


Africa Practice Impact Report 2024

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December 2024

Prepared by Africa Practice

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Executive Summary

This report covers our operations for the period between **April 2022** and **March 2023** and contains examples of our work with partners.

Letter from our **CEO**

Africa Practice is a catalyst for change. We partner with Africa's visionaries and trail-blazers to drive impact-led innovation.

In 2023, more than 80% of our revenues derived from work in four critical areas: **digitalisation, climate and energy transition, education, and health**. Our activities ranged from advocating for reforms to accelerate access to clean cooking technologies through leveraging AI-driven insights to strengthen financial inclusion, to championing policies and investments that nurture Africa's burgeoning creative industries.

The impact of our work between 2022 and 2023 facilitated the creation of **10,000** jobs, unlocking **\$1.1 billion** in new client investments; propelling **\$10 billion** in digital startup growth, and defending freedom of expression rights for **31 million** citizens.

Two decades of experience have taught us that progress towards inclusive growth is not linear. It demands a sound understanding of the interplay between social, technological, and economic factors, and it requires partnerships – often between unlikely allies.

Across Africa, there's a growing clamour for **change**. There's a need to bridge the gaps of polarisation and inequality.

Delivering change requires consultation to ensure diverse perspectives shape policies, which takes time, but requires urgency. It is hinged on innovation, but needs balanced regulation to unlock investment, create jobs, and nurture growth.

This report reflects our approach to tackling complex challenges, building community resilience, and creating lasting value for our clients and other stakeholders. **We invite you to explore our work and join us in our journey to shape a more prosperous Africa.**

Our Impact

In the period **2022 - 2023** our assignments supporting industry, philanthropy and the public sector helped catalyse the following results:

10,000

The creation of 10,000 jobs

USD 1.1 billion

of clients' new portfolio investments in Africa

USD 10 billion

in digital startup growth

31 million

freedom of expression rights defended for 31 million citizens from minority groups

As a mission-led organisation, we are intentional about ensuring that our work is aligned with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. More than **90%** of our income originates from projects that contribute to achieving at least one SDG.

The visual below illustrates the number of projects that contribute to achieving the SDGs. It is worth noting that our projects may impact multiple SDGs; however, we have classified project impact based on the most closely aligned SDG. Additionally, it is noteworthy that due to the nature of our work, a significant number of our projects impact **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals**. In the table, we have recognised the number of projects specifically contributing to SDG 17 beyond their primary aligned SDG.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Number of contracts that impact each of the 17 SDGs



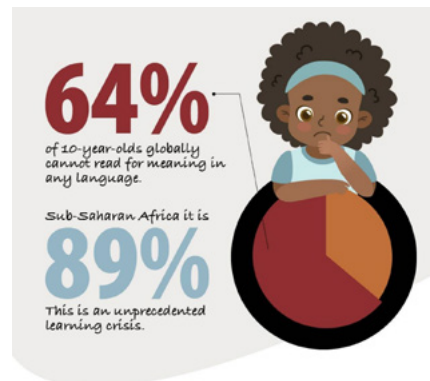
□ Sustainable Development Goal impacted
○ Number of projects

Tackling Africa's learning crisis

Africa Practice is working with a global philanthropy foundation to support its efforts to confront the continent's severe learning crisis. With nine out of ten African children unable to read or perform basic maths by age ten, the situation demands urgent attention.

Africa Practice has designed and implemented a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder advocacy campaign to raise awareness and promote cost-effective, scalable solutions. The campaign targets policymakers, education practitioners, and key stakeholders at global, regional, and country levels, and has achieved some notable results, including:

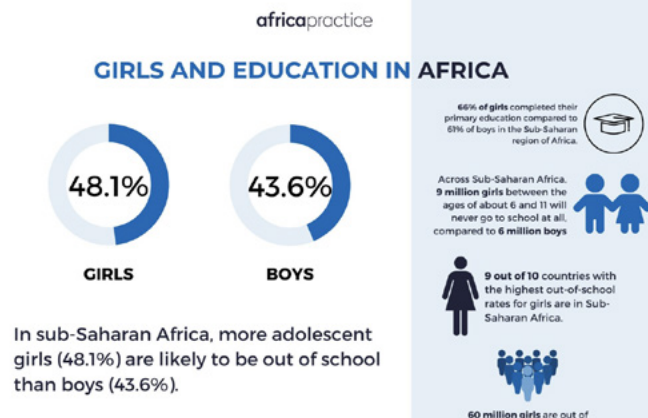
- Increased global awareness of Africa's learning crisis;
- Collective action from donors and development partners;
- Establishment of regional platforms in Africa for policymaker engagement;
- Emergence of country-level champions implementing successful solutions at scale.



