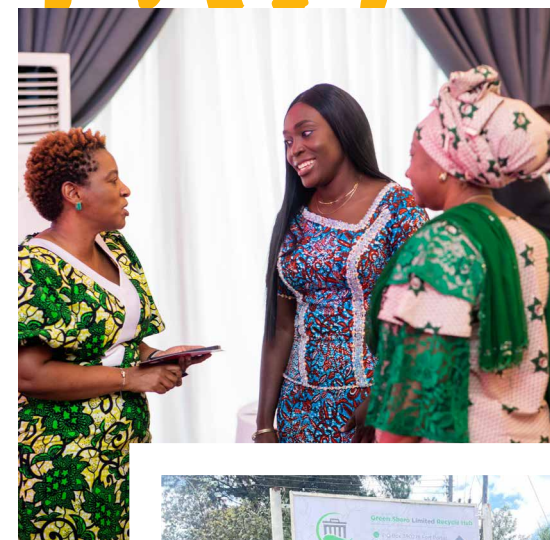
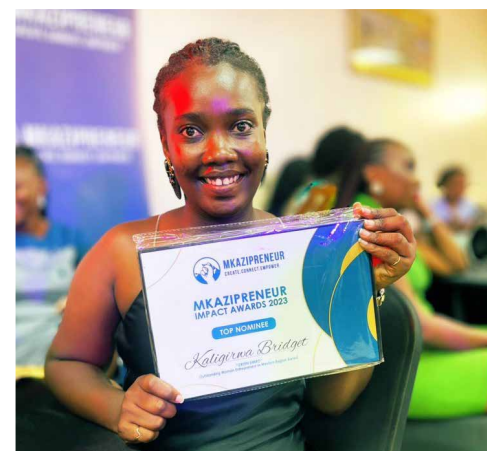
Access to Financial Systems

By depositing these investment funds into banks, entrepreneurs create a credit history which is important for receiving future eligibility for business loans. This is an essential step for long-term business sustainability.

Mentorship plays a critical role in supporting youth entrepreneurs who, despite strong motivation and innovative ideas, often lack the structured business experience and track records that investors seek. The Bold Women Cohort bridges this gap, providing the tools, networks, and financial pathways needed for business growth. Through AWARE's support, Mkazipreneur expanded its reach to more rural and underserved communities, ensuring that no one is left behind.

“Before this programme, we struggled with limited space, funding, and awareness. Now, we recycle over 148 tons of organic fertilizer and 200 tons of plastic waste annually, creating 58 direct jobs. Our community sees waste as an opportunity, not a burden.”

– Kigambo Bridget Kaligirwa, Founder of Green Shero Ltd., Uganda



Economic empowerment is not just about financial investment but also about breaking down systemic barriers and promoting inclusive and sustainable opportunities. Strategic partnerships and tailored initiatives can create lasting change. By continuing to invest in women and youth, the continent will realise its full economic potential and transform challenges to opportunities and a prosperous and equitable future.



BUILDING RESILIENCE IN AFRICAN CITIES

Youth Leadership for Urban Planning and
Disaster Risk Reduction



The growing impact of climate change is reshaping Africa's urban landscape. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and rapid urbanisation challenge cities already struggling due to insufficient infrastructure and preventive measures. Globally, 2024 was the hottest year on record for the fourth consecutive year; droughts, floods, and heatwaves intensified, threatening the lives of millions. The African continent is particularly affected; more than half of the population on the continent, mostly in urban regions, face disproportionate risks from these climate shocks.

In response, the African Union and its member states promote a shared understanding of urban risks and integrated solutions to enhance urban resilience. Central to this effort is engaging Africa's youth, who are not only the most affected, but also the main contributors to innovative climate action.

A Unified Approach to Resilience

Through the Africa Urban Resilience Programme (AURP) steered by the AU Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment, the AU sets a blueprint for climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction in cities. Germany supports this work through the Resilience Initiative Africa (RIA), emphasising disaster risk knowledge, multi-hazard early warning systems, and risk-informed development planning. RIA ensures youth leadership is integrated into resilience planning, and African cities and communities are equipped to withstand climate change. By collaborating with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), Slum Dwellers International (SDI), and the Africa Adaptation Initiative (AAI), RIA puts policy into practice and contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Youth for Climate Leadership

Africa's young people are particularly vulnerable to climate change. Its consequences – displacement, poverty, and disruptions in education and health services – directly affect them. Yet, they are also key agents of change. Engaging young people in climate resilience strategies is crucial. By providing them with the tools, knowledge, and platforms to participate in disaster risk reduction, the AU and its partners empower the next generation to thrive in a changing climate. Through education, community-based adaptation projects, and youth-led innovation, Africa's young people play a key role in sustainable urban development and the fight against climate change.



Youth Forum on Adaptation Finance in Africa

The second Youth Forum on Adaptation Finance in Africa (YOFAFA 2024) was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 29 to 31 October 2024. Under the theme "Financing Energy Access for Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience in Africa", the forum brought together 150 young leaders from over 30 African countries. Participants co-developed strategies for equitable and accountable climate financing. The forum was organised by AAI, the African Coalition for Sustainable Energy and Access, and the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance, in collaboration with the Government of Cameroon. It showcased the transformative power of African youth in shaping sustainable solutions for a resilient future.

SDGs



Agenda 2063





“Young people’s active participation is essential for building climate-resilient cities and in line with the Aspiration of Agenda 2063.

– Harsen Nyambe Nyambe, Director, Directorate of Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy at the AU Commission

Africa Youth Advisory Board on Disaster Risk Reduction

The Africa Youth Advisory Board on Disaster Risk Reduction (AYAB DRR), an initiative of the AU, empowers young people across the continent to engage in disaster risk reduction and resilience-building. By addressing challenges from urbanisation, climate change, and natural disasters, AYAB DRR fosters capacity building, drives impactful advocacy, and influences policy development. It also supports community-led initiatives, such as green space creation and waste management, while promoting research and innovation. In 2024, AYAB DRR, partnered with UNDRR for an art competition themed “Empowering the Next Generation for a Resilient Future”, highlighting the creativity and commitment of Africa’s youth.

300+ people participated in the development of Disaster Risk Management concepts

1,200+ people were engaged through various activities

13

countries hosted resilience-building initiatives: Cameroon, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, and Uganda



5

participatory risk assessments were conducted in Accra (Ghana), Bukavu (DRC), Homa Bay (Kenya), Mwanza (Tanzania), and Windhoek (Namibia)

15 formats

of RIA were implemented in a way that minimised barriers to participation, ensuring involvement from individuals with diverse backgrounds



Disaster Risk Reduction Workshops

Climate change does not stop at national borders, making it essential to share knowledge on regional risks, most vulnerable areas, and effective solutions. To encourage peer learning between cities, RIA and its partners organised several workshops in 2024, including in Nairobi, Kenya, and Gaborone, Botswana. Over 90 representatives from around 30 countries and cities, regional organisations, and civil society initiatives discussed urban resilience and disaster risk management, focusing on flooding, rapid urbanisation, and impact on vulnerable groups such as women, youth, and marginalised communities. These workshops provided tools and strategies for developing climate-sensitive and gender-equitable solutions ensuring cities are better prepared to manage climate risks.

The AU’s Agenda 2063 envisions an Africa that is resilient, inclusive, and sustainable. Through RIA and its partners, 2024 became a milestone year in equipping youth and cities to withstand climate shocks. Collaboration between civil society, governments, and international partners remain crucial in scaling these efforts.



“By harmonising climate financing with sustainable development, we can compose a resilient future that echoes with hope, harmony, and prosperity for all.

– Fatimah Zannah Mustapha, participant of the Youth Forum on Adaptation Finance in Africa 2024 and Co-Founder & Software Engineer of Future Prowess Foundation, Nigeria



EQUIPPING AFRICA'S YOUTH WITH THE SKILLS TO LEAD

Shaping the Future of Education



The African continent has the largest youth population in the world, representing a massive opportunity for economic growth and innovation. However, a persistent gap between the available skills and the needs of labour markets limits employment prospects. Millions of young people enter the workforce each year without industry-relevant qualifications and skills. Addressing this challenge requires high-quality technical and vocational education and training (TVET) aligned with labour market demands.

Recognising this, the Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA), a programme of the African Union Commission and the African Union Development Agency, strengthens career skills and enhances future employment opportunities. Supported by Germany and the European Union, SIFA advances the AU's Agenda 2063 by fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and inclusive TVET strategies.

Africa Skills Week: A Catalyst for Change

The Africa Skills Week in Accra, Ghana, in October 2024 provided a platform for policy-makers, development partners, educators, industry leaders, and youth to boost skills development. Aligned with the AU's Year of Education, participants urged all stakeholders to harmonise policies, invest in TVET, and institutionalise the Africa Skills Week as a bi-annual platform for continuous collaboration.

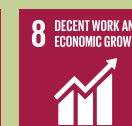


“Our youth, the torchbearers of tomorrow, must be equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate and lead in a complex world.”

– H.E. Nardos Bekele-Thomas, Chief Executive Officer, AUDA-NEPAD



SDGs



Agenda 2063:





2. IMPACTS OF TVET ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING

2.1 ECONOMIC EMPLOYMENT
TVET equips women and girls with practical skills that enable them to access high-demand jobs in various sectors, including manufacturing, services, and agriculture. These jobs offer higher salaries than non-skilled jobs, providing women greater financial independence and social status.