Every child has the right to #Foundationallearning

A staggering number of students in Africa face challenges with mastering foundational skills like reading, writing, and numeracy.

Addressing these challenges isn't just about fixing problems, it's about building a stronger foundation for all learners.



African youth voices join Human Capital Africa, ADEA, African leaders, education ministers, and development partners call for a continental commitment to confront Africa's learning crisis on the sidelines of African Union meetings in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.



About Africa Practice

Africa Practice is a mission-led strategic consulting firm advising investors and development partners across the continent.

Our **insights** and **advocacy** shape a **prosperous Africa** that inspires the world.



We have been a signatory to the UN Global Compact since 2017.

Certified



Corporation

We are a certified B-Corporation.

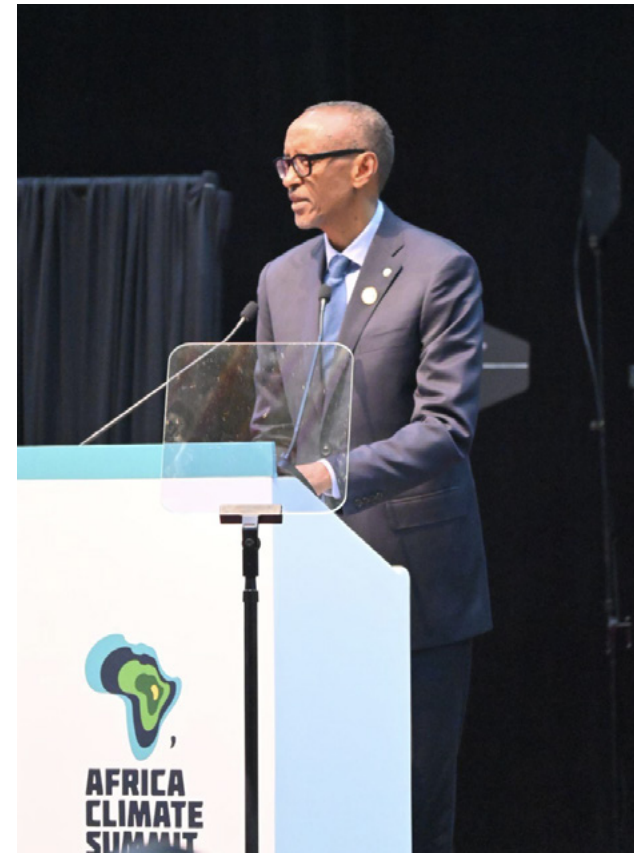
For over **20 years**, we have been partnering with global investors, development partners, policymakers and other changemakers to drive transformation on the continent. We maintain an unrivalled footprint across Africa through our **local presence in 9 hubs**.



Forging an African growth agenda aligned with global climate action (Africa Climate Summit)

Africa Practice was retained by the secretariat of the inaugural [Africa Climate Summit](#) in September 2023, to shape the narrative and mobilise pledges of support and investment from the private sector and international development partners.

Our engagements resulted in national and global media coverage that reflected Africa's potential in global climate mitigation efforts and contributed directly to reframing the global climate discourse from a North-South divide to one of collaboration and collective action. This shift in narrative was reflected in the multi-stakeholder Nairobi Declaration, which served as a critical lever for Africa in **COP28** negotiations.



Richard Kiplagat, Director at Africa Practice, spoke at the Africa Climate Summit, while our colleagues managed communications for the Secretariat.



Our solutions



Systems thinking



Human-centred design



Insights



Advocacy

Our insights and advocacy solutions are rooted in a deep understanding of **stakeholders and systems**. We bring a human lens to systems thinking, designing solutions with people, not just for them.

With a deep appreciation of local contexts, we know success depends on **collaborative action, inclusivity, and trust**.

Our expertise spans these key areas:



(Geo)political & market insights



Public policy solutions



Campaigning



Impact evidence & design

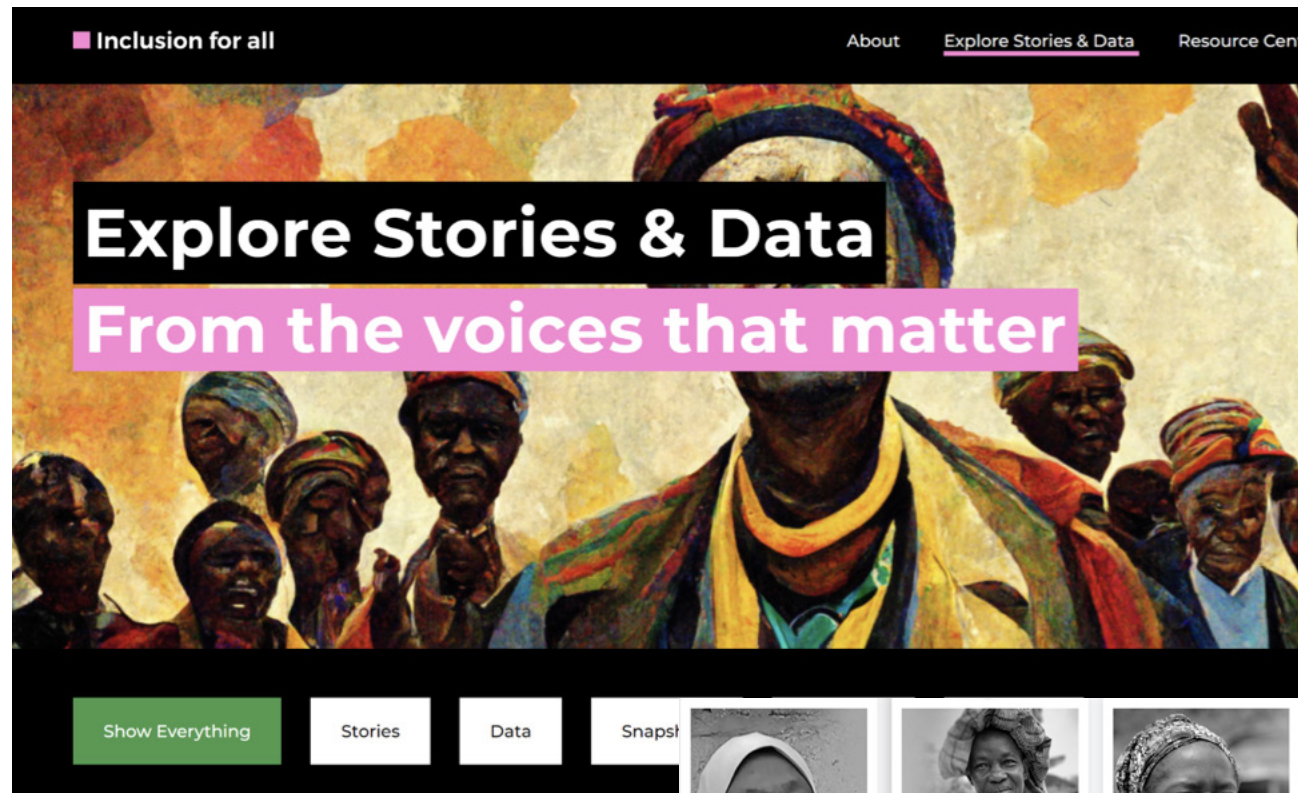


Data & AI-powered insights

Removing the barriers to financial inclusion for communities in Nigeria

Africa Practice has a longstanding partnership with a major global philanthropic foundation to promote financial inclusion in Nigeria.