2.2 POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
TVET improves the livelihoods of girls and women and their families by providing them with stable and decent work. Access to quality employment and regular wages are crucial in lifting people out of poverty and providing them with sustainable livelihoods. TVET also promotes social inclusion by enabling girls and women to participate in society and contribute to its development. Training girls and women in TVET challenges gender roles and stereotypes, promoting gender equality.

1. RATIONALE: WHY A TREASURE TROVE ON TVET AND GENDER EQUITY?

Some colleagues might question the need for yet another publication on TVET and gender, given the abundance of documents, initiatives, and material already available. This booklet is referred to as a "treasure trove" because it offers a collection of promising gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches within the TVET sector from the African continent. These approaches are valuable in addressing existing social norms and values regarding women and girls but also highlight the barriers that hinder their active participation in the economy and contribution to family well-being.

1.1 CONTINENTAL AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR GENDER-RESPONSIVE STRATEGIES
Prominent frameworks at both continental and international levels advocate for responsive and transformative strategies to ensure decent employment and decent work for women and girls, aiming to shift harmful norms and gender stereotypes. The AU's Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2019-2026), known as the 10th Agenda, aligns with the AU's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment. Similarly, the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (GIZ) emphasizes an intersectional transformative approach through the German Economic Development Policy (GEDP) introduced in 2022.

1.2 THE GAP IN DOCUMENTATION
Despite these frameworks, there remains a significant gap in the systematic documentation of effective gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches. To address this, the GIZ Network for Economic Development in Africa (NEDA) has initiated the development of a gender-responsive and gender-transformative approach. For many years, the NEDA has been collecting promising project examples from the African continent. For many years, the NEDA has been collecting promising project examples from the African continent. For many years, the NEDA has been collecting promising project examples from the African continent.

1.3 FRAMEWORK FOR SELECTION: THE REACH-SCHEMATIC SHOWCASE MATRIX
The selection of projects showcased in this booklet is guided by the Reach-Schematic Engagement Matrix. This matrix provides a straightforward, understandable framework for assessing the degree of effectiveness and, to some extent, the innovative or transformative character of projects. While many programmes aim to empower marginalised groups, their effectiveness can vary. The Reach-Schematic Engagement Matrix offers a clear and comprehensive method for planning and implementing projects with measurable outcomes in terms of benefit and empowerment (see illustration below).

NEDA TREASURE TROVE: A COLLECTION OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICES FOR TVET IN AFRICA

giz Partners: South Africa, The United Kingdom, Development Cooperation (GIZ) 2024

Promoting Equity and Inclusion

In 2024, SIFA reinforced inclusive skills development through the Africa Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship (ASPYEE), expanding its knowledge-sharing resources and fostering innovative collaborations. SIFA launched a call for good practices that led to the creation of the [African Treasure Trove on Inclusive TVET](#), a collection of gender-responsive and gender-transformative approaches.

A Priority for Africa

During the UN General Assembly, the AU hosted a high-level event advocating for prioritising skills development in Africa. Aligned with the AU's theme of the year, the session identified innovative strategies for mobilising domestic resources, enhancing private sector contributions, and fostering cross-sectoral partnerships. Key outcomes included actionable recommendations for sustainable investments in youth-centred skills development and a reinforced commitment to advancing Africa's education landscape.



In response to evolving economic and social conditions, the AU revised its Continental TVET Strategy 2025-2034 to reflect emerging skills priorities.

Skills Excellence at WorldSkills

From 10 to 15 September 2024, WorldSkills Lyon showcased global excellence, with 1,400 participants from around 70 countries competing across 59 skill areas. This effort strengthened the WorldSkills Africa initiative and enabled a greater youth engagement in vocational education and training.



Building a Skills-Driven Africa

Initiatives such as Africa Skills Week, Africa Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship, and WorldSkills Africa shape the future of education, employability, and economic inclusion. Tailoring vocational education and training to the needs of the labour market and promoting cross-sectoral cooperation will ensure that African youth are equipped with the skills they need to drive the continent's transformation.

FACES & STORIES

GIZ works to shape a future worth living around the world. The true impact of our work is reflected in its effects on people's lives. Across Africa, countless inspirational individuals embody the diversity of our efforts. Whether in Ethiopia, Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, South Sudan, or The Gambia, these changemakers come from diverse backgrounds – driven by passion, commanding their paths, and improving the lives of many. We are honoured to support them alongside our partners and delighted to share their stories with you.