The foundation draws on strategic advocacy and stakeholder engagement expertise to drive systemic change and broaden access to financial services. Our efforts have resulted in financial inclusion being included as a key tenet of the **National Economic Growth and Recovery Plan** and have resulted in a steady increase in the number of Nigerian adults that use formal financial services.



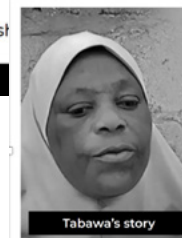
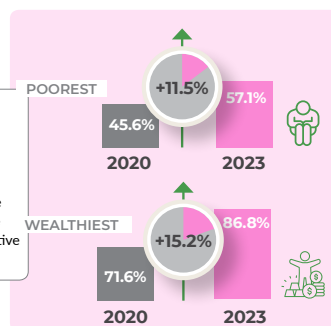
Tracking NIMC's* Progress since 2020

A comparison between the 2020 and 2023 A2F data analysed by I4ALL reveals encouraging strides in NIN ownership among marginalised groups. Despite this positive movement, gaps persist, requiring further action to fully unlock financial inclusion. It is also imperative to note that the 2023 survey had a larger sample size compared to 2020, which may potentially impact the direct comparability of results between the years.



ECONOMIC STATUS

In 2020, 45.6% of the poorest respondents had NINs, which increased by 11.5% by 2023. For the wealthiest group, there was a 15.2% rise in NIN ownership during the same period. The larger increase among the richest indicates a wealth gap, although the overall rise across all groups suggests effective measures by NIMC to improve enrolment.



Tabawa has her NIN and knows how it is well accepted. She highlighted that the older ones in...



Joy declares that she has a formal ID - the Permanent Voter's Card has her means of...

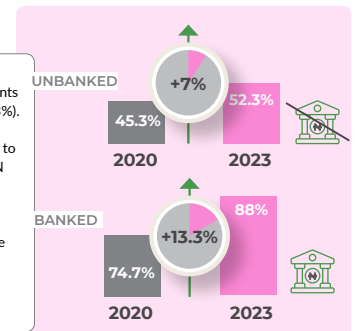


Shadia shares her awareness of the availability of a range of formal IDs including NIN, BVN, and...



BANKED STATUS

In 2023, 52.3% of the unbanked respondents had NINs - a 7% increase since 2020 (45.3%). For the banked respondents, 2023 saw an increase of 13.3%, up from 74.7% in 2020 to 88%. While there is a positive trend in NIN ownership for both banked and unbanked individuals between 2020 and 2023, the increase is more significant for banked individuals compared to the unbanked. The larger increase for the banked may reflect easier access due to existing ID processes or higher awareness within the banked population.



Case study

Evidence-based campaigning for clean cooking

Cooking with dirty fuels has devastating public health and climate impacts. About 600,000 Africans die prematurely each year from the effects of dirty cooking, making it an even bigger killer than malaria.

Our client, **Koko Networks**, provides technology-led clean cooking solutions. They wanted our help to mainstream awareness of the devastating public health and climate impacts of cooking with dirty cooking fuels such as wood, charcoal, and kerosene, and to advocate for a set of regulations to make the cost of cooking with denatured ethanol competitive with traditional cooking fuels - removing the greatest barrier to adoption. **Our work has contributed to over one million people across Kenya switching from dirty cooking to clean cooking, and is saving lives and forests.**



Governance

We are committed to adopting global best practices in **environmental, social** and **governance** performance.



Board of Directors

The company's apex board comprised a non-executive chairman, two non-executive directors and two executive directors in the period in review. The board met four times over this period. The board has three standing committees comprising nominated directors and retained advisors. Each standing committee met at least twice.

- **Audit Committee**
oversees the company's system of internal controls and knowledge of, and compliance with, laws and regulations. Monitors the integrity of the financial statements of the Company, reviews financial reports before these are submitted to the Board.
- **Remuneration Committee**
determines the broad policy for the remuneration of the Company's executive directors and senior management, on the recommendation of the chief executive.
- **Treasury Committee**
proactively manages the company's treasury exposures within acceptable risk limits, monitoring levels of total debt, liquidity, currency exposure, and interest rate exposure.