NG'ASIKE SYMPROSE

Participant of the Peace Caravan at the Trijunction Uganda, Kenya, and South Sudan; South Sudan

"Peaceful coexistence plays a major role to the entire Ateker community. We live in different countries, but we speak the same language and dialect, share the same culture and have many other things in common. Just the borders divide us. Thanks to peaceful coexistence through the peace caravan, we now embrace each other and create an atmosphere, that supports everyone and brings the whole community together. Now, our cattle can move and graze on the other side of the border in Kenya. It is also possible to cross the border and access medical and educational services, and much more from there. The peace caravan is a catalyst for change and peace."

"WE HAVE LEARNED THAT PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WILL HELP US TACKLE OUR PROBLEMS TOGETHER."

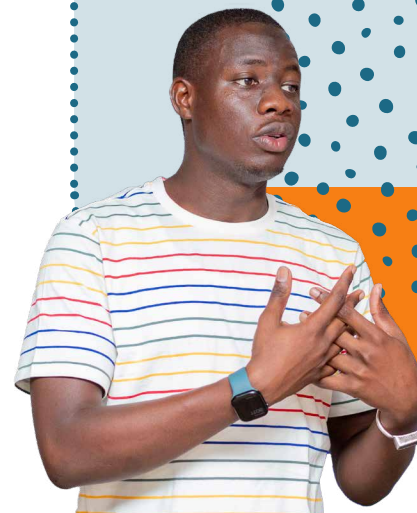
Borders drawn in colonial time divided the Ateker community across Uganda, Kenya, and South Sudan, disrupting their pastoralist way of life. Frequent cross-border movement for water and grazing land often leads to tensions and violent conflicts. To foster peace, the three governments launched a peace caravan, introducing the Ateker to the Maasai's successful conflict resolution method. In 2024, officials and community leaders signed a peace resolution promoting cooperation. The German Government supports this initiative through the African Union Border Programme. It demonstrates how resource management can reduce conflicts and stabilise border regions.



BAKARY SONKO

National Programme Coordinator, PeaceHub The Gambia, The Gambia

"Our partnership with GIZ shaped The Gambia's process for the development of a National Action Plan (NAP) on Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) as it strengthened engagement with policy-makers and youth leaders. It created a platform for a more robust and inclusive process by ensuring all key stakeholders are engaged. Furthermore, the partnership created an opportunity for young people at the grassroots to be trained on the YPS Agenda, thus adding value to the consultation process for the development of the NAP. We are now mentoring 15 young women through the Young Women 4 Peace Mentorship Programme, who will be supporting the implementation of the NAP across the country. This is a unique initiative that explores the potentials of young women as pillars in advancing the YPS Agenda."



"I FELT THE IMPACT OF OUR ADVOCACY AND HOW IT LED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIRST EVER NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE GAMBIA."

Building on the Continental Framework for Youth, Peace, and Security, the AU Youth for Peace Africa Programme, supported by the AU-German APSA-AGA project, has facilitated the development of National Action Plans in AU member states. The Gambia is the third member state to achieve this milestone, following Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo. By adopting action plans, member states commit to addressing the needs, aspirations, and potential of youth to build peaceful and prosperous societies. As a result, young people's critical role in preventing conflict, promoting social cohesion, and fostering resilience is recognised.

HENTHEL DREDA EYOLE

Finalist at the Young Africans Writing Contest 2022, Cameroon

"Participating in the Youth Advocacy Training on the AU Free Movement Protocol (AU FMP) fostered a sense of responsibility and urgency to work towards a continent where mobility is not hindered by borders, and opportunities are accessible to all."

One of the most memorable moments of the training was our visit to the AU Headquarters where we met the AU Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development, H.E. Ambassador Minata Samaté Cessouma. She highlighted the importance of youth in driving the success of the AU FMP and emphasised that the dream of an integrated Africa can only be realised through the active participation of young people in advocacy and implementation.

The programme helped me create meaningful connections with other young leaders who share a vision for a united Africa. Upon my return, I was part of the team that created the Open Borders Alliance, advocating for open borders and endless opportunities in Africa."

"TO GET THE AFRICA WE NEED, WE MUST WORK FOR THE AFRICA WE DESERVE."



The Youth Advocacy Training on the AU FMP was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as part of the award for the finalists of the 2022 Young African Writing Contest. It was not only an opportunity to learn about the FMP but also to connect with fellow young advocates. The training was organised by the AU Economic, Social and Cultural Council in collaboration with GIZ.

VERA BWIRE

Public Participation and African Youth Engagement Specialist; Political Columnist at The Star newspaper, Kenya

“The Pre-Tana Forum in Dakar, Senegal, with a focus on aligning African states and African youth, could not have come at a better time for me. I was at the end of my research on youth engagement in policy making and was also actively writing my political column in Kenya on youths’ civic participation. I was able to find like-minded African research enthusiasts, to connect and exchange views on general, geopolitical, and country-specific issues affecting youth, peace, and security. Through one of these contacts, I was able to present a paper on a forum on ‘Democracy in South Africa’, speaking on youth participation.