Executive Committee

Strategic direction, oversight, and management of the firm's operations and resources are supplied by an Executive Committee, which is composed of executive directors appointed by the CEO. The Executive Committee is chaired by the CEO and meets weekly to review performance against company objectives.

Members of our Executive Committee have a cumulative **100+ years** working together. They have a deep knowledge of our business and the geographies and contexts in which we operate.

Establishing a continental Model Law to drive innovation

The success of companies employing advanced tech such as cloud and AI, is key to realising the potential productivity and economic gains that these technologies hold for the African continent.

At the invitation of **Google**, Africa Practice designed a draft **Startup Policy Framework and Model Law for the African Union**, with the goal of supporting member states to unlock the potential of Africa's advanced technology sector industry. We consulted extensively with a broad range of relevant stakeholders including **Regional Economic Community** representatives, government officials, policy experts, and startups.

Contained within the draft we supplied were provisions for IP and data protection, tax credits and sandbox testing environments, all designed to enable African startups to compete with global tech companies.

The Framework and Model Law was adopted by the continent's ministers at an AU summit. It is now available for member states to domesticate in national policy-making.



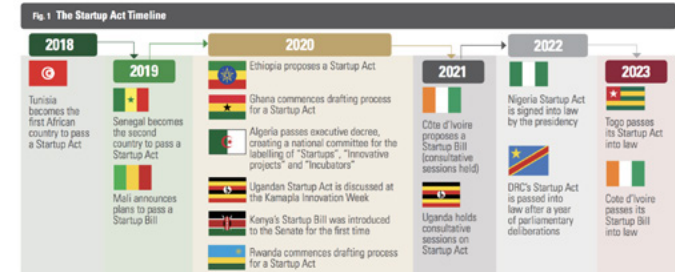
STARTUP MODEL LAW FRAMEWORK

- THE CASE FOR STARTUP BILLS
- STARTUP LABELLING
- FUNDING FOR STARTUPS
- TAXING STARTUPS
- IP IN STARTUP LEGISLATION
- DATA, CLOUD AND STARTUPS
- AI AND STARTUPS
- THE CASE FOR EDUCATION IN PROMOTING STARTUP CULTURE
- ANNEX: COMBINED MODEL LAW

THE CASE FOR STARTUP BILLS

THE STARTUP POTENTIAL

Five (5) billion dollars in funding flowed into 5,200 African startups in 2022¹. Yet, across the continent, enabling legislation is scant, high compliance costs and regulatory uncertainty often hinder these businesses' ability to scale. The internet economy can contribute USD 180 billion to Africa's GDP by 2025, but African nations must also be creators - not just consumers of technology. Startups spur development by creating jobs in the digital economy and driving the research-innovation pipeline. They may not necessarily be market-agnostic, but will usually be tech-focused or tech-enabled. As a consequence, startups will often have high capital costs with low revenue.



WHY DOES STARTUP LEGISLATION MATTER?

Member States are at varying phases of readiness in respect of some of the factors which influence the growth trajectory of countries' startup ecosystems: infrastructure, government support, technology readiness, internet penetration, affordability, funding, ease of starting and doing business, ease of access to electricity, urbanisation, tech hubs, amongst others.

The turbulence the world has seen play out in the tech ecosystem over the past year has reset capital funding conditions and is driving a back to basics approach: focusing on fit, efficiency and solving real problems. Member States have a critical opportunity to create the regulatory enablement that will drive greater investment in Africa's innovation ecosystem.

¹ Africa: The Big Deal





B Corp

In 2023, we took the decision to work towards **B Corp certification** and subsequently secured certification as a B-Corp. This exercise has provided a powerful opportunity to reflect on how we translate the convictions we share and the commitments we make at a leadership level, into operational policy and process and then to implement this across the company.

To ensure the operationalisation process was inclusive and consultative, we established three working groups - **Impact Labs**. Participation in the Labs is voluntary - it's an opportunity for team members to help define the impact we want to create as Africa Practice and design how we deliver, measure and communicate it.

The three Labs focus on employee well-being, our responsibility to the community and environmental stewardship.