I cannot emphasise enough that the voices of youth are more important than ever in achieving peace and security through youth-led efforts. Youth need to represent the power, numbers, and influence they have in Africa and in African conversations on peace and security.”



“AFRICAN YOUTH NEED TO BE ALIGNED WITH AFRICAN STATES: THE YOUTH NEED VOICES OF POWER.”

The Tana High-Level Forum on Security in Africa at Lake Tana in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, is a political dialogue conference bringing together African leaders and stakeholders to find African-led peace and security solutions. The Tana Forum also strengthens the dialogue between the Global South and North by partnering with the Munich Security Conference in annual high-level side events as well as regional Munich Security Leaders Meetings on the continent.

KEDRALA WABELA HUSSEN

Researcher in Irrigation Agriculture and Water Resource Management, Ethiopia

“Hailing from Dalocha, a district in southern Ethiopia, my early education in a rural setting laid the foundation for my passion for sustainable agriculture and water productivity. I earned my Bachelor of Science from Hawassa University’s College of Agriculture in 2011 and began my career as a junior researcher in irrigation agriculture. After that, I achieved a Master’s degree in irrigation and drainage engineering in 2017.

My academic and professional journey embodies the impact of the Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa’s (NELGA) support. I had a desire for advanced learning which was fulfilled through the NELGA-DAAD scholarship, opening doors to world-class education and international exposure and leading to my PhD in Water Resource Management in Morocco in 2024. During my studies, I gained invaluable skills in research data analysis, scientific publication, and climate change adaptation. I was able to participate in notable forums in Marrakech and Dubai. These experiences allowed me to exchange knowledge and bring fresh insights back to Ethiopia”



“STUDYING WITH NELGA-DAAD WAS NOT JUST ABOUT EDUCATION – IT WAS ABOUT CONNECTING, LEARNING, AND MAKING A REAL IMPACT BACK HOME.”

Through the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa (NELGA), the programme Strengthening Advisory Capacities for Land Governance in Africa (SLGA) offers students scholarships and academic opportunities to enhance their knowledge of land governance in Africa. The support has empowered individuals to make significant contributions to land and water management in Africa. Kedrala’s journey underscores the value of international academic collaboration and illustrates NELGA’s role in fostering expertise that land governance across Africa.

FUNMILOLA ADEREMI

Co-Founder and Chief Product Officer at Pharmarun, Nigeria

“As a result of Pharmarun winning the Speak Up Africa – Africa Young Innovator Award, we were invited by GIZ to the Africa Health Tech Summit 2023 (AHTS), where I had the privilege of being nominated as the Youth Champion on the Africa Digital Health Network (ADHN). This opportunity enabled me to co-create the Youth in Digital Health Network at the AHTS 2024, collaborating with young innovators across Africa to define its objectives and foster youth-led innovation. Additionally, my engagement extended to global platforms, such as participating in the Geneva Digital Health Week. My participation at the AHTS created the opportunity to represent women and youth on the interim board of the ADHN, where I contribute to shaping the future of digital health in Africa through advocacy and collaborative leadership.”

“MY EXPERIENCES HAVE BEEN TRANSFORMATIVE, OPENING DOORS TO LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION IN SHAPING THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL HEALTH IN AFRICA.”

Young people are main drivers of health tech innovations in Africa. However, they are often not able to showcase their impacts and participate in shaping processes and in leadership spaces. GIZ fosters youth engagement in the digital health ecosystem through its continued collaboration with the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) to organise the Africa Health Tech Summit. This summit brings together key stakeholders in digital health, providing young innovators with a crucial opportunity to overcome barriers too difficult to tackle independently.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



AEEP APPOINTS NEW HEAD OF SECRETARIAT

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA | OCTOBER 2024

The Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP) is the key political platform for energy cooperation between Africa and Europe, working to facilitate the achievement of universal access to affordable, sustainable, and modern energy for all in Africa. In October 2024, Dr Towela Nyirenda-Jere was appointed as the new Head of Secretariat. Simultaneously, the position was relocated from Germany to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

“I am excited to join the Secretariat and contribute to strengthening the AEEP through continued dialogue and exchanges between the two continents. I see immense opportunities for the partnership to make a tangible impact in meeting the global targets of SDG 7,” says Dr Nyirenda-Jere. She brings a wealth of experience from the energy sector in Africa, having previously served as the Head of Infrastructure, Digitalisation & Energy at AUDA-NEPAD.

The relocation of the Head of Secretariat to Addis Ababa ensures that the Secretariat will work even closer with the AU Commission, the EU Delegation to the African Union, and expand the bicontinental energy dialogue to actors outside the political realm.



STRENGTHENING AfCFTA VALUE CHAINS FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH

ABIDJAN, CÔTE D'IVOIRE | SEPTEMBER 2024

Women and young entrepreneurs are vital drivers of Africa's trade, yet many face significant challenges in accessing markets and financing. To address these barriers, GIZ collaborated with the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to organise a forum in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. 35 representatives from key institutions, along with women and youth entrepreneurs, explored solutions for deeper integration into value chains under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The discussions centred on key sectors of trade, and highlighted structural barriers, financial constraints, and limited export capacity as major obstacles hindering women and young entrepreneurs. It provided a platform to develop tangible solutions, including strategies to enhance access to innovative financing and expand market opportunities – laying out a clear roadmap for inclusive trade growth. Beyond knowledge sharing, the event fostered collaboration, strengthening

UNIFYING AFRICA'S POLICING EFFORTS

CAIRO, EGYPT | NOVEMBER 2024

Security challenges across Africa remain complex and multifaceted, particularly in the areas of regional instability, terrorism, and transnational organised crime. As these threats continue to evolve, a coordinated and strategic response is essential.

To address these challenges, the North African Regional Capacity hosted the fourth AU Police Coordination Meeting in Cairo, Egypt, from 25 to 29 November 2024. The event brought together heads of police components from four of the five African regions, along with representatives from the AU Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), the Police Strategic Support Group, the AU Mechanism for Police Cooperation (AFRIPOL), the AU Counter Terrorism Centre (AUCTC), and other key strategic partners.

The meeting focused on strengthening communication, coordination, collaboration, and integration among all policing entities under the AU. Participants reviewed progress on the 2024 work plans, outlined priorities for 2025, and exchanged insights on policing in Peace Support Operations. Additionally, discussions covered the roles of AFRIPOL, AUCTC, and the successor to ATMIS: the AU Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia.

The event concluded with observations and recommendations, to be submitted to the Peace Support Operations Division before being presented to the AU's Specialised Technical Committee on Defense, Safety, and Security.



ties between governments and the private sector and setting the stage for more impactful and inclusive trade initiatives.

By empowering women and young entrepreneurs, the AfCFTA is evolving beyond policy and becoming a reality, unlocking Africa's full trade potential.



WHEN THE RAINS DON'T COME: TACKLING AFRICA'S CLIMATE SECURITY CHALLENGES

NAIROBI, KENYA | AUGUST 2024

Across Africa, climate change is no longer a distant threat – it is a present crisis. Droughts dry up farmland, force families to flee, and fuel tensions over scarce resources. Recognising the urgency, the AU is shaping a Common African Position on Climate, Peace, and Security (CAP-CPS), a unified response to climate-driven instability.

In August 2024, over 100 leaders from AU member states, regional economic communities, climate commissions, civil society organisations, and research institutions met in Nairobi, Kenya, to chart the way forward. Guided by real-world experiences and Africa's first Climate Security Risk Assessment (ACRA) report, they explored solutions to protect regions, states, and communities from climate-induced insecurity.

The consultation led to a firm commitment: Leaders adopted guiding principles for CAP-CPS, prioritising conflict-sensitive adaptation, stronger governance, and regional cooperation to prevent crises before they escalate. With the ACRA report as a foundation, CAP-CPS will equip Africa with strategies to safeguard both peace and livelihoods. Climate change is not just an environmental issue; it is a security challenge, and action cannot wait.



GREEN BORDERS: CLIMATE CHANGE AND BORDER GOVERNANCE

ABIDJAN, CÔTE D'IVOIRE | OCTOBER 2024



In recent years, climate change has exacerbated the challenges of borderland fragility and governance across Africa. A recent study* highlights how climate change undermines human security in border regions by depleting scarce natural resources and threatening the livelihoods of millions in border communities. However, the African Union's border-related strategic frameworks have yet to fully address the climate conflict nexus.

The second edition of the Abidjan Border Forum focused on these challenges. The forum examined the relationship between climate change and borderland fragility while exploring solutions to enhance the stability of border regions. Border actors from across the continent convened to exchange insights on sustainable border management, transboundary resource governance, access to climate funding, and multi-level collaboration to combat border area fragility.

The forum called for the implementation of the AU Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation, a legal framework to strengthen trade, security, infrastructure development, natural resource management, and cultural exchange among African states. Additionally, the forum emphasised its role as a central platform for African border stakeholders to drive solutions to borderland challenges.

**AU Commission & adelphi. (2024). *Africa Climate Security Risk Assessment: Executive Summary. Weathering Risk.*

THE AU INNOVATION LAB: A HUB FOR YOUTH-CENTRIC INNOVATION AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA | AUGUST 2024

More than half of Africa's population is under the age of 25, and by 2035, the continent will see more young people entering the workforce annually than the rest of the world combined. This demographic shift presents a unique opportunity that must be leveraged through innovation.