The focus for the first phase of the Labs was to generate a set of recommendations on policy and process to operationalise our impact commitments. These were presented to our Executive Committee and the majority of recommendations have been approved and implemented, including:



Ensuring **counselling support** is available for all staff under our medical policies.



Introducing a breastfeeding policy and practical support for **new mothers returning to work** after maternity leave who wish to continue breastfeeding.

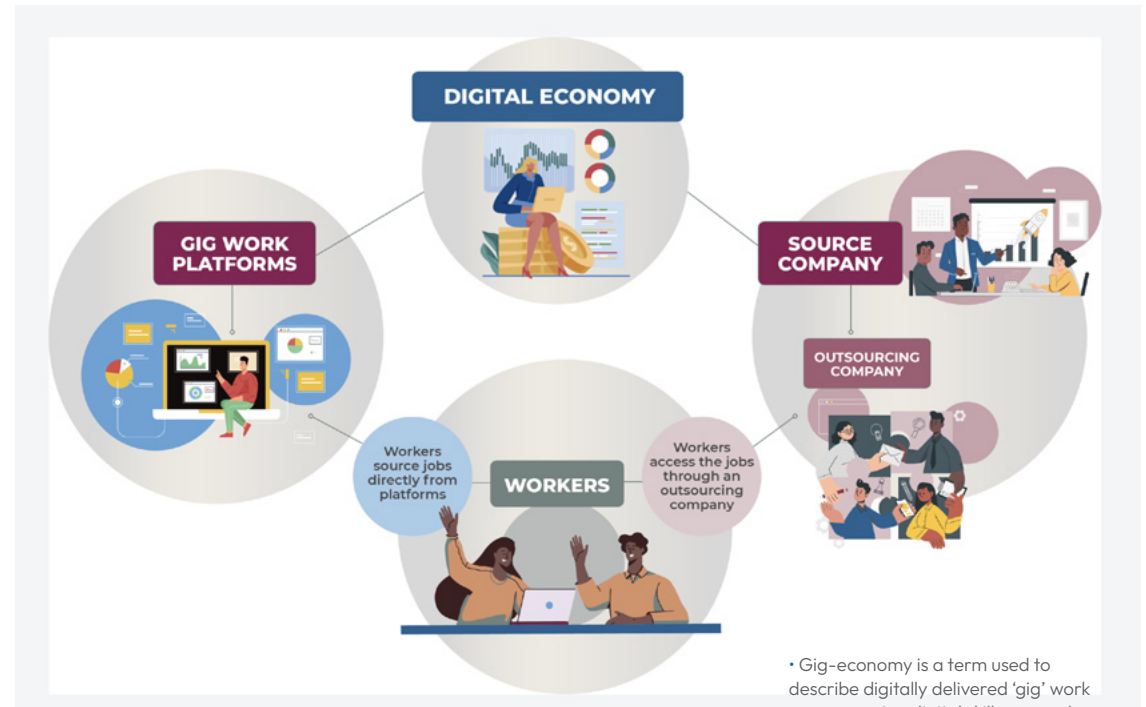


Introducing a **Supplier Code of Conduct** and an **Environmental Code of Conduct**.

Regulatory engagement for the gig-economy

We designed a policy-testing environment for government, industry, and gig-worker stakeholders in Kenya, bringing everyone together and testing different approaches in a real-world environment before setting out policy options to strengthen employment opportunities and wellbeing for gig economy* workers.

Our approach tested different behavioural assumptions and change interventions to establish their success outlook and stakeholder buy-in. In the process we were able to raise awareness and build alignment around a set of recommendations (concrete and actionable) for reforming Kenya's regulatory system, enabling the country to seize the opportunities in the gig-economy, and improve the experience for both investors and gig workers.



* Gig-economy is a term used to describe digitally delivered 'gig' work encompassing digital skills sourced through job platforms and business process outsourcing enterprises.

Leading into the emerging future

Going forwards we are committed to focusing our efforts on areas that can realise rapid income gains for the majority of Africans, not just the few.