As part of the African Union's 1 Million Next Level Initiative – which seeks to provide young people with concrete opportunities – the AU Innovation Lab was launched in August 2024. It serves as a co-creative space designed to drive youth-focused, actionable policies. The lab facilitates multi-stakeholder input, fosters strategic collaboration, and harnesses Africa's vibrant innovation ecosystem while consolidating existing innovations.

Anchored within the AU's Women, Gender, and Youth Directorate, the lab offers services across three key areas: innovation management, ecosystem connections, and capacity building for AU departments and member states.

The lab is paving the way for greater collaboration in the public sector by assembling cross-departmental solution teams. By adopting a comprehensive approach, it also creates opportunities for collaborative work within the AU and with its partners.

EMPOWERING YOUTH INNOVATION IN PUBLIC HEALTH

KIGALI, RWANDA | OCTOBER 2024



Africa has a unique opportunity to use digital health for transformative change, with young people already leading the way in advocacy, research, policy-making, and entrepreneurship. However, challenges such as limited access to networks, mentorship, and resources often slow their progress.

To address these barriers, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), in partnership with Germany, launched the Youth in Digital Health Network (YiDHN). Announced at the 2024 Africa Health Tech Summit, it is a major step towards empowering young people to drive innovation and strengthen healthcare systems.

The YiDHN was developed through extensive consultations with young policy-makers, innovators, and digital health experts. It will build leadership skills for youth in digital health, increase youth participation in governance and regulation, improve access to funding, and encourage collaboration among key stakeholders.

By amplifying youth voices, fostering partnerships, and supporting youth-led initiatives, the YiDHN will help expand access to digital health solutions and tackle Africa's healthcare challenges.

MOVE AFRICA: RESHAPING MIGRATION NARRATIVES IN MEDIA ACROSS AFRICA

VIRTUAL | DECEMBER 2024



Despite the African Union's commitment to promoting free movement across the continent, barriers continue to hinder mobility, slowing economic growth and regional integration. One of the biggest barriers is the widespread negative narrative around African migration, shaped by data gaps and underreporting.

2024 marked the official launch of MOVE Africa, an initiative designed to reframe the conversation on intra-African migration. In collaboration with five leading media organisations, the project seeks to foster informed dialogue and storytelling that highlight the benefits and complexities of migration.

MOVE Africa empowers skilled media professionals to produce and distribute compelling multimedia content, from in-depth articles and podcasts to documentaries and photo essays. By amplifying voices, particularly those of women and youth, the initiative ensures a more inclusive and representative discourse on migration. Additionally, a series of trainings and learning events will equip journalists and content creators with the expertise needed for comprehensive reporting on migration.

This collaborative effort represents a pivotal step toward reshaping perceptions of migration across the continent. By fostering a more nuanced understanding on migration, MOVE Africa contributes to a united and prosperous Africa, aligning with the vision of the AU Agenda 2063.

SPORT AS A POWERFUL TOOL FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT

GABORONE, BOTSWANA | SEPTEMBER 2024



Every year, over 10 million young people enter Africa's labour market, facing the challenge of acquiring the skills needed to thrive in an evolving workforce. Beyond technical knowledge, communication, teamwork, and problem-solving are essential for success. Sport provides a powerful way to develop these life skills while also promoting responsibility, fairness, gender equality, and conflict resolution.

To harness sport's impact for Africa's sustainable growth, the AU Sports Council (AUSC) and the regional project Sport for Development in Africa partnered to develop a five-year roadmap (2024–2028) promoting sport as a driver of social and economic progress.

Throughout 2024, extensive discussions with key stakeholders in the African sports community have shaped this strategy. A major milestone was reached in September 2024, when representatives from all five AUSC regions met in Gaborone, Botswana, to finalise the roadmap. They identified five strategic priorities: governance and accountability, equity and inclusion, participation, performance, and sustainability.

By focusing on these priorities, the strategy strengthens life skills, improves livelihoods, and creates more economic opportunities in sports across the continent, contributing to the achievement of the AU's Agenda 2063.

CONNECTING AND COLLABORATING AT PIDA WEEK 2024

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA | NOVEMBER 2024

PIDA Week focuses on connecting and collaborating on Africa's infrastructure needs and celebrating the achievements of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA).

The eighth PIDA Week took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 25 to 29 November 2024, bringing together more than 1,000 representatives of African governments, regional economic communities, international financial institutions, development partners, and civil society. PIDA has made a significant impact in improving African infrastructure since its launch in 2012.

Germany supported several sessions at the PIDA Week 2024, including discussions on youth and micro, small, and medium enterprises in infrastructure, AUDA-NEPAD's Service Delivery Mechanism for project preparation, and infrastructure development in regional corridors.

Germany supports infrastructure projects through technical and financial cooperation.



NELGA CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF IMPACT IN LAND GOVERNANCE

WASHINGTON, D.C., USA | MAY 2024



Secure land rights remain a challenge in Africa, impacting development, food security, and peacebuilding. The Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa (NELGA) was established to address these issues by strengthening capacity, supporting research, and shaping land policies across the continent.

To celebrate a decade of progress, NELGA hosted a 10-Year Anniversary Breakfast at the World Bank Land Conference, with over 30 partners. The event showcased key achievements, including the launch of 29 land governance programmes in 23 countries, the awarding of more than 160 PhD and MSc scholarships, and the training of nearly 2,500 land professionals.

NELGA's efforts have supported over 80 research projects in more than 40 countries, contributed to land policy reforms in Chad, Ghana, Namibia, Senegal, and Zambia, and advanced five National Agriculture Investment Plans. The anniversary event not only celebrated these successes but also fostered new partnerships to sustain and expand NELGA's impact on land governance in Africa.

CLIMATE, CONFLICT AND COOPERATION: RETHINKING ENERGY SECURITY IN AFRICA

RABAT, MOROCCO | MARCH 2024



In a world shaped by conflict, climate change, and economic uncertainty, energy security in Africa is about more than just reliable and affordable power. It also requires considering environmental, social, development, and geopolitical factors to ensure sustainable solutions.

The Tana Forum, in partnership with the Policy Center for the New South, hosted a Pre-Tana Forum focused on energy security and transitions. This hybrid event brought together around 60 representatives from AU member states, the AU Commission, regional economic communities, and regional mechanisms, along with experts, youth organisations, development partners, research institutions, and think tanks.

In his keynote address, Tana Forum Board Member, H.E. Lassina Zerbo, highlighted the importance of regional cooperation and integration in the energy sector. He also underscored the role of digitalisation in improving energy efficiency and driving innovation.

Discussions covered key issues, such as the link between climate, energy, and security, achieving a just energy transition, and strengthening human security in the face of climate change. Participants emphasised the need for renewable energy, independent power production, and a unified continental approach to climate action.

STAKEHOLDERS UNITE TO TACKLE ILLICIT FINANCIAL FLOWS

TUNIS, TUNISIA | JUNE 2024



Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) present a major obstacle to Africa's economic growth, draining essential resources that could be used for development. Stopping them requires stronger collaboration, innovative solutions, and greater financial transparency.

That is why leaders, policy-makers, and experts came together for the Pan-African Conference on IFFs and Taxation in Tunis, Tunisia, from 26 to 28 June 2024. With over 250 delegates, the event focused on building a united front against IFFs.

A key milestone was the launch of the Team Europe Initiative – a joint effort by the EU, Finland, France, Germany, and Sweden to combat IFFs and transnational organised crime. Birgit Pickel, Director-General for Africa at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), praised the AU's efforts and reaffirmed Germany's commitment to supporting these initiatives.

The event wrapped up with the adoption of the Tunis Declaration, which reinforces the AU Agenda 2063 by pushing for stronger tax systems, closer cooperation, and new strategies to stop IFFs across Africa.

OUTLOOK 2025

In 2025, our longstanding and trusted cooperation with the African Union and its institutions, as well as all our partners, will continue to thrive. We are anticipating exciting developments:



2025 AU THEME: THE YEAR OF REPARATIONS

The 2025 AU Theme, “Justice for Africans and People of African Descent through Reparations,” puts reparative justice and historical accountability at the centre of continental dialogue. This theme unites

Africans and the African diaspora and addresses the historical crimes and mass atrocities committed against Africans, including colonisation, apartheid, and genocide.

AFRICA CLIMATE SUMMIT 2025

The next Africa Climate Summit will take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in September 2025. Bringing together leaders and climate experts, the summit will focus on resilience, green growth and climate finance – strengthening Africa’s role in global climate negotiations and mobilising action to address the continent’s climate vulnerabilities.

NEW LEADERSHIP AT THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

2025 marks a significant leadership change within the African Union and its Commission.

The new appointments are:

- AU Chairperson: H.E. João Lourenço (Angola)
- AUC Chairperson: H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf (Djibouti)
- AUC Deputy Chairperson: H.E. Selma Malika Haddadi (Algeria)

New and re-appointed Commissioners include:

- Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS): H.E. Amb. Bankole Adeoye (Nigeria)
- Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (ARBE): H.E. Moses Vilakati (Eswatini)
- Infrastructure and Energy (I&E): H.E. Lerato Mataboge (South Africa)
- Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development (HHS): H.E. Amb. Amma Twum-Amoah (Ghana)

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Addis Ababa, 2025

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