To achieve this, we will **continue to collaborate with a diverse array of partners to direct investments** towards critical areas such as **energy systems, biodiversity restoration, sustainable transportation, universal healthcare, and quality education**. By channelling resources into these transformative sectors, we aim to co-create lasting, positive productivity gains that **drive prosperity**.

In pursuing our mission, we will be guided by a three-pronged approach to drive transformative change:



Change the equation

Reducing capital costs by bridging the gap between perceived and actual risk and value.



Shift the narrative

Mobilising action through evidence-based storytelling.



Rewrite the rules

Fostering market growth through innovative policy design.

We will continue to **promote a culture of curiosity and collaboration**, encouraging our staff to draw on indigenous wisdom and to seek out new ideas that challenge us to think and behave differently.

We will be intentional about **embracing participatory processes** in our work, so as to co-create solutions that are truly responsive to the needs and aspirations of beneficiaries.

As we move forwards, we will continue to share our experiences in the hope that we can inspire others who are working at a system-wide level to address the **political, technological and societal factors** that limit progress towards peace and prosperity.

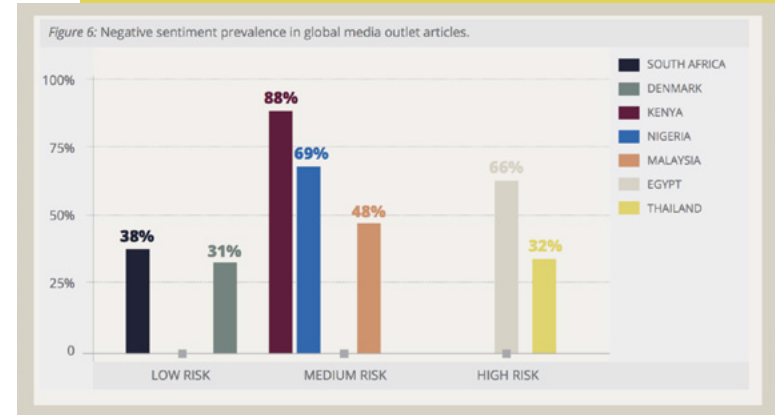
Case study

The cost of media stereotypes to Africa

Narratives are a collection of related stories that are articulated and refined over time to represent a central belief. The prevailing narrative of Africa as the continent of poverty, disease, conflict, poor leadership and corruption is stereotypical.

It has turned a dynamic, innovative and evolving continent with 54 countries into a single story of a broken and dependent continent and a people who lack agency.

With a multidisciplinary team of economists, data scientists, political scientists, and media experts, we developed a unique, data-driven approach to assess media bias and estimate the potential economic impact of biased media reporting on Africa. Our economic modelling found that reporting about Africa is much more negative than for other regions, and that overall, Africa could be losing up to **USD 4.1 billion per year** due to increased capital costs shaped by misrepresentation in the media. This research provides a crucial evidence base, which substantiates the need to for more accurate narratives about Africa in global media.



Negative stereotypes in international media cost Africa £3.2bn a year - report

Focus on conflict, corruption and poverty heightens perception of risk, raising interest on sovereign debt, authors say



Men read about the 2022 election in a Kenyan village. Getty Images

Mail Guardian

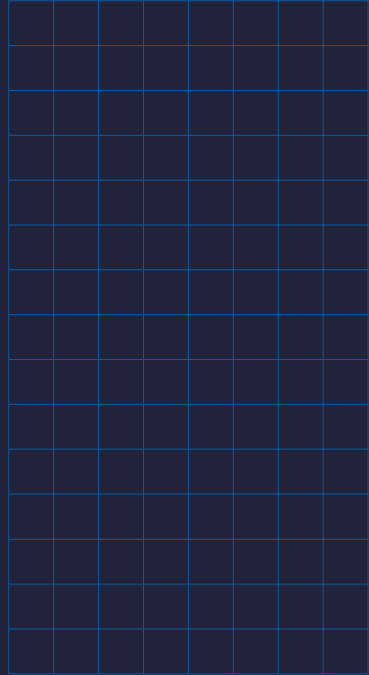
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AFRICA | 18 OCTOBER 2024

Study finds that negative media stereotypes drain African economies

By Aundé Brown





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